

Legislative Assembly

Wednesday, 5 April, 1995

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

GASCOYNE DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION - ANNUAL REPORT, AMENDMENT

THE SPEAKER (Mr Clarko): I have a correction to a tabled paper. I have received a ministerial request to authorise an amendment to the annual report of the Gascoyne Development Commission which was tabled on 20 December 1994. The amendment is to page 28, which contained a misprint. Accordingly, under the provisions of Standing Order No 233 I advise the House that I have authorised the necessary amendment.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT - MINISTER FOR COMMERCE AND TRADE *Select Committee on Science and Technology, Final Report*

MR COWAN (Merredin - Minister for Commerce and Trade) [11.04 am] - by leave: I wish to make a statement in response to the final report of the Select Committee on Science and Technology. I appreciate the work done by the select committee which comprised its chairperson, the member for Cockburn, and the members for Belmont, Dianella, Roleystone and Collie. The committee deliberated for 18 months and produced three reports. The first was an interim report dealing with the level of commonwealth government investment in research and development in Western Australia, and Western Australian applications to the cooperative research centres program. The second report was a discussion paper on this State's research and development opportunities in South East Asia, emphasising the value of science and technology as a means of developing trade with South East Asia. The final report provides a comprehensive set of recommendations for government to best use science and technology as a multiplier in economic development and in building a long term, sustainable competitive advantage.

Some of the report's recommendations relate to the ministerial responsibilities of the Minister for Education, and I understand the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Education will be responding on his behalf in this House at a later date. I commend the work of the select committee as a basis for the development of a Western Australian science and technology policy. The theme of the final report is that the development of science and technology must be directly linked to the State's industrial and commercial base. This means that not only must we have a clearly defined science and technology policy but also this policy must be integrated with the State's economic development objectives. Indeed, the need for a framework of support and encouragement for innovation and the use of science and technology as a key tool in economic development was brought home to me early in March at the CeBIT expo in Germany, which is the world's biggest information technology and telecommunications exhibition. It is evident from what I saw at CeBIT that a clear policy is needed to set the direction for government's role in encouraging the development of Western Australia's science and technology sectors. This is necessary if the State is to increase, or even maintain, its place in the world's manufacturing and service industries. As the final report says, "countries wishing high standard of living must be technology leaders, not followers."

The select committee correctly identified the need for Western Australia to have a science and technology policy and, indeed, this was the key recommendation of its report. I concur with this finding and have already requested the Department of Commerce and Trade and the State's Technology and Industry Advisory Council to jointly undertake the development of Western Australia's first comprehensive science and technology policy as a matter of priority. The science and technology policy will be a clear document that sets out the principles behind what the Government will do to support science and technology as a key enabling factor in the State's economic growth. It will encourage diversification and enhance competitiveness in our existing industry

through the greater use of science and technology. It will also aim to promote the development of new science and technology based industries in this State. In addition, the policy will clarify the areas where the State Government will have no involvement. It will also aim to minimise duplication between the State Government and the efforts in this area of the Federal Government, industry and academia. The policy will identify issues that need attention but are not being addressed by other bodies. I will be seeking a bipartisan approach in the development of this policy.

Western Australia has a proven record in innovation and cultivating niche markets. Its shipbuilding industry has risen in a few short years to a position of providing some 67 per cent of Australia's commercial shipping, and it exports ferries and naval ships throughout Asia and the Pacific. It is not often realised that the computer software used by the designers of many of our ships has also been generated in this State, and is now exported internationally and used to design Japanese-built supertankers and leisure craft in many countries. Elsewhere in the information technology sector, Western Australian companies lead the world in automatic transport ticketing systems, electronic funds transaction hardware, and remote sensing.

The Government's science and technology policy will seek to identify means of supporting similar industries in their early stage of growth. The policy will be developed jointly by the Government and all sectors of the science and technology community, including industry, research organisations, government departments and the academic institutions. I intend to keep the lines of communication open with the Opposition during the policy formulation process. The preparation of the policy will be jointly overseen by the chief executive officer of the Department of Commerce and Trade and the chair of the Technology and Industry Advisory Council. TIAC, as the State's advisory body on technology and industry, includes representatives of industry, academia and trade unions among its membership. The policy development process will take up to six months to complete. A discussion document will be released and a series of public forums will be held in metropolitan and regional locations. These will seek to obtain feedback on the discussion paper, clarify the issues raised and stimulate discussion of science and technology issues in the community. Public submissions will also be sought following the release of the discussion document. Feedback from the forums and public submissions will be taken into account in framing the policy, before the approval of Cabinet is sought.

Given the level of public consultation in this process, I can make no firm commitment that the six-month deadline will be met. However, I am confident that with goodwill on all sides, it can be achieved. During the process of policy development the State's existing science and technology programs will continue. However, these programs will be reviewed in the light of the policy established and if they do not fit the new policy, they will be abolished or modified. Similarly the need for any new programs will be considered. The principles of the policy will be clearly reflected by the programs that support it. The policy process will be considerably aided by the work already done by the select committee.

The select committee's report makes many recommendations and these will be fully considered as part of the policy development process, especially where the need for stronger policies in weaker areas has been identified. As recommended by the select committee, the Government will issue a science and technology statement. The statement will incorporate the Government's science and technology policy and an audit statement providing data on key aspects of science and technology activities in Western Australia. As well, a series of indicators or measures of the success of the science and technology policy and its implementation will be put forward. The first science and technology statement will be produced once the new science and technology policy has been adopted. Future science and technology statements will be made annually, and linked to the Budget cycle. The science and technology statement will provide a comprehensive analysis of science and technology activities and review the success of the Government's programs to expand and diversify science and technology activities in Western Australia.

I point out that the membership of the select committee was drawn from all parties. The quality of the committee's final report is a demonstration of the benefits that can be achieved through a bipartisan approach to significant issues. I believe the State will benefit greatly if this bipartisan approach can be maintained through the policy development process and beyond. I assure the House that I am fully committed to the timely development of this policy as I believe it is vital to the long term sustainable economic development of Western Australia.

MR THOMAS (Cockburn) [11.14 am]: The Minister stated that the select committee report was unanimous and that the approach to science and technology should be a bipartisan one. That should for the most part be the case with policies regarding economic development in general. Programs in this area have a long lead in time and if sudden changes were to be made to policy, quite clearly that would be counterproductive.

The Minister also indicated that in the formulation of the policy which he has foreshadowed, open lines of communication will be maintained with the Opposition. We appreciate that. I personally appreciate the fact that the Minister gave his statement to me in advance, which has given me the opportunity to prepare a better response than would otherwise be the case. Notwithstanding that, we could not be expected to be completely uncritical; and in some cases it is our best friends who tell us what we do not want to hear. I hope the House will not regard the few reservations I have about that statement as being churlish in this context.

The Minister's statement was in response to the select committee report which, from recollection, was based on approximately 55 recommendations, some of which were substantive and some procedural. It could be said that the Minister's statement was largely procedural. It set out a procedure to be embarked on in order to draw up a policy. The committee recommended that such a policy be drawn up and I am pleased that that will happen. However, I am somewhat disappointed that some of the substantive components of that policy have not been adopted since the select committee report was put before the Parliament in late November. When it was foreshadowed that the Minister would respond in the time prescribed by the standing orders I hoped there would be some response to the substantive recommendations. Nonetheless, I understand that the Minister has set in train that process. Presumably those substantive recommendations will show up in one form or another in the policy to be drawn up through the process he has outlined. I also acknowledge that possibly more of the substantive recommendations than the procedural ones fall within the responsibility of his colleague, the Minister for Education, hence, technically speaking, they were not his to respond to.

Again I am disappointed that the Government has not put forward a comprehensive response to the report as it crosses two ministerial portfolios. The Minister has indicated that the Minister for Education will respond at a later date. I have been advised informally that that will happen some time next week. I am not sure to what extent there has been cooperation between the two departments and Ministers. However, if the select committee report is to be dealt with properly, it is necessary there be cooperation between the portfolios of Commerce and Trade, and Education, because they are both affected by it.

I understand that next week a response will be made by the Parliamentary Secretary on behalf of the Minister for Education. One wonders whether that response will deal with the substantive recommendations or merely set in place some sort of procedure to draw up a policy. I hope the latter will not be the case and that at least some of the substantive recommendations will be dealt with. I hope it is his intention to be involved in the process which the Deputy Premier has just outlined to draw up a comprehensive response to the select committee report. I am disappointed at an apparent lack of coordination within the Government. I realise it involves two Ministers and two portfolios, but they are both part of the same Government and Cabinet. It should be possible to have a coordinated response when responding to a report which crosses more than one portfolio. The Parliamentary Secretary's response on behalf of the Minister for Education remains to be seen. It will be interesting to see to what extent the two responses are consistent.

Earlier I said I was somewhat disappointed that a number of the substantive recommendations had not been dealt with. A response could have been formulated in the period since the select committee report was presented to Parliament approximately three months ago. I refer to two or three of those recommendations to which at least some response could have been made from the Government.

The first was endowments to universities. I am not quite sure to what extent the Government feels this is the responsibility of the Minister for Commerce and Trade or the Minister for Education. In the sense that universities are involved, it is the responsibility of the Minister for Education. The University Endowment Act, as I recall it, falls within the responsibility of Education; therefore something may be forthcoming in that area when we hear from the Minister for Education, through his colleague the Parliamentary Secretary. Nonetheless, if a decision is to be made about a substantial endowment for universities - it is not worth doing unless it is substantial - it will cross a number of portfolios. If, as envisaged by the select committee in its report, it is to be an endowment of land, as is most often the case in these areas, the Minister for Lands, the Minister for Planning, and Ministers responsible for associated portfolio areas would be involved. If it is to be an endowment of another form that involves cash, obviously it would have budgetary implications and other Ministers, particularly the Premier and Deputy Premier, would be involved.

I am disappointed there is not some indication at this stage of the Government's attitude towards the question of endowments for universities. This is a matter in which the universities are very interested. In the wake of the select committee report I received a great response from the universities in favour of endowments. They will look closely to the Government's actions in this area. If this matter is to be covered by the Minister for Education's response next week, that is well and good. I look forward to hearing that response. If it is to be part of the process of drafting a policy which the Minister for Commerce and Trade just foreshadowed, I look forward to seeing that when it is completed. Nonetheless, I cannot let it pass without saying that I am disappointed that in the three months since the select committee report was tabled in the Parliament the Government has not been able to formulate a response.

Another of the recommendations which has been well received is the notion of developing the Queen Elizabeth II Medical Centre site as part of a technology park dealing with medical activities. One of the select committee's recommendations, which was repeated in the Minister's statement, is that it is necessary for the State to identify its potential economic strengths; that the science and technology policy should be derived from the subjects it identifies, and there should be a nexus between science and technology policy and industry development policy. Presumably that will be one of the exercises foreshadowed by the Minister which will be undertaken over the next six months. It has already been established that there are three or four areas in this State which have world leading commercial potential in the medical field. The select committee report puts forward a proposal to encourage associated industries to locate at the Queen Elizabeth II Medical Centre site around the University of Western Australia Medical School and associated facilities. That proposal requires legislation to amend the Act which creates the reserve of the Queen Elizabeth II Medical Centre site. The drafting of that legislation would be a simple task. It could be done relatively quickly and we could deal with it in this session.

The process which the Minister foreshadowed, which will take some six months, contains another disappointment. Any of the recommendations of the select committee which have budgetary implications - that is most of them - will be able to be incorporated only in the budgetary cycle for the 1996-97 financial year. Therefore, any prospects for the recommendations being acted upon in the 1995-96 financial year are severely diminished because they will not be in the Budget bids, which presumably will be almost completed by now. The 1996-97 financial year is sadly too long away for those of us who anticipate the implementation of the recommendations of the select committee.

The final aspect of the Minister's statement on which I will comment relates to the preparation of this policy by the Department of Commerce and Trade in cooperation with

the Technology and Industry Advisory Council. I have some reservations about the Department of Commerce and Trade as it is currently constituted undertaking the preparation. One of the key recommendations of the select committee report is that there should be a division within the department which has responsibility for science and technology. The committee stopped short of recommending the creation of separate government departments because it did not think that was warranted in this scale and size. Nonetheless, the committee felt that the operations should be headed by someone who is sufficiently senior, who answers directly to the chief executive officer and is able to deal with the major players in the field - the universities, the commonwealth agencies and the major corporations - at a level to be taken seriously. The person should have the confidence to make statements which will be implemented and predictions about government processes and procedures which will be acted on. I make no reflection on the people in the department as individuals; however, at present those who have responsibility for that area do not have that level of standing within government and, hence, are not perceived to have that standing by the universities and the other players in the science and technology field.

The fact that these people will presumably prepare the policy is something of a disadvantage. I hoped that the Government could have made the decision to act on that recommendation and go head hunting outside the State for a top of the range person to occupy that position and prepare that policy. If the committee's recommendation is accepted, as I believe it must be, the committee will basically prepare the policy, and somebody will then be appointed to that position. That process is the wrong way around. It would have been much better if the Government had acted on at least that one recommendation; that is, the notion that a division should be created within the Department of Commerce and Trade with responsibility for those areas. That division would be headed by someone who was sufficiently senior to answer directly to the CEO and do the job of preparing policy.

BILLS (2) - INTRODUCTION AND FIRST READING

1. Acts Amendment (Betting Tax) Bill
Bill introduced, on motion by Mr Cowan (Deputy Premier), and read a first time.
2. Artificial Breeding of Stock Amendment Bill
Bill introduced, on motion by Mr House (Minister for Primary Industry), and read a first time.

CORPORATIONS (WESTERN AUSTRALIA) AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

MRS EDWARDES (Kingsley - Attorney General) [11.30 am]: I move -

That the Bill be now read a second time.

This Bill is required to be considered as part of Western Australia's participation in the agreement that governs the Commonwealth, State and Northern Territory scheme for corporate regulation. The scheme has been in operation since 1 January 1991.

The Bill is based on a model Bill agreed to by commonwealth, state and territory Attorneys General. All State Governments and the Northern Territory Government will be introducing similar legislation. Complementary provisions, contained in the Corporations Legislation Amendment Act 1994 of the Commonwealth, which was passed in June 1994, will commence at the same time as this proposed state and territory legislation. This Bill, in conjunction with these complementary amendments to state and commonwealth legislation, will confer jurisdiction in civil matters under Corporations Law on lower courts throughout Australia. This jurisdiction will not extend to matters the Corporations Law reserves for the superior courts and will be subject to the monetary limits of the Western Australian District and Local Courts.

The principal object of the Bill is to ensure, as far as possible, that the District and Local Courts of Western Australia have the same powers over civil matters under the Corporations Law that they had under the previous cooperative scheme. Under the previous cooperative scheme laws, the District and Local Courts had jurisdiction over corporate matters depending on the appropriate monetary limits. For example, under section 556 of the Companies (Western Australia) Code a creditor could take civil action in the Local Court, subject to its monetary limits, against the former directors of a company if the debt in question was incurred when there were reasonable grounds to expect that the company could not repay the debt as and when it became due and the company subsequently went into liquidation.

The Corporations Law, when drafted, conferred jurisdiction only on superior courts. The amendments will allow creditors, once again, to take actions in the lower courts. Transitional provisions are included in the Bill to ensure that the effect of actions commenced or taken before the commencement of this legislation are preserved. This proposal has been developed in response to concerns from the business community and the legal profession against court judgments over recent years which have held that civil jurisdiction under the Corporations Law is confined to superior courts; that is, the Federal Court, the Family Court and the Supreme Court in each State and Territory. Concern has also been expressed that legitimate civil actions will not be able to be brought under the Corporations Law because of the cost and delay involved in bringing actions before the superior courts. For small claims, it could be that the cost of the filing fees and legal representation alone would prevent the commencement of civil proceedings in a superior court.

The Western Australian Government remains committed to the principle that justice should be available to the community at an affordable cost and with the prospect of a speedy resolution. It is for these reasons that the Government supports this Bill to amend the law to confer civil jurisdiction on lower courts in regard to those civil actions under the Corporations Law which are in the nature of debt recovery, monetary compensation or minor administrative remedies.

The legislative framework for the national scheme of corporate regulation means that effective jurisdiction can be conferred on lower courts only if complementary amendments are made by State and Northern Territory Parliaments to the corporations Acts of the respective jurisdictions. The Ministerial Council for Corporations, which is responsible for the preservation and promotion of the current legislative scheme, has agreed that the necessary amendments should be made as soon as possible, and a uniform date will be set for the operation of these amendments in each jurisdiction in Australia.

These amendments will reduce the cost and delays associated with bringing small civil actions under the Corporations Law. Therefore, they are further tangible evidence of the Government's efforts to assist all Western Australians, including small businesses, who are involved in these matters. It is important that these reforms receive the support of all members and be implemented as soon as possible. The Bill will also amend the definition of "officer" consequential to an amendment to the Corporations Law, and amend provisions which provide for application of certain provisions of the new evidence Act of the Commonwealth. Finally, it will amend section 90 of the Corporations (Western Australia) Act 1990 to clarify the powers and functions of the commonwealth Director of Public Prosecutions in relation to offences under the former companies and securities scheme. I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Ms Warnock.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY

Motion

Resumed from 4 April.

MRS HALLAHAN (Armadale) [11.36 am]: I have commented on the disappointing nature of the speech given by His Excellency the Governor. The most disappointing

aspect of his speech was the absolute failure to indicate any awareness of the destruction of services in this State, the destruction of jobs for many Western Australians, and the very great dislocation that is going on both in the workplace and in families as a result of his Government's actions. Some comment indicating the difficulties that often face those associated with change would have been in order. The Governor has not therefore represented fairly the experience of all Western Australians, through puppetlike adherence to the dictates of the Court Government. We are in a very disturbing period. If we thought that Margaret Thatcher was bad news for Britain and Jeff Kennett was bad news for Victoria, we have Richard Court who is quite clearly very bad news for Western Australia. The worst aspect of privatisation of public services which is being carried out in this State is that there is no policy about the way it is happening and there is no analysis in relation to the services that are to be privatised. Only recently I have been forced to directly address this question of privatisation. Anything that I have read about the subject suggests that privatisation must be undertaken in concert with a very well developed policy; that the services to be privatised must fit in with a clearly articulated direction; and that the community has the right to know that direction. The Court Government has completely failed.

All we have is what I regard as the infamous memorandum from the Minister for Transport to the Cabinet public sector reform subcommittee. That is a very interesting description of a committee that is about destroying the public sector and not reforming it. In his two and a half page document one gets no articulation of any policy position by the Government and nothing that says, "This is the Government's policy position. We as a Government have all agreed to it. Therefore, I am throwing a challenge to my ministerial colleagues." Hon Eric Charlton says none of those things. The closest we get to a reform policy is contained in paragraph 2 which reads that reform only works if the tough bullet is bitten, reducing the number of employees in the public sector. That is the policy position. It is simply the reduction of the number of employees in the public sector, regardless of what they do, regardless of the quality of the job, regardless of how important the job is to the community of Western Australia, and regardless of whether it can be performed as adequately by the private sector. We have this extraordinary document by the Minister for Transport boasting about the reduction of public sector numbers and castigating his ministerial colleagues for not likewise having the reduction in numbers that he has achieved through Westrail, MetroBus, Main Roads, Fremantle Port Authority, the Department of Transport and Stateships. Those are the agencies to which he refers. The figures he provides indicate that from February 1993 to February 1995, there was a reduction in Westrail of 1 506 people; in MetroBus a reduction of 437; in Main Roads 213; in the Fremantle Port Authority 193; in the Department of Transport 37; and in Stateships 30. All up, that is a reduction of 2 416 people.

Points of Order

Mr COWAN: The member for Armadale is quoting from a document. I ask that she table that document for the duration of today's sitting when she has finished quoting from it.

The SPEAKER: Order! I do not think that was a point of order. However, it would be useful if the document remained on the Table of the House for the balance of the day's sitting. I am sure the member is aware that references to that document should be brief rather than her reading large excerpts from it. I am not suggesting she is doing that. However, I remind her not to do it. Would she prefer to table the paper at the end of her speech?

Mrs HALLAHAN: I have a number of notes on it and therefore will not be tabling this copy.

The SPEAKER: Order! If the member has written on that document and she regards those notes as personal, she is not required to table that paper.

Mrs HALLAHAN: That is the case.

The SPEAKER: The paper will not be tabled because of that explanation.

Mrs HALLAHAN: I have used this as a working paper. I have written on it, "What is the policy objective" and other matters. I appreciate your guidance, Mr Speaker, and will not quote from the document at length. The information contained in it is really very scanty. It is about reducing the public sector and contains no policy matter.

Debate Resumed

Mrs HALLAHAN: The document refers to the destruction of people's jobs and the destruction of services in Western Australia. It is about the exodus from the public sector of expertise that has been built up over decades. It represents heartache to many Western Australian families. It is not about efficiencies in the Public Service and it should be of great embarrassment to the Government. I was interested, therefore, in the point of order raised by the Deputy Premier. Maybe he is embarrassed by the document, and he should be.

Mr Cowan: I am not embarrassed at all.

Mrs HALLAHAN: In recent weeks I have been told by people throughout the public sector, in comments unlike any that have been made to me in the past two years, that there is an absolute hatred for the Court Government. Members opposite could respond to that by saying that people do not like change and they are feeling threatened. That is understandable. On the other hand, there must be something wrong with both the changes and the way they are being implemented for them to generate such strong feelings. It is an indictment of the Court Government and all its Ministers that, because people are being treated so badly they feel threatened and aggrieved, and they have reached the emotional point where the feeling they have for the Court Government borders on hatred. That is a very important commentary on the way the Court Government is managing the goal that it wants to achieve, even though there is no rationale for it. It does not care if the public sector can do the work. A growing body of evidence indicates that, when the work is tendered out, public servants have to suffer the indignity of teaching the successful private tenderers how to do the job. They then have to hand over their income earning positions to the private sector, which in many cases does not have the knowledge necessary to do the job even though it won the tender. It is a disgusting way to manage things. It is no wonder that people feel aggrieved.

Some of the interjections from the other side indicate either a lack of knowledge about what the Ministers are doing or a callous disregard for human beings who work in the public sector who have given, not always but in most cases, long and dedicated service. To the best of their ability they have served the State well. It is unforgivable, therefore, for them to be treated in such a cavalier way. I understand many people are feeling very unforgiving right now. That cannot be put down to the fact that we are human and human beings do not like change or that people do not like the present Government. That is nonsense because many public sector employees are middle income earners. They are the middle ground of Australia and they do not have a commitment to the Labor Opposition any more, I suspect, than they do to the Court Government. They are judging it on the basis of how they experience Administrations and their effect on them and their quality of life.

In Western Australia we are in very unfortunate historical times because of this absolute desecration of public services and the destruction, as I have indicated earlier, by one Minister alone of thousands of jobs. That is not an understatement. It is indicated in the Minister's memorandum to his ministerial colleagues.

What are we forgoing in this reduction of services? I travelled with the Select Committee on Heavy Transport to other States. The consistent evaluation by other States was that Transperth and Westrail in Western Australia were highly competitive. I commend my former ministerial colleagues for their leadership in government. I also commend those people in the public sector who met the challenge of changing times and the demand for efficiencies in the transport system, including freight and passenger services, and for having that recognised around this nation. Nationally, those agencies in this State have been regarded highly and there was some dismay, even among conservatives, about their destruction.

I will turn now to the tendering out of bus services. I understand that, when expressions of interest were invited for the services out of Armadale, there were three options: The first option was for service routes; the second was for the school bus services only; and the third option was for both service routes and school bus services. The general talk around Metrowest circles is that there is some real interest in the school bus services because they are lucrative. Their hours are contained and the carriage of passengers is guaranteed. The distances on some of the routes in the rural areas south of Armadale are long and the services required are more demanding on the provider. I wonder whether the details of the expressions of interest will be made public not only for the service routes, but also the school bus routes. How economic were the proposals that were submitted?

The Court Government was elected on the basis of openness and accountability. There has been an opportunity for providing information into some of the new privatising ventures in Western Australia which are proceeding on a very grand scale but the information has not been released. Surely a minimum requirement is that the information be readily available. A Government which is so committed, as is the Court Government, should not be reluctant to provide information. If the Government were confident about what it was doing it would accept any form of scrutiny, but that is not the case and the system is shrouded in secrecy.

I refer members to the ferry tender. Some people within Transperth circles were disappointed because it did not win that tender. I understand that the officers said they would wait for the briefing to find out why the Transperth tender was not successful in the hope that the information would assist them to frame the Transperth tender for the bus services to be tendered. They thought it would put them in a stronger position to compete more effectively with the other tenderers. Lo and behold, the briefing on the ferry tender told them nothing. That is another example of the Court Government withholding information that would facilitate a growing awareness of how the tender process should be approached. That did not happen and the people concerned feel aggrieved by it.

It has been said before in this House that the Water Authority of Western Australia won tenders over the private sector. The contracts were completed within time and under budget. I thought its effort would have been rewarded, but it was not because the Water Authority officers were told they could not tender for any more work. Members can imagine how aggrieved they feel. It brings me back to the Court Government's agenda of not being open and accountable. It apparently has no policy except to push resources out of the public sector and to the benefit of the private sector, its support base.

It is obvious that the Labor Party has a strong and close relationship with the union movement. It was the party's base which became a political movement. To varying degrees that relationship has remained a vital and fundamental one; although over the years many labour organisations in various parts of the economy have not maintained their affiliation with the ALP. Nonetheless, the party's interest remains in the wellbeing of the economy for the benefit of the community and I mean that in the broadest possible sense. Members on this side of the House do not have any difficulty with the comments that are thrown at them about their union connections. It would be denying reality to do otherwise, in the same way as it would be denying reality for the Liberal Party and, to a lesser degree, the National Party to say that their support base is not people in business. If a government member said that, it would indicate that he or she was not being rational or honest. What we are seeing is a transfer of investment, ownership and expertise which has built up over decades, to the support base of the Liberal Party. It is a disgusting and destructive dynamic. The Liberal Party has no policy base except its desire to look after its supporters regardless of whether they can do the job or not.

I turn now to an interesting aspect of Main Roads Western Australia. Supalux Paint Company Pty Ltd succeeded in gaining the white line marking contract for Main Roads, and it appears that the company does not have the equipment or expertise to do the job and has subcontracted out the work to somebody else. I am told that the job on the Eyre Highway is under way and has been the subject of considerable discussion within Main

Roads. Apparently the equipment being used - a white mouse - is inferior for the job and can do only one line at a time. I have been told that the white mouse has broken down and was out of action for several hours. The equipment used by Main Roads I am told, is known as a road liner. Currently the work progressing on the Eyre Highway has a Main Roads officer designated to it to supervise the subcontractor. Some people were under the impression that the officer would visit the area once a week to monitor the quality of the work and then return to Perth to his normal duties. However, that is not the case and that officer has been sent to supervise the subcontractor on a full time basis. Where are the efficiencies in that? I have been told that he will be taken off that job as soon as he instructs the district engineer in the standard of the work required and what he must look for to make sure that the subcontractor is doing the job efficiently. It is an extraordinarily expensive business which the Court Government has embarked upon simply to provide opportunities to the private sector in this State.

I have been advised that the subcontractor is paid \$25 an hour and must pay for his travelling expenses, accommodation, meals, superannuation and holidays. Supalux treats its subcontractors who reside on the other side of the border in a more generous way and flies them in and out of Adelaide. It appears to me that Western Australian workers, whether they be from the public sector as it diminishes in size or the private sector, are being treated in a discriminatory and mean way by the Court Government and its private sector friends. Much has been said about State Print. The Minister for Labour Relations said the people were not under stress, the change had been handled well and everything was fine. I indicated last week that a number of staff at State Print had suffered from stress related illnesses. That information was gained in a survey undertaken by their professional association. It will be interesting for the Premier to hear some further information I received from another source about the private sector company which took over State Print. This should be on the record, and I ask the Premier to respond to it because it is sometimes difficult to know what is rumour and what is fact. I ask the Premier to indicate the facts of this matter when he concludes the Address-in-Reply debate. I understand that staff of the private company which took over State Print are quietly telling people it has gained assets with an approximate value of \$7m for which it paid about \$3.5m. They say it has been a super bonus to the company from the Court Government. One wonders how close that company is to the Court Government. I am also advised that of that \$3.5m, only \$1m has gone into State Treasury. Where are the benefits to this Government and to the people of Western Australia? Whatever else it does, this Government is supposed to represent Western Australians. From that whole exercise and the transfer of valuable assets to a private company, the net gain to the public purse is \$1m, and it is alleged that the State of Western Australia has lost approximately \$3.5m. If the Court Government thinks that is smart financial dealing on behalf of this community, it will find more and more criticism heaped on its head. It must change its ways, develop a sense of propriety and dignity about the way in which it conducts these matters, and not denude the whole public infrastructure of this State in its blatant and overt transfer of resources to its friends in the private sector.

I now refer to the increased fuel levy by which everybody pays an additional 4¢ a litre for their petrol. I note that the people purchasing diesel fuel, even if it is for a four-wheel drive leisure vehicle, will pay no extra. The Premier appeared on the first edition of the Channel 9 television station new current affairs program. I was interviewed the previous Friday and that interview was not live to air, but the Premier's interview was. The Premier said that the Commissioner of Main Roads had written indicating that he did not have the additional funds from the Commonwealth Grants Commission, allocated by the commission in recognition of road maintenance and road related revenues. I make it clear that the letter from the Commissioner of Main Roads, dated 30 January, absolutely confirms the point the Opposition and I made; that is, the allocation never went to Main Roads Western Australia. Bearing in mind that the Premier is also Treasurer of this State, one expects him to speak on behalf of his own portfolio, and not ask the head of another agency to give him a spurious letter to read to the public of Western Australia. At that point my regard for the Premier of Western Australia fell through the floor. I do not think he will ever recover any position of respect in my eyes as a result of that action.

Mr Shave: You must get on well together, because he holds you in the same regard.

Mrs HALLAHAN: I do not mind how he holds me. On the basis of his dishonesty and misleading people, I have seriously reconsidered my view of the Premier of this State. He set out on a very smart game to try to mislead people. Members opposite who interject should reflect for a moment on why their leader, who, as Treasurer, has the whole of Treasury and all the information from the Commonwealth Grants Commission at his disposal, should become involved in a game that leads him to ask the head of a government department to provide a letter that will let him off the hook in a public sense. However, that does not in any way absolve the Premier from dealing with this situation accurately. Western Australia received more than \$63.5m as a result of the road maintenance factor, and the State Government did not spend it on road maintenance.

Mr Cowan: You show me where it is provided anywhere in the budget.

Mrs HALLAHAN: I have the letter from the Commonwealth Grants Commission setting it out.

Mr Cowan: What is the difference between the funding the previous year and the funding this year? There was no additional \$63.5m.

Mrs HALLAHAN: Do not be silly.

Mr Cowan: I am not being silly; you cannot add up.

Mrs HALLAHAN: If road maintenance had not been taken into account, the grant would have been \$63.5m less. The Deputy Premier is being dishonest, just as his leader is.

Mr Cowan: That is absolute nonsense.

Mrs HALLAHAN: Perhaps the whole team opposite is dishonest. The Deputy Premier, sadly, is trying to defend his leader's position when he should be dealing with the accuracy of the information.

[The member's time expired.]

MR SHAVE (Melville) [12.07 pm]: In this Address-in-Reply debate I shall bring to the attention of the Parliament a very serious matter relating to one of my constituents. I was very concerned last week to read an article in *The West Australian* regarding Mrs Sue Howell, who lives in Willagee in my electorate. This 47 year old lady has become a political prisoner in Western Australia. Unfortunately, she had to spend four days of a six day sentence in Bandyup Women's Prison because of a \$20 fine. This unfortunate occurrence resulted from Mrs Howell's failure to vote in the 1993 state election. Her fine has ballooned to \$165, and she now faces greater penalties because she intends to drive her motor vehicle even though she will lose her licence under the fine default laws.

This brings me to the subject of democracy in Western Australia and issues in which the Labor Party appears to be rather interested, with regard to electoral reform. In my view compulsory voting and putting people into prison if they do not vote are a blatant disregard for democracy in this country. Australia remains only one of five countries in which people are compelled to vote and are incarcerated if they do not vote. The other countries to which this applies are Belgium, Greece, Luxembourg and Venezuela. The member for Whitford may be interested to know that since its introduction, compulsory voting has had a number of unexpected outcomes. For example, it has tended to produce a situation where most electorates are safe for one party or the other. That is unfortunate because it tends to lead to political parties focusing their attention on a few so-called marginal seats, the theory being that these big political parties have safe margins in the so-called safe seats because they are assured of a vote from their committed followers so they must seek votes from the swinging voters in a number of marginal seats. That leads to the situation where electors generally in Australia and particularly in Western Australia are not serviced properly by their local members. Some of the members who sit in these safe seats are good members, but many of them have massive majorities and as a consequence their electors suffer because there is no need for those members to be competitive.

In the nearly 50 years since compulsory voting was introduced, the original reasons for its introduction have become less relevant. While the issues of individual freedom and liberty have been central to any debate about the position of government within our society, the issue has become blurred. From an international perspective, it could be argued that compulsory voting is a breach of not only liberal principles but also the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights which the Australian Labor Party professes to uphold. Article 25b of that covenant provides that "Every citizen shall have the right and opportunity to vote at genuine periodic elections which shall be by universal and equal suffrage and shall be held by secret ballot, guaranteeing the free expression of the will of the electors". To compel people to vote is hardly a guarantee of free expression.

Mr Brown: People are not compelled to vote.

Mr SHAVE: The Labor Party uses the fallacious argument that people are not compelled to vote, but it does not tell people that they are compelled to get their name marked off on the roll or they will be incarcerated, as is the case with Mrs Howell.

Mr Bloffwitch: If people do not have to vote, why make it compulsory?

Mr SHAVE: Absolutely. Mrs Howell states that the reason she has not been enrolled for 26 years is that, "I would vote if I could find an honest politician but usually the candidates are not worth it."

Mrs Henderson: Was she one of your constituents?

Mr SHAVE: Yes, and I believe it is noble of me to mention that because it gives members opposite the opportunity to reflect on what some people in their electorates say about what they have seen with WA Inc over the past few years. If Mrs Howell thinks her local member is a bit of a blob, I would love to know what people in Labor electorates think about their members.

The newly emerging democracies in Eastern Europe - with a lot of Communists and some of the types of people who support members opposite - and South Africa have decided to adopt voluntary voting in order to respect the rights of the individual. The Labor Party has always suggested that it supports the people of Eastern Europe and their right to freedom, so why not support voluntary voting?

Mr Bloffwitch: Because it does not suit it.

Mr SHAVE: No. It does not suit the Labor Party for political reasons; therefore, it would allow a person like Mrs Howell to be incarcerated. This lady is very worried. I spoke to her recently and made the point to her that I would take up her case in the Parliament, and that is what I am doing today. Mrs Howell is reported in the article as follows -

"I am expecting any day now to lose my licence and I will get banned for life because I will refuse to pay any fines," . . .

Jail was like a country club but losing her licence would be difficult.

It seems to me that when we get to the point in a democratic society where we are incarcerating people, when we all know that the gaols were built not for innocent, conscientious objectors, we must look at the issue of voluntary voting. In recent years the Labor Party could have easily introduced a Bill into this Parliament to support the principle of voluntary voting but it chose not to do so. Members on this side of the House would undoubtedly support that concept. I urge members opposite to talk to their parliamentary leader, Mr "Swan Brewery" McGinty, and get his support for this issue because it is affecting decent people on pensions, and single mothers - people whom members opposite purport to represent. Western Australia's laws on compulsory voting remove the right of an individual not to vote. These people have commitments on Saturday mornings. They have a family to look after and do not want to vote. Why in a democracy must we force these people to vote?

Mr Riebeling: You do not want them to vote.

Mr SHAVE: I believe in giving everyone the right to vote and it would please me if everyone who had the right to vote chose to do so, but I am not in the business of putting people in gaol and persecuting them because they do not wish to vote. The Australian Electoral Commissioner, Mr Barry Young, when questioned about this issue, said that he was not sure why 75 per cent of the people gaoled for not voting were from Western Australia and denied that this State had stricter enforcement. He said also that 41 Australians were gaoled for not voting in the 1993 federal election, and 31 of those decent human beings who chose not to vote were from Western Australia. Does the member for Ashburton support the principle of putting people in gaol for not voting?

Mr Riebeling: It is not a principle. It is an obligation of citizens to vote.

Mr SHAVE: It is amazing how the member's democratic principles go out the window when it does not suit him.

Mr Thomas: It is appropriate that Easter is approaching because this seems to me like a resurrection.

Mr SHAVE: I thought the member for Cockburn said something else. People should be encouraged to exercise their political rights. The question is whether they should be forced to do so under threat of a fine or gaol. The recent Senate committee which is investigating the proposed political advertising ban was told by Labor pollster and adviser Rod Cameron that compulsory voting had a harmful effect on our political system. This is a Labor man who is very much in touch with the way people think, and with polling. Mr Cameron said -

If you did not have compulsory voting . . . you would have a higher level of political debate and political advertising generally because you could actually talk policy.

This is a comment by a Labor pollster and adviser. Let us look at the international experience.

Mr Riebeling: Let us look at the United States.

Mr SHAVE: I am happy to do that. It is interesting for members to know that in most democratic countries which have voluntary voting, over 75 per cent of eligible electors vote in national elections.

Mr Brown: Is that in the United States?

Mr SHAVE: I will provide the figures. In Holland, which changed from compulsory to non-compulsory voting in 1970, the turnout averages 84 per cent. In Britain the turnout at the elections averages more than 76 per cent. Voluntary voting tends to result in fewer seats being taken for granted, and more motivated and active party membership. I spoke about that yesterday.

In Austria, which has non-compulsory voting, the turnout is 94 per cent. In Italy it is 92 per cent; Iceland, 90 per cent; New Zealand, 90 per cent; Germany, 87 per cent; Sweden, 85 per cent; Denmark, 85 per cent; and Portugal, 83 per cent. It is very clear that the Australian Labor Party has a misconception about people. It believes that people will not vote in Australia because they are apathetic. It talks about local councils. We cannot draw a parallel between local council and state elections. It is nonsense. One is an election of the Government and the other an election of the local council, so it is ridiculous to compare the two.

Mr Leahy: How do they compare with overseas countries? How do the numbers that go to local government and the federal elections in England compare?

Mr SHAVE: Perhaps because of the non-compulsory nature of the situation, political parties get off their bottoms and address the issues.

Mr Leahy: Are you telling me that you want to politicise the situation and bring party politics into local government?

Mr SHAVE: No.

Mr Leahy: That is why they turned out in England.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Order!

Mr SHAVE: I ask the member for Rockingham a question: How can I bring party politics into local government when it is already there? In the 1989 election, a Labor candidate - Mrs Barton, the Mayor of Melville - stood against the member for Applecross. In the last state election the sitting mayor tried to unseat me in Melville. She was a Labor candidate; the Australian Labor Party probably funded her. She had a how-to-vote card in the upper House which ran through three candidates and back to the ALP -

Mr M. Barnett: If it were not for the member for Melville, politics would not have entered the argument.

Mr SHAVE: Absolutely. She wanted to get rid of me.

Several members interjected.

Mr Thomas: She resigned from the ALP.

Mr SHAVE: What about her husband?

Mr Thomas: She stood against you as an Independent.

Mr SHAVE: Did her husband resign or is he still a card carrier? The member knows about the wife. The Opposition is pretty good on families, and I expect the member to know about the husband if the wife resigned.

Several members interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr Day): Order! The member for Melville has the call. It is extremely difficult for the Hansard reporter with more than five conversations going on in different directions.

Mr SHAVE: I appreciate your protection against the rabble on the other side, Mr Acting Speaker.

Ms Warnock: You are such a delicate flower.

Mr SHAVE: My friends think so; the member for Perth may not.

Several members interjected.

Mr SHAVE: It is interesting to note that only 4 per cent of eligible British people did not vote in the 1979, 1983 and 1987 elections. Perhaps those people had a family grievance on the Saturday morning and did not feel compelled - just as Mrs Howell did not - to go to the polls, and they did not vote. Does the member for Whitford believe that the 4 per cent should be thrown into gaol - just as my constituent was thrown into gaol? Anyone here would consider that to be a violation of democracy.

Mr Johnson: That should not have occurred. However, local authorities in England are like mini State Parliaments. They deal with education, public housing, health and welfare and are not representative of the political situation we have here. Local authorities in Western Australia should not be political. I will tell you who controls the ticket for the City of Wanneroo; it is Jim McKiernan -

Several members interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Order! The member for Melville has the call. The member for Whitford will have an opportunity to make a speech later, if he wishes.

Mr SHAVE: Let us consider the intellectual argument. It is interesting to note why and when compulsory voting was introduced. Compulsory voting for federal elections was introduced in 1924. At that time Australians were promised that by compelling people to vote we were likely to arouse in them an intelligent interest in politics and give them a political knowledge that they did not then possess. More than 65 years later we are entitled to ask whether these hopes have been realised. Many people do not think that the initial intent has been fulfilled. It is said that compulsion may actually represent an

admission of failure to achieve democratic government. Everyone should care about national elections, but forcing people to vote cannot make them care. We cannot make people care by putting them in gaol or by forcing them to vote. People must understand the political reasons why they should vote. As in most cases, education and encouragement are preferable to compulsion. At the last federal election almost half a million people in this country risked a fine and a possible gaol sentence by not turning out to the polling booth. This indicates clearly that we have not engendered respect for the right to vote by making it such an irksome obligation or responsibility.

Voluntary voting would improve participation in the democratic process and it would inevitably change the style of campaigning. We would see people in marginal or safe seats campaigning enthusiastically. Just look at the upper House, where we need to get the numbers on the ticket. We would have people like the member for Rockingham knocking on doors every weekend, signing up members, and trying to get people to understand what the ALP stands for. Of course that would be difficult, because members opposite do not understand that themselves.

Professor Joan Rydon argues that compulsory voting tends to exaggerate the worst features of mass democracy by strengthening the role of the bigger political parties and allowing them to ignore voters in other cities, just to concentrate on selected marginal electorates. Professor Rydon says that under these conditions parties have little interest in serious explanation of the issues at stake or of the differences in their policies.

We get back to my initial question of why the Australian Labor Party has gone to the supreme court of this country on the issue of one-vote-one-value yet has ignored the fundamental rights and democracy of people with regard to voluntary voting. Given all the argument I have heard over the past five years, why have members opposite said, "We understand it is a person's right to decide whether to get a driver's licence, whether he can afford to go on a trip, or whether to vote"? It is dinosaur stuff to tell people that they will be put in gaol if they do not vote.

Mr Marlborough: We do not say that.

Mr SHAVE: What does the member say?

Mr Marlborough: If you do not turn up to the polling booth.

Mr SHAVE: Is that not an interesting diversion? Is the member saying, "If you don't turn up to the polling booth, you will go to gaol"?

Mr Marlborough: Yes, I am. I am in a very comfortable team. It is also supported by your federal colleagues. They support compulsory voting.

Mr SHAVE: Not so.

Mr Marlborough: They do absolutely.

Mr SHAVE: On the two occasions when this issue was raised by the South Australian division of the Liberal Party at our federal convention, it was endorsed as party policy to introduce non-compulsory voting. When we are elected to government federally in 12 months' time - if Keating can hold out that long - it will become part of our policy in Parliament. The member for Peel is absolutely wrong, and he will see that.

Mr Marlborough: You confuse people being forced to vote and their not turning up at a polling booth. They are two entirely different issues.

Mr SHAVE: What a fallacious argument! It is even worse to say to a person, "If you don't turn up to the polling booth, I will fling you into gaol." That is just like what happened to Mrs Howell, who was thrown into gaol because she would not go to the polling booth.

Mr Leahy: How many of the 500 000 people who did not vote were taken to court?

Mr SHAVE: Does that make it better? This innocent woman is thrown into gaol - incarcerated with hardened criminals. If it were the brother of the member for Northern Rivers, would that make it any better? Of course it would not. The hypocrisy of those on

the other side! They sit there and say, "We don't support harsher penalties for this; we don't support harsher penalties for that; but by the way, we believe if a person does not turn up to a polling booth that person should be thrown into gaol." How outrageous these people are.

Mr Marlborough: We also believe if people do not wear helmets - legislation supported by government members - or do not pay fines, they should be put in gaol. You have just passed a law which states that they lose their licence if they do not pay a fine.

Several members interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER: It is extremely difficult for the Hansard reporter to record the debate. I remind the member for Melville to direct his remarks through the Chair.

Mr SHAVE: This is a matter of conscience. This is not a matter of a lady not wearing a bike helmet having a serious injury and costing the State millions of dollars.

Several members interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Order! If interjections continue to flow at the rate and volume that they have, I will be forced to call some of the members on my left formally to order.

Mr SHAVE: This is not an issue where the State and taxpayers are paying hundreds of thousands of dollars to look after someone who is in hospital for the rest of his life as a result of an accident while not wearing a bike helmet. This is about conscience. The hypocrites on the other side of the House say that they are the political conscience of this Parliament; yet they have no conscience.

Mr Riebeling: You have no conscience.

Mr SHAVE: I agree that the member for Ashburton has no conscience. If he had any conscience at all, he would not sanction a person, who on conscientious grounds decides not to vote, being thrown into gaol. I am absolutely certain that this issue will not go away. The Australian Labor Party should address the issue in the near future because it will not go away. The Labor Party has talked about one-vote-one-value and has gone to the High Court on that issue. This issue is just as important.

DR HAMES (Dianella) [12.37 pm]: I want to speak about the Gogo fish. What is a Gogo fish, members might ask. It is a *McNamaraspis kaprios*. Members are probably still no better off. In my electorate in Dianella recently the Premier and the Minister for the Arts launched a submission for public comment about the establishment of a fossil emblem for Western Australia. In this State we have a floral emblem, the kangaroo paw, and two faunal emblems, the numbat and the black swan; but, as with every other State in Australia, we do not have a fossil emblem.

The idea of having a fossil emblem in Western Australia first came from one of the parents connected with the school who was in one of the American States. While there, she found that one of the schools had adopted a fossil emblem as a result of one of the primary schools doing research, approaching the Government and convincing it that the State should have a fossil emblem. The Sutherland Primary School in Dianella decided it would do the same. It did much research on the fossils that had been found in Western Australia. The school voted that the Gogo fish should be adopted as the State fossil emblem. It is the only three-dimensional fossil found anywhere in the world. Most are either preserved in rock or crushed with only their outlines being present. Because the Gogo fish settled into soft mud in areas of the north west of the State, near Gogo station - from which it gets its name - the fossil was able to be preserved three dimensionally in that medium.

The Gogo fish has become famous throughout the world for that reason. It was discovered by Dr John Long of the Western Australian Museum who named the fish after Dr McNamara a fellow worker at that museum. It is called the *McNamaraspis Kaprios*. As part of the process of developing the submission to the State Government the Sutherland Primary School incorporated all the research and work involved through the school curricula in social studies, language, art, reading, research and history. The Gogo

fish won the vote within the school with a 90 per cent majority, and I organised for children from that school to make a presentation to Premier Court on the Gogo fish. Likewise, Hon Ross Lightfoot organised a similar presentation to Hon Peter Foss, Minister for Arts. That presentation has been supported by the State Government; hence, the recent release at the Sutherland Primary School of the submission on Gogo fish. Part of that presentation was a recital by Thomas Shaw, a student at the school. His story won second prize in the creative writing section of the WA science teachers' competition when he was in year 3. It is an excellent piece of work by this young student. It is called "Stephen The Finballer" -

Once upon a Devonian period there was a placoderm fish (a boy) six years old playing finball in his Dad's seayard, under the smiling sun and between the seaweed trees. His name was Stephen. He lived 380 million years ago on what is now Gogo Station.

Stephen joined the GFFL (Gogo Fish Finball League). He did skills with the occasional scratch match.

Once that year Stephen took such a good high mark that he jumped up and saw a tropical paradise and could breathe air.

He told all his mates, but they didn't believe him. He took three weeks off Gogo school and went to the tropical paradise and discovered the land. After the three weeks he went back to school and told his mates about the paradise. They still didn't believe him.

He died years later because of old age and fell to the muddy sea bottom. He was lucky because when he fell to the sea bottom the chemicals in the water and the soft muddy bottom made him a three dimensional fossil.

Millions of years later

Stephen heard a tap tap on the rock, it was Doctor John Long. Stephen was taken to the WA Museum where he was dipped in acid for three months by Doctor McNamara. He was plastered back together. Two months later he was put in a glass case in the WA Museum.

He was very valuable and precious because he was so old.

That story was received extremely well during the presentation. The children also sang a song they had composed on the Gogo fish. They have produced some car stickers which state, "Gogo our own fossil Sutherland Primary School". I have quite a few of these car stickers which I will hand out to members of Parliament, so they can support Sutherland Primary School in its quest for the Gogo fish to be named as fossil emblem of Western Australia. If they are successful Western Australia will be first state in Australia to have a fossil emblem.

The next item is law and order. I have held a number of street meetings in my electorate by sending out letters to local residents inviting them to such and such a corner to discuss issues that are relevant to them. As was the case before the election, the main issue is law and order. Residents raised four law and order issues as being of major concern. One is the continuing problem of juvenile crime. To some extent the Government has addressed that concern with the recent juvenile justice legislation that stops the revolving door syndrome. It makes parents, in particular, more responsible for the actions of their children, and it is more difficult for juveniles to get bail on their own recognisance. It determines that either a parent or a senior representative of a responsible organisation must take over those bail conditions. The next area of concern is the sentences that are being handed down by the courts. In many cases the laws are already in place for a reasonable level of sentencing of people who have committed certain crimes. One thing that frustrates the police more than anything else is that after finding the people who have committed the crimes, and getting them into the courts, they see them being let off with relatively light sentences. That is not satisfactory. The courts are not reflecting adequately the views of the community on the seriousness of crimes being committed. In most cases the laws are in place to allow for more severe sentencing. I do not believe the

justice system is taking this into account. It is not sentencing people to the degree that most people in the community feel is reasonable.

Another issue that is of great concern to most people within the community is their ability to defend their property and, in particular, their vehicles. People believe that the criminal is being given more protection than the person who is being robbed. They believe that the criminal has all the rights, and the person who is trying to protect or defend his property has no rights. The law gives reasonable opportunity for people to defend their property provided they do not cause death or grievous bodily harm - that is, unless there is some reasonable chance of their having the same done to them. In reality and in practice most people feel intimidated by the law. They feel they do not have sufficient protection and that virtually anything could be used by the criminal against them. They feel that the law should be strengthened and clarified to give them greater rights in defending their property. They see their property as sacrosanct, that people who cross the threshold of their property without their permission deserve whatever they get and that they should not be held responsible for any serious injury that occurs to anyone who is on their property. I support that view.

Another issue raised was the time served in gaol when people are sentenced. We know from recent cases of previous members of Parliament who were sentenced to gaol that often they would serve only one-third of their total sentence and then be released on good behaviour. That is not appropriate. It is particularly inappropriate for more severe crimes such as crimes against the person. The maximum time off the sentence for good behaviour should be 20 per cent. For example, if someone is given a 20 year sentence for murder, the maximum time off for good behaviour should be four years. The sentence should not be reduced to one-half or even one-third, as often happens with people who are gaoled today. That would be welcomed by the people I speak to in these street meetings. They believe that people are put in gaol for crimes, often extremely serious crimes, but never serve what they regard as being reasonable sentences or pay a reasonable price for the crimes they commit.

I turn now to organised crime. We had several meetings with the Police Department. One of the points that was highlighted was the relationship between drugs and juvenile crime. It was pointed out that in many instances organised crime gangs recruit youngsters and get them hooked on drugs - often extremely expensive drugs - that are supplied by the organisation. In order for the juveniles to get sufficient money to feed their habit they are given lists of the goods they are required to steal. Often those items are vehicles; at other times they are items within a household such as televisions and video recorders. These children, often high on the drugs supplied by the criminals, go out with little fear and steal those items from the community and provide them to the organised criminals. In return they get either money or a further supply of drugs.

It is extremely important that the Government try to break this cycle. The problem facing the police is the restriction in the law preventing them from adequately investigating and policing organised crime gangs. One of the things that will address that problem is the pawnbrokers legislation which has already been passed by this Parliament. That to some extent will stop offenders from cashing in on stolen goods. The resources and powers of the police who are responsible for tracking these criminals must also be increased.

Two items which I hope will come to the Parliament later this year or at least before the end of this term of government are, firstly, a listening devices Bill to give police with the support of magistrates the power to tap telephones of people suspected of criminal activities; and, secondly, DNA typing which will allow the police to track down criminals far more effectively through technology that allows small samples of body parts to be typed and used to identify criminals.

Recent media reports have suggested that the fear of crime is greater than the reality, and that people are becoming scared of crime, when in reality the level of crime is no worse than before. I have not seen the figures relating to that, but from my own experience I admit that I doubt that is the case. Perhaps the level of reporting crime is not as good as it was. Many instances of crimes are not reported to police because of the perceived lack

of success of the police through the lack of police resources and numbers. I will relate a few incidents I have seen of a specific increase in crime, one of which is from my own surgery.

On many occasions elderly citizens have come into my office after being assaulted and having their handbags stolen. These occurrences have increased over the past four or five years. Elderly people walking back from the shops are having their handbags grabbed by individuals operating from vehicles which stop nearby; sometimes the car does not even stop. This is a devastating experience for those people. It makes them frightened to leave their homes or to go anywhere alone, even in the middle of the day. I have noticed also an increase in glue sniffing. Next to my surgery is a park and on any day of the week we can see up to half a dozen children sitting in the park sniffing glue. Some of those children have come to me as patients. While they are off the glue they are fine, normal children. I confronted a patient of mine whom I saw sniffing glue, and he was a totally different person. That is what solvent sniffing does: It changes the personality of the children and makes them extremely aggressive. That is how this young lad was. If I had taken one step further and tried to take the substance from him, I would have been in serious difficulty with three or four of those youths. They were only about 15 or 16, but most were taller than I am. In another recent incident a group of youths, who were recognised as a gang in the Morley area, incessantly needed the son of a patient of mine until he responded. When he did respond the bus driver ordered both him and the other student off the bus. Of course, the boy and the guy who was needling him hopped off the bus - and so did three or four of his mates. As soon as they were off the bus the boy no longer had any protection; he was on his own with three or four members of the gang who bashed him up. I saw him after that attack. Although he did not have any permanent injuries, he was severely bruised. He is quite a big lad, but only 14 years old.

These things are happening in our community every day. I spoke to the police about the members of the gang. The police had done their best for a long time to control them. However, when the student went to the police with his father and talked about pressing charges the police told them they would be happy to do so, but they could offer the student no protection from subsequent bashings. This student must ride on the bus every day with this gang. Naturally enough, his father offered him the choice, and he decided not to proceed because he did not want to get bashed up the next week. That is one of the things that is creeping into society which we must do our best to stop. How do we stop it? It is a difficult task. All sorts of issues must be addressed, such as family responsibilities, supports and structures.

It is difficult for us as a Government to do anything about that problem. One thing the Government should do, and is doing, is to increase the numbers in the Police Force. It is essential that the promised 800 officers are put in place during the coalition's term in government; that police doing desk work which can be done by secretaries and other civilian personnel are released from those duties; and that police are released from duties such as patrolling cricket and football matches. I have no problem with police doing that patrolling for extra remuneration in their own time, but that should not be one of the police duties in their routine hours of work. The Government must also increase significantly the resources that are available to police, particularly in modern technology, to allow them to compete reasonably with the criminals who in most instances have large amounts of money. The police will never be able to keep up, or catch up, if they are not given similar resources. The courts must be encouraged to impose reasonable sentences for crime. It must be made clear to people within the court system that the community will not tolerate the level of punishment being handed down at present. Although the people within that system are not directly answerable to the public, they have a responsibility to ensure they adequately reflect the views of citizens of Western Australia. Those citizens are saying loud and clear that they are not happy with the current level of sentencing, and they want the courts to go to the higher bracket of available penalties, not the lower bracket which, to most people, seems to be occurring.

The laws may need to be changed in some areas. The Government is addressing those

areas, but if members from either side of the House have further suggestions on laws that can be changed to improve the situation, they should make them clear. That should be done in a bipartisan fashion, not as a point scoring exercise. All of us should do our best to make sure we address the issue of crime in the community because at the next election it will still be a major item on which people judge for whom they vote. Perhaps that encourages both sides to do their best to make things harsher for the criminals. However, the last thing we need to do is get into a bidding war, as occurred in New South Wales, of who can pick the worst punishment. We need to tackle the problem in a sensible fashion, and we need to do it now, not in two years before the next election.

Sitting suspended from 1.00 to 2.00 pm

[Questions without notice taken.]

Dr HAMES: I will also address the provision of essential services in remote Aboriginal communities. A two volume report entitled "The Task Force on Aboriginal Social Justice" which task force was chaired by Mike Daube, made numerous recommendations on what needed to be done to address the problems of Aborigines in Western Australia. One of the recommendations was that a committee comprising chief executive officers of the major government departments in Western Australia be established to look at the 48 Aboriginal communities for which the State Government is traditionally responsible for maintaining essential services. That committee has been formed and I was pleased to be named as its chairman. The committee has been studying this issue since last year and will report in mid-June. The committee comprises the chief executive officers of Western Power, the Water Authority of Western Australia, Main Roads Western Australia, Homeswest, the Department of Aboriginal Affairs, the Health Department, the Education Department and Treasury.

Although it is not appropriate for me to go into any of the possible conclusions of that committee because that report will go to the Minister, nevertheless I will highlight some of the problems that are experienced by Aboriginal communities in these 48 areas. We are dealing specifically with those 48 communities because this State accepted responsibility for maintenance in those areas in an agreement with the Commonwealth Government. Many of those 48 communities were initially managed by missions operated by various religious denominations. When that practice ended many of these communities did not have adequate essential services. One of the major problems has been the source of funds and the manner in which those funds have been expended in looking after those communities. The Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and I visited communities such as Beagle Bay, Fitzroy, Kalumburu and Oombulgarri towards the end of last year. The standard of essential services provided at Oombulgarri was particularly poor. I will go into some detail on the very poor standard of those facilities.

The Aboriginal community in Oombulgarri is the second most northerly Aboriginal community in Western Australia; Kalumburu is further north. It has dirt streets and the houses that have been constructed for the Aboriginal community are the size of the offices of members of Parliament. The houses each have one room with a tin roof and concrete floor. All the family members, and that is normally 12 to 15 people, live in that one room. Adjacent to that room is a kitchen with a refrigerator and stove. The kitchen has no hot water or other normal services that one would expect in a kitchen. The hot water is in an outhouse. The sink in that outhouse is used to wash dishes, to bathe children and to wash clothes. The main room where everybody sleeps has no beds, so everybody must sleep on the floor. Scabies is a major problem. We saw one Aboriginal child who was about three to four months old with severe scabies. It is a very small mite that burrows under the skin and causes severe irritation and itching. This child also had secondary infections of the scabies mite with pussing sores, mostly around the feet, but also on other parts of the body. The mother had been looking after the child, taking it to the Oombulgarri health clinic and providing the proper treatment, but the child went back on to the floor with all the other members of the family and the family's dogs, which were often infected, and was reinfected. One of the problems this committee found in not only Oombulgarri, but also the other communities, was the lack of a coordinated provision of services, between the State Government and the Federal Government,

between the State Government and ATSIC and also between individual state government departments. There was a severe lack of knowledge about what had been provided and what was required. Those communities face many problems. Unfortunately, I have run out of time to go into further detail on those problems, but we need to come up with not just another report, another series of records, but guidelines and directions for those communities. We need a coordinated and cooperative approach not just within state government departments, but also between the State Government and ATSIC and the Commonwealth Government. My committee plans to proceed along those lines and produce a report in June that will lead the way in Western Australia and provide an excellent example to other States on the way in which these issues should be addressed.

MR CUNNINGHAM (Marangaroo) [2.40 pm]: My contribution to the Address-in-Reply will centre on the beatification of Blessed Mary MacKillop, which took place in Sydney early this year, and on education needs in my electorate. Blessed Mary MacKillop was in many ways, especially in the eyes of many Australians, the ultimate of what the Australian character was all about. Her pioneering spirit and understanding of the Australian way of life was indeed a shining example. Mary MacKillop was an underdog in every sense of the word. She was dedicated to the education of young people. It did not matter whether people were Catholic, non-Catholic or of no religion at all. As she often stated and demonstrated by her life, people must serve and care for all religious points of view. It did not matter what religious point of view. She was indeed unique in her tolerance for all and an inspiration for all Australians. I am proud that the dreams and aspirations of Mary MacKillop continue today, in not only my electorate but also throughout the length and breadth of Western Australia. I am proud also to have been taught by the Josephite sisters during my primary education at Hendra, a suburb of Brisbane.

Blessed Mary MacKillop, the first Australian on the road to sainthood, has had a special place in my electorate since November 1991 when the Ballajura Catholic community chose her as their patroness. The Mary MacKillop Catholic Community School, a primary school in Ballajura with 423 pupils, has as its founding principal one of the most dedicated people I have known in teaching for many years; namely, Sister Margaret O'Sullivan. Together with dedicated, loyal and hardworking lay staff, she is assisted by three other sisters of St Joseph - Sister Maureen Hodge, Sister Emilie Cattalini, and Sister Sharon O'Donohue. The Ballajura Catholic community have been keen promoters of Australia's first saint to be. Some 95 of them, with their enthusiastic and energetic parish priest, Father John Jegorow, travelled to Sydney for the beatification on 19 January.

Mary MacKillop stayed in Western Australia for only one night; that was in Albany on 3 April 1873 when she was on her way to Rome. However, her influence through her nuns has reached thousands of Western Australians. In a time when Governments did not contribute to Catholic education, the sisters of St Joseph, better known as the Josephites, brought education to the outback of Western Australia. In particular, they brought Christian education and wholesome value training to rural Western Australia. My colleague the member for Cockburn also is proud to have a Mary MacKillop primary school in Yangebup in his electorate.

Mr Marlborough interjected.

Mr CUNNINGHAM: The member for Peel is claiming the same school. Today the Federal Government helps with capital funding for non-government schools for which hundreds of parents are queuing for a place for their children. If Mother Mary were in Western Australia today she would prompt her local member of Parliament to explain what the Government was doing for those many parents whose children cannot attend independent schools because of little assistance from State Governments. Independent schools, ranging from Muslim, Seventh-Day Adventist, Presbyterian, Jewish, Baptist, Catholic to Anglican and many more are feeling the enormous financial burden. I will give an example.

In the current year the Catholic Education Office, which is responsible for the education of 16 per cent of the State's children, is faced with the impossible task of meeting 27

applications from around the State, seeking a total of \$14m, for school building funds with \$4.5m of federal funding promised to it. The Court Government has failed to fulfil its election promise to implement its policy of providing every child in the non-government sector with at least 25 per cent of the average government school recurrent cost. The Liberal Government promised also to review the base figure of the AGSR. Once again, it has yet to do so.

According to the parents and friends association, the 1995 figure for educating a child is \$4 500 in a government primary school and \$7 000 in a government high school. The State Government is providing only a paltry 17 per cent - one-seventh of the recurrent cost for each child in the non-government sector. That works out to be \$762 for each primary child and \$1 242 for each secondary child. Although this Government continues the initiative of the Burke Labor Government to provide low interests loans to the non-government sector, it does not give any grants for buildings to that sector. The State Government is spending in the vicinity of \$90m on government school building projects. It is a well known fact that the non-government sector can build schools much less expensively than the Government because of the high degree of involvement and spirit of voluntary work and commitment from local communities. This sort of commitment inspired blessed Mary MacKillop. If the predicted increase in the number of parents hammering at the doors of non-government schools continues, the State Government will save money by making a much larger contribution to building programs by increasing its contribution to the non-government sector.

Mary MacKillop was best known for establishing a system of schooling for the poor and the lower classes at a time when the poor were considered not worth educating. She sent out her sisters in twos and threes to care for and teach the children of settlers, miners and farm workers. In the cities she established refuges for destitute women and children at a time when the welfare state was still unheard of. She would have related well to the average Australian today. Mary was a child of an immigrant family of Scottish parents. She knew intimately what poverty was. She came from a family who, not unlike many families of today, would have continuous difficulties and in which poverty was part of everyday life. The relationship of her parents was often strained. Her father, Alexander, was not the most reliable breadwinner. As the eldest child she supported her family by acting as a governess. Blessed Mary wrote, "My life as a child was one of sorrow. My home when we had one was a most unhappy one." For all his problems, her father was a learned man and instilled great wisdom in Mary, and, together with his wife, Flora, passed on a great love for family, country and church. Blessed Mary's love, kindness and compassion for all people, regardless of faith and racial background, was part of her fierce determination to befriend and, in return, she was befriended by people from all walks of life. She had a deep love for Australia as a nation, not just as a collection of colonies. She set an example for all Australians. She was Australian first and foremost. Blessed Mary MacKillop would have been proud to be involved in the communities of Balga, Girrawheen, Koondoola, Marangaroo and Mirrabooka because she was a real battler and, to us on this side of the House, she was a person with whom we can all identify.

Mr Marlborough interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Peel should not interject from out of his seat.

Mr CUNNINGHAM: One of her sayings was that we should never see a need without doing something about that need. Today her followers continue to achieve that ideal. At present, approximately 90 Sisters of St Joseph throughout Western Australia continue to work as Mary MacKillop would have done, teaching children, educating adults, directing parenting courses, acting as counsellors and simply caring for anyone in need. Mary MacKillop was a dreamer, but also she was a visionary. However, most importantly, she was a person of action. Hers was a down to earth, roll up your sleeves approach. She reached out to everyone alienated from family, from country or from church. I see in Blessed Mary MacKillop a great inspiration because she was not only a real battler but also a real person - someone to whom we can all relate. She was an educated woman who sought to do everything possible to serve the poor. If anyone could serve as a role

model it was her. Mary MacKillop, who fought and worked hard for the deprived and needy, left us a legacy of caring for many wonderful people through her "brown joeys", a teaching order of Josephite sisters who are so important to the Western Australia community. They are caring and talented and display a great loyalty to the poor and to the disadvantaged. Mary MacKillop's life has been judged on her capacity to inspire and to teach. She also inspired, ably and professionally, as I said earlier, loyalty to the disadvantaged and a commitment to the poor. Hers was a simple message to all of us in this Chamber. We must never ignore our commitment to the poor and underprivileged who live in our communities.

Blessed Mary would have been very proud of the work and commitment that has been achieved at the Girrawheen Senior High School in my electorate. The staff is extremely caring and professional. Girrawheen Senior High School staff are leading the State in many aspects. Their caring attitude has brought about many changes at the school. Under the leadership of principal Barrie Wells, the school has continued to flourish. Many exciting and innovative programs have been introduced at Girrawheen Senior High School over the past three years since Barrie Wells became principal. These programs have ensured that students have a place in society; they have reaped the rewards. Especially successful has been the hospitality and tourism catering course where students have successfully catered for a number of functions and are fast gaining a reputation for excellence.

Girrawheen Senior High School also is very proud of the fact that it now has 70 Aboriginal students. Numbers have been increasing and the school's relationship with the Aboriginal community is excellent. The retention rate of Aboriginal students moving from year 10 to year 11 is the best of any school in the State. Girrawheen Senior High School has achieved another State first with the nomination of two teachers for the national excellence in teaching awards. On the weekend of 25 March, Helen Bryant and Gary Heldt were flown to Melbourne at the invitation of the Australian scholarship group where Helen subsequently took the most prestigious award from many national finalists. Helen obtained for Girrawheen Senior High School as first prize a PC Risc computer, an Acorn pocketbook computer for the person or persons who nominated her - the class of the off campus program in Girrawheen - and \$5 000 for her personal development. Approximately 2 000 teachers from around Australia were nominated for these awards. For Girrawheen Senior High School to have two teachers nominated is indeed a reflection of the calibre of the teaching staff.

Science teacher, Gary Heldt, has been at the school for approximately 12 years and has been involved in the peer support program and coaches the school swimming team. Gary encourages his students to discover science in a relaxed environment where they can become involved and measure their own achievement at a leisurely pace. Helen Bryant is a multipurpose teacher who is caring and dedicated in the off campus program now in its seventh year. This very special innovative teaching program has helped many of the students disaffected by mainstream education. Those refusing to attend a place of education, constantly in trouble with the police, coming from dysfunctional families, and with low educational and academic standards are all catered for by the off campus program.

The program is one in which I have been personally involved since its inception. The ethos of the off campus program is to teach students based on need rather than curriculum, thus giving many students the opportunity to redress those elements lacking in their education. Many students have extremely poor literacy and numeracy levels and it is a program which allows them eventually to take their rightful and lawful place in society. It is in this safe environment that students feel able to take educational and academic risks. They contribute to group discussions with honesty, learn communication skills which will see them through the hard knocks of life, are able to introduce themselves with pride to strangers, and generally learn some of the social skills lacking in their everyday life. In the past seven years I have brought them to this House at least once a year. They have been a credit to the school. Most of them today have goals in life which include training and employment.

Under the patient direction and guidance of Brother Olly Pickett to whom I referred in this place late last year, the students' learning skills in metalwork have been one of the features in the off campus program. In 1994, the products made were sold in the Girrawheen school community thus giving the students the experience of running a small cottage industry. Sadly, the worries of recurrent funding loomed with some very real concerns about the future of the program, for without the federal and state education funding bodies this program would not exist. It is criminal that a program such as the off campus program should have recurring funding problems. Where does its future lie? It is extremely uncertain. It is up to this Government to continue that funding.

Mrs Parker: Where does the funding come from?

Mr CUNNINGHAM: It gets half of its funding from the State and half from the Commonwealth. Commonwealth funding is okay. It is up to the State to match that funding.

Mrs Parker: What level of funding are they on?

Mr CUNNINGHAM: It is only paltry - about \$25 000 a year. This Government has matched the Federal Government's funding. This off campus program has done a lot for the young people. They are gaining worthwhile skills and they are able to stay off the streets and out of trouble. They have even organised themselves to give society something in return. Last year the students and teachers held a 40 hour famine during the school week, and they raised a significant sum of money for charity.

As a further initiative, Girrawheen Senior High School joined with Balga Senior High School late last year to investigate the possibility of establishing chaplains on the school campus. The local community came together with the local churches after a two year feasibility study, with support for the idea and a small initial grant from the churches' Education Commission. A chaplain was appointed to work part time at Balga Senior High School. The work of the chaplain was so well received, and was considered such a valuable part of the school community life, that Ms Alice Staats has now been appointed to Balga Senior High School on a full time basis. In 1993 the Girrawheen Senior High School also requested a chaplain, and in 1994 Mr Nick Gullaci commenced part time work at the school. It is hoped that with the continued support of the school communities, churches and local community, this position will become full time in 1996. The chaplains have been established and are maintained at a tremendous cost to the local churches, the schools and the community who jointly and voluntarily find the funding to maintain the chaplains. It is a truly amazing effort and those involved are to be commended for their dedication to this vital link in the welfare of our community.

Landsdale Farm School is a community initiated project in the suburb of Landsdale, which is 15 km from the GPO in Perth and 10 km from the coast. Although it was founded especially for the needs of children with disabilities, for which the place has been beautifully designed, it is open to and used by the whole community. Under the expert leadership of the principal, Tim Saggars, Landsdale Farm School has become a regional educational and recreational resource centre that many thousands of people from all sorts of groups visit on a regular basis. Primary school classes, play groups, day care centres, as well as senior citizens and groups of people with disabilities comprise the main users. Landsdale Farm School is under the Education Department and is classified as a class 4 education support branch school, even though it has no enrolled students. It is a statewide resource for all the education support branch schools and units throughout Western Australia. City groups visit regularly on a day basis, while country groups usually stay for a longer period and camp in the excellent residential complex that has a 50 bed capacity.

A new and significant development at Landsdale Farm School has been the opening of a conservation park on the reserve next door to the farm. A section of the reserve has been developed as a conservation park under the authority of the City of Wanneroo, in which the land is vested. Last year more than 700 metres of wheelchair accessible walkway was placed through the bushland, and this has enabled all groups visiting the farm to enjoy the bush while taking a recreational or educational walk through the reserve. This

year the use of the farm and conservation park continues to grow, and further developments and improvements are being made in the form of more pathways and security fencing. All the money for these developments comes from self-help community support raised through Landsdale Farm School Inc. The facilities at the school are used every weekend and many week nights by community groups, such as church groups, girl guides and brownies. Landsdale Farm School is a product of the previous Dowding Labor Government. It is imperative that it be continued by the present State Government, once again through funding. It is so important, that the staff and supporters of Landsdale Farm School must be further encouraged and assisted by everyone concerned with our social and community wellbeing.

In conclusion, I place on the record my disappointment with this Liberal Government. Twelve months ago in this House I raised my special concern about the urgent need for the installation of traffic treatments at the intersection of Templeton Crescent and Marangaroo Drive, Girrawheen. This intersection is the scene of at least two or three accidents every week - not every month.

Mr Omodei: Have you taken it up with your local council?

Mr CUNNINGHAM: I have taken it up with numerous people, not only the local council but also Main Roads. It must be one of the most dangerous intersections in the metropolitan area, and yet this Government has failed to act. I urge the Government to act quickly to install traffic treatments at this intersection before a much more tragic accident occurs.

Amendment to Motion

Mr CUNNINGHAM: I move -

That the following words be added to the motion -

but we regret to inform Your Excellency that the Government has failed to implement its pre-election commitment to guarantee appropriate accommodation options for people with disabilities. Further we advise Your Excellency that the House calls on the Government to act in accordance with its responsibilities as agreed with the Commonwealth and immediately allocate funding for this priority.

DR WATSON (Kenwick) [3.09 pm]: I second the amendment and in my contribution to this debate I indicate that members on this side of the House hope to reflect the concerns of parents and carers, and the concerns of the people themselves, as well as their hopes, aspirations and achievements. The welcome home campaign committee has so far done a sterling and tremendous job in bringing to the people of Western Australia the stories of how families have managed over the years to care for someone with severe or profound disability or, indeed, perhaps of less severe disability.

The Minister and I attended a meeting that the campaign committee organised in South Perth on 21 March. It was the first such meeting in Australia. It was brought to our notice that there are perhaps 10 000 people in crisis in Australia. Certainly in Western Australia we know that 400 people are in crisis and need accommodation yesterday - and that is just the people with a developmental disability. This campaign has focused on them. As well, people with physical disabilities, with acquired brain damage, and with psychiatric disabilities are in crisis. We know from the work done by the campaign committee that urgent accommodation must be sought for 400 people, and that plans must be put in place to prevent a similar crisis occurring next year and the year after.

I have given a public commitment, and I have spoken to the Minister for Disability Services, that the Opposition would rather work with the Government to resolve this community problem. We do not want to play politics because the only people who will be hurt as a result will be the people with the disability and their carers. However, I want to make points in this debate in this House; that is, that it was most disappointing not to hear the Premier give a commitment today to the number of people who would be accommodated, or a commitment to provide a certain number of dollars that would alleviate the crisis as it exists. I shall return to that because both the Minister and the

Premier have indicated that they will not be able to meet their commitment without funding support from the Commonwealth Government.

It was this Minister for Disability Services who in June 1993 completed negotiations for the Commonwealth-State Disability Agreement. He signed the agreement. Over four years the Commonwealth will have contributed \$75m to the transition period - the transition period in which the State has agreed to assume responsibility for accommodation support and related services. They include respite care and services, recreation and leisure services, and those sorts of things that will alleviate the great pressures and strains on individual families. The last thing we should encourage here is a federal-state stoush. We know the Premier's proclivity to that end. As I said before, if the Opposition and the Government cannot work together and the Government will not assume its agreed responsibility in relation to the Commonwealth, the only people who will be hurt will be those with the disability and their carers.

The campaign committee has encouraged people to tell their stories, and many people have been able to contact their members of Parliament. They have been urged to invite members of Parliament to their homes to see how people are cared for, and the physical and emotional stress suffered by different family members. I congratulate *The West Australian* for the stories it has published about different families and their needs. As shadow Minister for Disability Services I have listened to a great number of people. I refer to two or three of them now, particularly William Booth, the President of the In-home Support Group based in Armadale. The group's objective is home ownership for adults with disabilities. For years Bill has been an advocate for his adult daughter. These people are not getting any younger. Certainly Bill and his wife are not getting any younger, and the people with disabilities are living longer.

Today at the protest I saw a woman who is well into her eighties. She was with her daughter who is perhaps in her late fifties, and is in a wheelchair. The thing that motivates people in this campaign, above all, is the concern about what will happen to their child when they die or when they are unable to care for him or her. In his latest newsletter in March, Bill states -

I cannot understand why they are reluctant to adequately fund SUPPORT SERVICES, without which most disabled people cannot survive in community living.

It is a state responsibility -

THERE IS NO SHORTAGE OF MONEY! Banks & big business are making record profits, & the spinoff results in unexpected additional income for the government.

This was \$638m last year, yet none of that has gone into those sorts of services. He quotes the Minister for Resources Development who had forecast the biggest boom in Western Australia since the 1960s and said that the new projects the Government has set in place would inject \$5b to the economy with another \$10b coming on line. Bill says that people with disabilities and their worn out families want and expect a piece of the action or at least a slice of the pie. Members on both sides of the House will agree with that sentiment but it needs the Government, first, to keep the written guarantee that it gave before the election, and, second, to keep its side of the agreement with the Commonwealth Government to provide accommodation support services.

I pay tribute to Homeswest for the program it has implemented since October 1993. It had another set of programs prior to that, and it committed itself to the same ends. This Government committed itself in October 1993 to build 500 units over two years. As much brick and mortar can be bought as the Minister cares to sign off but it is no use without the support services that the Government must provide through the Disability Services budget.

Another old woman outside today has been caring for her head-injured son for 24 years. A man told me he has had six days free of his daughter in 15 years. The pressures on carers are amazing. Most of us find it difficult to imagine how we would cope in those

circumstances. Last week the Australian Bureau of Statistics released a document that examined the roles and responsibilities of carers of people with disabilities, and aged persons, throughout Australia during 1993. A number of significant facts have been published, facts that the Government will not be able to ignore, facts that I hope the media will be able to publicise so that these voices are heard from a different direction. For instance, over half a million people in Australia who have a handicap live in households where they do not receive enough help to meet their needs. One and a half million people are caring for persons in the same household and just over 6 per cent provided care for more than one person. Another woman to whom I spoke today, herself disabled, cares for her husband who has a chronic illness and a son with enormously challenging behaviours. Most of the carers of children who need care, irrespective of whether they are young or adult children with a disability, are women. Ninety-four per cent of the principal carers of children are women and only 28 per cent of them have any paid work. In fact, an enormous number earn an income of less than \$200 a week. Being a carer restricts their income and can plunge them into poverty, besides having a dramatic impact on their health and access to leisure and enjoyment. People miss their sleep, their friends and their lives, and they dedicate the life they have to their son or daughter. When the parents die, very often that responsibility falls on to a sibling. The burden of carers is something we cannot ignore.

In Western Australia, according to Disability Services Commission figures, 48 200 people receive care through informal systems; that is, from government, non-government agencies or commercial sources. Seventy-four per cent, or 127 000, receive it through family care - that is, parents, brothers, sisters, in-laws and children - and 10 per cent, or 28 700, receive no help at all. We estimate that the money that goes into the Disability Services Commission budget, counting that from the home and community care program, Commonwealth Government, assets of the Disability Services Commission and the Lotteries Commission, totals about \$200m. That goes to 16 per cent of the people who need care, leaving roughly 80 per cent of people without it. This informal network of care is saving the Government up to \$1b. It is a crude estimate but it is one that I could make very quickly with the information published by the Disability Services Commission.

I repeat that the State Government has this responsibility. It signed the agreement with the Commonwealth. The Commonwealth is responsible for employment services; the State for accommodation. One of the things that shocked people last week was the revelation that at the end of 1994 more than \$3.7m of federal funds, 77 per cent of the allocation for that year, was sitting unused in a state government trust fund. Members will remember that last year I had access to a Cabinet memorandum signed by the Minister. At the time of the Estimates Committee debate - it was broadcast on the radio - I said that thousands of disabled people would be denied a range of services, including appropriate accommodation, respite care and therapy. The Minister dismissed the claim and said that the shortfall was due to a hold-up in federal government funds.

Mr Minson: It is no good reading from your own paper. Mr McGinty wrote it for you.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order! I ask both the Minister and the member for Thornlie to come to order.

Dr WATSON: I told the Minister that I wanted to work with him. That is on the public record.

Mr Minson: You are going about it in a funny way.

Dr WATSON: Only when the people came up here to lobby us, to make their plight known about the plans at the Brand Centre, did it come to light that the money was still unused and that the Government decided that it would have to spend the money that was there, providing a new allocation of funding.

Members on this side of the House and the parents of children with disabilities are concerned about the planned privatisation of Disability Services Commission hostels and

group homes. I was distressed to hear the Minister's answers this afternoon in response to my question. On eight occasions the Minister started a sentence with the words, "I don't care".

Mr Minson: Oh, come on! That is ridiculous. You should finish the sentence. You are a joke.

Dr WATSON: The parents at the welcome home committee campaign meeting said that one of the things that really distressed them was that the Minister said that he did not care who was providing the services - but the parents do; the residents do.

Mr Minson: I did not say that. It is my job to provide services to as many people as possible. You are a joke.

Dr WATSON: I have received statements of concern from a group from the northern suburbs called Voices. It comprises young men and women who live in Disability Services Commission group houses and hostels and is chaired by Renee Savvy. That group says that staff are not available when they are needed. It wants more choices. Decisions are made without first contacting the group. It wants more group homes. These people are left without a voice and we must be advocates and provide a voice for those in our community who do not have one. The Minister thinks of everybody as an economic unit.

Mr Minson: No.

Dr WATSON: The Minister has no soul. He talks about how to maximise funds. That is what he is all about.

Mr McGinty: You have broken your promises and failed to provide money for accommodation.

Mr Minson: You had 10 years and did nothing. You lost \$1.2b.

The SPEAKER: Order! I ask the Leader of the Opposition to come to order.

Dr WATSON: It is repugnant for the Minister to say that the driving force of his efforts in relation to hostels is to find maximum value for the taxpayers' funds. People do not want to hear that; they want to know how their people will be properly cared for, with a standard of care that is the best in Australia. From the information we have received about nursing homes, that cannot be done where profit is the motive. I want the Government to allocate a very high priority to this issue. If the Premier can announce a \$400m commitment to a road tunnel and \$13m to buy a building next to the R & I Bank building in Barrack Street only to knock it down, he can provide \$20m from the windfall profits to reallocation of priorities. I would like this amendment to go before the Governor. I know he is very committed to family support and that he would want to know about it.

[The member's time expired.]

MR TAYLOR (Kalgoorlie) [3.30 pm]: The Western Australian Welcome Home Committee has played a critical role in making sure that, hopefully, this issue has reached a turning point in the State's ability to deal with the great needs of those people with disabilities. The rally held outside Parliament this afternoon clearly indicated to the Government that those people are deadly serious. They will not take no for an answer. They are aware of my concerns on an issue which is probably one of the most important I am aware of in this State; that is, they are approaching it on a far too gentle basis. They are very gentle people and when it comes to knowing how to deal with governments, especially how to get their way with this hard-headed government, they must be absolutely bloody-minded about it. If I were them, from now on I would make certain that everywhere this Minister or the Premier goes, be it any function anywhere in the State, a dozen people will attend and hold up placards asking for the money. I do not care whether it is a function for overseas dignitaries at the Sheraton Hotel or a Liberal Party meeting in the northern suburbs, the Government should be faced with that sort of rally day in, day out until those people in need get an answer.

My concern at the rally today was that people did not get the answer they wanted about a commitment on funding. They did not get an answer to the stated requirements of the welcome home campaign; rather, they heard "poli-speak". They still do not know whether they will be funded come the Budget in June or July. The Government came into office in February 1993; therefore it will be more than two years down the track before it will let people know whether it will meet its own guarantee on accommodation for people with disabilities.

I do not know how many government members took the trouble to talk to a few people at that rally today. However, I will give members two examples of people in need: One concerns a fellow I have not seen since I went to school in Kalgoorlie well over 30 years ago. His friend has a 21 year old daughter with a severe disability, who is in a wheelchair and whom she has looked after from the time she was born. She is quite violent and very difficult to handle. Her violence is not usually directed at anyone other than the mother, the person who cares for her and loves her most. That situation is not uncommon. Simple little things cause difficulties; for example, the mother cannot receive or make a phone call while the daughter is in the house because she finds that totally unacceptable.

Another example concerns a mother I had not previously met whose 30-odd year old son lived at home for most of his life, except for a few years ago when he went into Homeswest accommodation. As the member for Kenwick mentioned earlier, that accommodation is very good. However, the problem is that there is no support. In this accommodation where he lives full-time he receives two hours of support services a week. Although they appreciate that additional accommodation, it is in Perth and the mother lives in Maddington. She is now spending more time travelling backwards and forwards trying to give him the support necessary to allow him to live with some degree of independence compared with when she was with him. It is fine to put in the bricks and mortar, but the backup to go with it must be provided.

At the rally the Premier went on about how we must be able to afford to spend money on those needs; and that budgets are tough and hard to manage and how his Government inherited all sorts of terrible debts, etc. Quite frankly, people are sick of listening to all of that. The Government has been in office for two years and people want to know what are the Government's plans before the Budget comes out. I have been involved in budgetary committees over many years and I worked in Treasury before that.

Mr Minson: And you do not release details before the Budget comes out, as you know very well.

Mr TAYLOR: I also know that it has been done time after time. Government does not come to a standstill for 12 months after the Budget and say that no new commitments will be entered into for another 12 months. When specific needs must be dealt with, whether they are for farmers or plantation owners in Carnarvon or a marina in Exmouth or whatever, the money is lined up. It happens outside the budgetary process and it is important, for whatever reason. The same applies to this situation. There is no budgetary reason or reason affecting the management of the State that people should not receive an answer before the Budget is released. A couple of weeks ago at the South Perth Civic Centre the Minister for Disability Services told us that he had put his case to the budgetary committee. Given what I know about the Minister, I have no doubt at all that he put it with a great deal of determination and commitment. However, it is unacceptable to wait around hoping that something might be allocated in the Budget. People should be told beforehand whether they will receive any funding.

I would love to be the Treasurer this financial year. I refer to a few figures I have picked out from the Budget over the past couple of years. In two years this Government has received an extra \$65m payroll tax over and above what it expected.

Mr McGinty: It promised to abolish that.

Mr TAYLOR: It is estimated to increase from \$529m in receipts for 1992-93 to \$593m, and it might be a little more than that. A 12 per cent rise is estimated over that period; in

fact, it will probably be 14 per cent or 15 per cent. Tobacco tax is estimated to increase from \$129m collected in 1992-93 to \$239m for 1994-95. That will be an additional \$110m in two years - not 10 years - which is an increase of 85 per cent. Financial institutions duty is expected to increase from \$94m to \$103m. That is only an extra \$9m; nonetheless it is 9 per cent more. Stamp duty on property - not in total, but on conveyances and the like - collected in 1992-93 totalled \$207.3m. What do we expect to collect in 1994-95? A total of \$295m is expected. That is \$88m million more than was collected in 1992-93.

Mrs Henderson: The Government says it has no money.

Mr TAYLOR: That is the point I am making. It is not as though we have been dealing with extraordinary wage claims over that period. Having been involved in the budgetary process I know what a huge chunk can be taken out of the Budget with wage claims alone.

Mr Minson interjected.

Mr TAYLOR: I will deal with that in a minute.

There have been no significant wage claims over that period. I think the most has been \$8 in two years. If the Minister wants to deal with the issue of debt, I ask him: What is more important, dealing with the now issue of disabilities and the requirements of those people, or dealing with the State's debt? When the Minister talks to the parents of people with disabilities and other people in the community he should tell them that his budget committee's greater priority is not their needs, it is the State's debt. This State has one of the lowest levels of state debt in this nation and has had that for a long time. It is not a pressing need. Accommodation for these people is a pressing need, and where the money should be spent.

The member for Kenwick referred to the Premier's baby of beautifying the City of Perth. The Government's forking out \$12m or \$13m to BankWest to buy a building to knock it over will be a great help to people with disabilities! The Government does not know how much it will cost to knock it over and turn it into a park next to the Town Hall that no-one will use. I expect it will end up costing about \$20m. The Premier has gone to Asia and promised \$30m will be spent teaching Asian languages over the next five years. That is nice, but if Government members think it is important to learn Asian languages, they should find a way to learn them. They should not rely on the taxpayers to show them the way through Asian languages. The issue is dead set simply and unquestionably a matter of priority.

Mr McNee interjected.

Mr TAYLOR: The Leader of the House on our side will deal with that; some mistruths have been put about on that. When we were in government the amount spent on disability services in general increased year after year. For the first time at the start of our 10 years - Keith Wilson had a key role to play as housing Minister - we made certain Homeswest funds were allocated to put in group and other homes so that people could have alternative accommodation. Things changed. Furthermore, over those past few years it was tough to budget and hard yakka. I would love to budget using the figures I just read out. They are huge increases in revenue.

Mr McNee: That debt must still be serviced.

Mr TAYLOR: Governments carry debt; they spend money on things which, quite rightly, generations should pay for. One example is the railway line to the northern suburbs. The Government should not consider wiping out that debt; that is a commitment that a number of generations should deal with. There are levels of debt that should be quickly dealt with and others that should not. I am happy to have a debate on debt; the Public Accounts Committee examined debt when we were in government, but the issue we are talking about today is far more important. A minimum of 400 people are in desperate circumstances. I cannot imagine how they cope. Many of us who have brought up able-bodied children know how difficult it is. I do not know how carers cope with people who have severe disabilities in every sense. Many of them look after them,

not just for a day or two, but year in year out. The Bureau of Statistics released some figures the other day of an Australia-wide survey of caring families. It revealed that 20 per cent of those caring for a child have been in the caring role for 20 years or longer and 52 per cent of the principal carers had a personal income of \$200 a week or less to cope with these problems. Of the 57 per cent of people with profound handicaps, 80 per cent with severe handicaps live at home. This problem will not go away and it is getting bigger. Medical science is such that more and more people with severe and profound disabilities are living. We are seeing a rapid expansion in the number of people with whom we will have to deal. This is not just a five year plan but a plan for life which the Government will have to face year after year and which will require more and more money. One of the worst ways in which the Minister can deal with an issue like this is to think that privatisation is the simple answer. This issue is the responsibility of government and not people who have a profit motive when looking after people with disabilities. The Minister mentioned some people in question time today when speaking of Rocky Bay and the like. I have no objection to that at all. I would encourage the expansion of those groups because they are not in business for profit. They have a different view on life. I would be very sad to see Western Australia go down the road of the nursing home type model with a profit motivation to care for people with disabilities. It would be the wrong approach. We are all aware of the sorts of resources that must go into policing nursing homes to ensure that they are delivering the quality of service that they should with taxpayers' funds. I am sure that all of us as members of Parliament have had complaints over the years about what has occurred in nursing homes. There has been a dramatic improvement, but it has been at the expense of putting people in the field to see that services are being adequately delivered. The Minister must build up a service which can provide quality care for such people. It is the most important aspect of the issue before us today.

We do not need any more reports or Charles MacKinnons to look at this issue. I do not know how much the Minister is paying MacKinnon, but the work has been done. The December 1992 report of the steering committee on the review of accommodation for people with disabilities in Western Australia is comprehensive. People went through Western Australia over a period of five months, in which they received 141 oral and written submissions, held nine public meetings and made 28 recommendations on this very issue. I was concerned the other day to hear a federal bureaucrat say on the radio that they have a role in this area but they are conducting an evaluation and review. It is totally unnecessary. That might be needed in Queensland or somewhere else, but it is not required in Western Australia. There is no need for more evaluations, reviews or committees. The answers are in the Minister's lap. He made a commitment on that report prior to coming into government. In his commitment on this issue he said that he would guarantee that funds would be made available to deal with the matters outlined in this report. I am sure the Minister will not quibble with that, although it is not a direct quote. Before he came into government he was prepared to go out there and say to these people, "Don't worry. If we get elected to government we have the answer in this report and we will deliver." Here we are, more than two years later, still waiting for something to be delivered; here we are waiting for June or July before something is delivered; here we are waiting for the Minister to announce what is available in the Budget. By the time the disability services manage to deal with it, it will be the end of the year, and nearly three years will have gone by. I urge the Minister, as I urged the Welcome Home Committee, not to accept what the Premier said today. He must not accept that sort of airy fairy answer which gives what he wants to hear in relation to these issues, because it does not. The Welcome Home Committee has continued to go after the Government and pin it down on getting an unequivocal commitment on these needs for the next five years and beyond.

MR MINSON (Greenough - Minister for Disability Services) [3.49 pm]: I thank members for their contributions to this debate. I want to say up front that there is no way I as Minister or this Government will support this amendment; in fact, I am surprised that the amendment was moved at all. A couple of weeks ago in South Perth and today in front of Parliament House I acknowledged the shortfall that exists in disability services. I

acknowledged the iceberg type crisis that we are facing. Let me explain what I mean by that. When I talk about an accommodation crisis, people think of the homeless sleeping in cardboard cartons in parks. That is not the sort of crisis we are facing.

For the benefit of those in the House - there are not many who have any interest in this area - the crisis is not one of not having a roof over one's head; it is about many people trying to support their disabled relations without sufficient support to enable them to have respite, get out of the house from time to time, and to access therapy services, community options and so on. I will not bother to go through the long litany of losses of the previous Government. However, there is a bit of a sleight of hand going on when we talk about increases in funding that are supposed to have taken place under the previous Government. The fact is that it is not true, except for a slight blip in the mid-1980s when there was an increase. When I came into office, it became obvious that a couple of years previously the Government had allocated money to the Authority for the Intellectually Handicapped and announced that in the Budget, but later said it was giving a million dollars to the Bureau for Disability Services. However, it forgot to say that it ripped off the AIH and put it into the Bureau for Disability Services. It told the public that it provided the same money twice. That is not fair.

The Commonwealth-State Disability Agreement is an in principle agreement under which it was recognised that there was duplication between the Federal and State Governments. It was to the credit of the federal and state disabled field that it was prepared to try to get some rationality into the duplication. Nowhere else in the Federal Government sphere was the Federal Government prepared to look at that. It is unfortunate that, in the areas of housing, road construction and education, in particular, it wants to continue to duplicate and extend that duplication even though it knows it is a waste of resources.

However, it was an in principle agreement to resolve that duplication. Basically, it provided that accommodation and community services and so on would be taken over by the State and the employment aspects would be taken over by the Federal Government, bearing in mind that until that time both Governments were involved in all areas. The State worked it out on how much it spent on employment and it transferred that on paper to the Commonwealth Government. The Commonwealth Government worked out what it spent on accommodation and so on and put that figure alongside the other figure and transferred the difference to the State.

There is nothing wrong with that and no-one is complaining about it. However, the fact is, at that stage nobody realised - if they did it was not generally known or acknowledged by the Government or the Opposition because I was the shadow Minister at the time and I did not know - that a huge backlog was beginning to build up. I provided figures in front of the Parliament early this afternoon which indicate that the disabled population is increasing at about 6.2 per cent per annum. That has been going on for some time. The general population is increasing at roughly 2 per cent per annum. I also said that one does not have to be Einstein to work out that we will have to increase grants to the disabled in either dollar terms or value terms, if we can get more efficiencies, by about three times the consumer price index if we are to keep pace with growing demand let alone the backlog.

Mr Ripper: The Einsteins in Cabinet did not accept that.

Mr MINSON: That is not true. The former Government never did work it out! At least I have got my people to accept that. I think we should get the facts straight.

Dr Watson: You did not give out anything last year.

Mr MINSON: That is not quite true. Every other agency in government had to return its public sector reform savings to the Treasury Department so that, if they managed to achieve efficiencies of 5 or 10 per cent, that figure was taken off the bottom line of their budget and that occurred in the first year of budgeting. I was able to get from Cabinet an undertaking that I could keep any efficiencies that we could make and pour it back into disability services. There were a number of efficiencies. I think we got approximately

two point something million dollars in efficiencies which was quite an amount at that stage in terms of what the State spends - about 3 per cent.

Mr Ripper: When you were in opposition you called them cuts; now you call them efficiencies.

Mr MINSON: They were efficiencies because the service was still being delivered. However, here is the crunch: When I looked for somewhere to spend that money, I was told by the chief executive officer that I could not do that because Carmen Lawrence and the member for Belmont, who was the Minister, said that they would give \$500 000 to Catholic Care to build a respite home north of the river. However, they did not tell Treasury.

Mr Ripper: It is a very valid service.

Mr MINSON: It is a very valid service. However, there was no provision for funding it. The member for Belmont is a hypocrite. I had to fund it.

Mr Ripper: Where did you get the money from?

Mr MINSON: Out of efficiencies.

Mr Ripper: Therefore, you could fund it.

Mr MINSON: Members opposite knew they would lose the election.

Mr Ripper: The money was there.

Mr MINSON: No, it was not there. Those efficiency savings could have been used to fund new services. However, they were used to fund wild promises. The former Government promised money to the Independent Living Centre, but it did not tell Treasury. Members opposite should tell us the truth.

Dr Watson: You used the word "guaranteed". If you knew you would win and you made a guarantee committing yourself, why did it take two years?

Mr MINSON: I thought the Labor Government would have funded its promises. However, it did not do that. Post school options were not funded. Pressure was put on the Lotteries Commission to fund things that should properly have come out of government.

Mr Taylor: Lotteries Commission money is there for that purpose. You do the same. You gave the Surf Life Saving Association money as if it was your own.

Mr MINSON: No, no. That arrangement with the Lotteries Commission was quite valid as long as the commission was prepared to give it. It said it would fund the Government to a certain time. The Minister at the time knew that he had to take over that funding - I think it was \$1.2m from lotteries. When I became the Minister, I received a telephone call from the Chairman of the Lotteries Commission, Wendy Silver, who told me that she did not think the former Government had funded what it knew it would have to meet. She said it knew what the agreement that it entered into was about. We checked and she was right - that had not been funded either. Therefore, all of the new growth that I wanted to put in was taken up funding Labor Party election promises. They were all worthwhile but the former Government did not fund them.

Mr Taylor: Now tell us what you will do. For the past 10 minutes you have given excuses.

Mr MINSON: I will not get involved in a federal versus state stoush. I wish to incorporate four documents into *Hansard*.

Mr Taylor: The statistics are lies.

Mr MINSON: It comes out of State Treasury.

Mr Taylor: There is a different way of doing it.

Mr MINSON: Is that right? The documents I wish to incorporate in *Hansard* are, firstly, the general purpose grants as a share of commonwealth taxes; secondly, the

commonwealth outlays on its programs, real per capita index; members will find that has increased by approximately 17 per cent over the past 10 years. The payments to the State, in real terms, have decreased by 13 per cent; therefore, there is a 30 per cent disparity over 10 years on a per capita index.

Dr Watson: You are confusing all commonwealth grants.

Mr MINSON: That is nonsense. The third document I want incorporated in *Hansard* shows the contributions made by the Commonwealth and the States. The only figures I was able to obtain this morning to present this argument were from 1989-90. Members will see from the figures that disability funding in both the federal and state spheres has grown by the same degree. It shows that in that period the ratio of state/commonwealth contribution to disability funding is about 2.2 per cent. The ratios in the financial years since 1989-90 in percentage terms are 2.2, 2.13, 2.18, 2.22, 2.26, and 2.19; the average is 2.2. Neither the Commonwealth nor any State Government can claim to have a good track record in this area. If members opposite are trying to tell me what a good job they did when they were in government, they are hypocrites.

Several members interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr Ainsworth): Order!

Mr MINSON: The other document I want incorporated in *Hansard* outlines the per capita funding for disability services. In 1994-95 it was \$15 per capita in New South Wales; \$13 in Victoria; \$15 in Queensland; \$11 in Western Australia - last year it was \$10; \$24 in South Australia; \$23 in Tasmania and \$16 in the Northern Territory.

Dr Watson: When you signed the agreement you knew an equalisation formula had been applied.

Mr MINSON: The figures speak for themselves.

Mr Taylor: Lies, damn lies and statistics!

[The material in appendix A was incorporated by leave of the House.]

[See pages Nos 851-854.]

Mr MINSON: I am disappointed that in the last couple of weeks and now these people have tried to pretend they are some sort of Mother Theresa in the disability area.

Mr Taylor: Who are you talking about?

Mr MINSON: The Australian Labor Party and the Government it formed. No Government in Australia can hold its head high in respect of its record with disability services. I have at least done something to get a handle on the matter by putting to Cabinet a very sensible plan which it is addressing. It is more than members opposite did when they were in government.

Mr Marlborough: Did you involve those people in the plan?

Several members interjected.

Mr MINSON: Absolutely. Members opposite know that a Cabinet document is not circulated. The people concerned have been consulted.

Mr Taylor: Tell us what you are asking for.

Mr MINSON: The member will find out in due course. I will refer to the \$3.7m which the shadow Minister says is hanging around in the Disability Services Commission. The department had a large payment at the end of June 1994. Another large payment was shifted from the Commonwealth in July 1994. The result was that in the middle of June the department had very little money and by 10 or 12 July it had a large sum of money. To say that the money was sitting in the commission and not being used is untrue. One cannot say, "I have some money, I think I will spend it." One must work out how the money must be spent and how to get the best value out of it.

Mr Taylor: Was any money sent back?

Mr MINSON: No money was ever sent back.

Mr Taylor: Why didn't you spend it?

Mr MINSON: We did. All the money is committed and it always has been. Members opposite should not go peddling untruths around this State to the effect that the money was sent back, because it was not. Members opposite appear to want to mislead the disabled people in this State. The money must be spent in a planned way.

My responsibilities in the Disability Services portfolio are manifold. It is an important responsibility, and I accept it, to ensure that appropriate and efficient services are provided. I make no apology for implementing some reforms in the Disability Services portfolio. I refer again to accommodation options. I do not care who provides a service provided it is up to standard and that as many people as possible are looked after with the money that is available. The three options are accommodation provided for profit, accommodation provided by the Government and the excellent services provided by non-government organisations on a non-profit basis. I do not see anything wrong with talking to all those groups to provide the best service we can to as many people as possible. I am not locked into saying that it must be done on a profit basis.

Mr Taylor: A few weeks ago you did.

Several members interjected.

Mr MINSON: I did not say that; I said I did not care. The overriding factors are that the quality must be good and cost effective. I will look at any option provided it falls within those parameters. We are looking at the options in terms of efficiency.

Mr Taylor: Who from the disability area is doing that?

Mr MINSON: It will unfold in time.

Several members interjected.

Mr Marlborough: Is he working for you?

Mr MINSON: He has been engaged by the Disability Services Commission. Charles MacKinnon is a very competent man. I remind members and others who suggest I have shirked my responsibilities that this Government is only halfway through its term of office. I have been a Minister for two years and at the end of four years I will deliver what I promised. Members opposite had 10 years, but they achieved nothing.

MR RIPPER (Belmont) [4.10 pm]: Last year when we had a debate about the Minister's failure to deliver improvements in disability services, the Minister responded by attacking the Commonwealth and the Opposition. We have here a case of *deja vu*. Once again, this Minister's response to criticism of his performance and that of his Cabinet colleagues is to refer to the Opposition's record, to misrepresent it, and to seek to place some of the responsibility at the feet of the Commonwealth. This motion is not about the Commonwealth. It is not about the Opposition. It is about this Government's commitment to provide accommodation services for people with disabilities. This Government has had two years to address this issue. It knew about this issue well before it came to office because this Minister, as the then shadow Minister for Disability Services, attended large meetings organised by groups concerned about the needs of people with disabilities which dealt with precisely this issue. Prior to the state election, members of this Government had available to them the report of the review of accommodation services which I initiated. It had two years of advice from the Disability Services Commission. Therefore, this Government has had plenty of opportunity to demonstrate its credentials on this issue.

In addition, the Government has reached an agreement with the Commonwealth Government, an agreement which it negotiated, in which it accepted responsibility for dealing with accommodation services for people with disabilities. That agreement reflected this Government's view of what should occur in federal-state relations because it rationalised a messy situation where both levels of government were involved in the provision of the same types of services to people with disabilities and provided for the

Commonwealth to take responsibility for certain types of services, principally those related to employment, and for the State to take responsibility for all other types of services. That is the type of agreement which this Government believes should be the rule in federal-state relations. That agreement was not revenue neutral so far as the State Government was concerned because I recall that when we were in government and negotiating with the Commonwealth, our signing of the CSDA was expected to generate \$2.8m in commonwealth grants to the State Government over and above the money that would flow from the division of services. I want to know from this Minister whether those expectations were met when he and his Government negotiated with the Commonwealth the finalisation of the CSDA, because the Minister implied in his remarks to the House that the finalisation of the CSDA did not produce any additional revenue for the State Government. That is certainly contrary to my expectation when we were negotiating that agreement. We expected an additional \$2.8m.

Mr Minson: There are transitional growth funding factors in that formula.

Mr RIPPER: I am pleased to hear that; so the Minister has confirmed to this House that the finalisation of the CSDA gave this Government additional revenue from the Commonwealth. That is important because the State Government received substantial additional revenue not only from the Commonwealth but also from its own state taxes and charges. I turn now to some of the increases in revenue which the State has received. My colleague the member for Kalgoorlie referred to increases in revenue from stamp duty. I will deal with the overall situation. Our last financial year in government was 1992-93. In the first financial year after that, 1993-94, total revenue from taxes and licences for the State Government was up by \$658m, and quite a significant proportion of that increase in revenue was not budgeted for. In the last financial year and in this financial year we have seen an increase in State Government revenues over and above what has been budgeted for. In the September quarter of this financial year, revenue from taxes and licences was up by \$116m over the corresponding period for the previous financial year - a 28 per cent increase. If the pattern remains consistent for the remainder of the financial year, by the end of this financial year revenue from taxes and licences will be up by \$465m over the corresponding revenue from the previous financial year. Therefore, the situation is that 1993-94 was \$658m up on 1992-93, and 1994-95 is likely to be up by a further \$463m. If we add together those two figures, we see that revenue for 1994-95 will be up by about \$1.1b over the revenue received in 1992-93. That is an enormous amount of additional revenue. We see in the Government's budget papers that while the budgeted amount is not quite \$1.1b - and I will have to confirm the figure - it is a significant increase in revenue, even on the Government's own figures.

I turn now to the Premier's comments to the meeting outside Parliament House, because while this motion is about the Government's position, it is necessary to divert and to comment on both the Minister's attack on the Opposition and the Premier's comments to that meeting. The Minister said that when he came into office, he had to meet wild, unfunded promises and this constrained him in his ability to deal with the issue.

Mr Prince: He did not say wild. He said they were unfunded.

Mr RIPPER: Yes, and he could not do what he wanted to do.

Mr Prince: Because you had spent the money without telling Treasury.

Mr RIPPER: That was the allegation.

Mr Prince: That is true. It is not an allegation.

Mr RIPPER: He found the money within his portfolio without having to go to Treasury for additional funds, so the money was there. The Minister said that he found the money through efficiencies. What does he think we would have done? We would have found it through exactly those same efficiencies. When the Minister does it, he calls it the outcome of a search for efficiencies, but when we do it, he calls it wild, unfunded promises. It does not wash. If the Minister found the money within the portfolio without having to go to Treasury, then it was not wild, unfunded promises. The money was there and the situation was completely credible.

The Premier told the meeting that there had been no increase, apart from a small blip in 1986, in funding to this area under the 10 years of Labor Government. That is simply wrong. In the last financial year in which the Labor Government set the Budget - that is, 1992-93 - the total disability services budget, counting together the Bureau for Disability Services and the Authority for the Intellectually Handicapped, as it then was, was \$93m, an increase of 2.9 per cent over the corresponding budget for the previous year.

In the AIH sector of the budget, the increase was 2.3 per cent. We need to remember that the consumer price index for that financial year was 0.08 per cent, so we see that for the whole disability services area there was a real increase of 2.6 per cent. Therefore, it is wrong for both the Minister and the Premier to say that there was no improvement in disability services funding under the previous Government when in the 1992-93 financial year there was a real increase of 2.6 per cent in funding for the total Disability Services portfolio.

Let us compare that with the record of this Government. It is worth having a look at the two financial years for which this Government has been responsible. There was a real increase of 1.9 per cent in 1993-94; that was a welcome increase, but it was less than the increase which the Labor Government was able to come up with in its last year of budgeting. The real tragedy is in the 1994-95 Budget; there is a real decrease of 2.3 per cent. The Premier told a public meeting on the steps of Parliament House that there had been no increase under the Labor Government, but he neglected to disclose the fact that there was a real increase in the last year in which Labor was responsible for the Budget. The Premier was talking in a financial year in which there has been a real decrease in funding for disability services of 2.3 per cent.

That is a disgrace because the situation which confronted the two Governments in their budgeting was completely different. The Labor Government was budgeting at a time of national recession when there were real constraints on the revenues flowing to the Government. This Government is budgeting at a time when, due to national economic policy - not due to anything it is doing - there is substantial economic growth.

As I have already demonstrated, a large increase has occurred in state revenues. In addition, this Government is getting additional money from the Commonwealth Government as a result of the finalisation of the Commonwealth-State Disability Agreement. Everything points to the possibility of increased funding for disability services; everything except the Government's will, sense of social justice and compassion. It has had for two years the capacity to increase the budget in this area, but it has not done as well as the Labor Government in its last financial year during a national economic recession.

The Government had its chance last year to provide a funding increase because of the huge increase in revenue. It knew that it needed to provide increased funding because it received a warning from the Minister. He wrote a memo to his Cabinet colleagues last year over his signature stating that unless substantial additional funds were allocated Western Australia would be facing "a human crisis of grave proportions by mid-1996". The Government had the information and the revenue from its own taxes and from the Commonwealth, and it failed to act. That is why we see a renewal of the public meetings which occurred in 1992 and a renewal of the campaign by people with disabilities, their families and organisations. This Government is in a position to act, but has not done so and without substantial pressure from the community it will not act.

We are talking about accommodation, but we all must recognise the need for a range of services in the disability services area. Most people with disabilities are cared for by their families, and it is fair to say that most of them will continue to be cared for by their families in the future. Families make a great contribution, way beyond that made by families where no member has a disability.

Dr Watson: They save the State \$1b a year.

Mr RIPPER: It is something which the rest of us should recognise. Nobody should underestimate the effort, commitment and cost to families which, as far as possible, they

accept willingly in caring for a family member with a disability. Those families who are doing so, and will continue to do so despite improvements which we hope will occur in accommodation services, need a whole range of family support services. Those support services enable families to do what many of them want to do - keep on caring for their family member with a disability.

We need improved local coordination services, continuation of the post school options program initiated by the Labor Government, and all sorts of family support services to make sure the majority of people with disabilities and the families who are caring for a member with a disability continue to get a fair go from the rest of the community. However, the bottom line is that we reached a situation long ago where improved accommodation services were needed. No matter what we are doing by way of family support or what families are doing for themselves, there is a need for improved accommodation support services. It is now a crying and very serious need about which this Government has known for two years but has done nothing.

What is the Government's main focus in this area? It seems to me to be on privatisation. The McCarrey report recommended the complete privatisation of accommodation support services. That is a very disturbing report because the figures on which it is based are simply wrong. The philosophy seems to be that money can be saved if accommodation services are taken away from the Government and handed in their entirety to other organisations. Any move to destroy government accommodation services for people with disabilities and transfer those services completely to the non-government sector, based on a philosophy that this will save money, will be very damaging for people with disabilities. The cost savings alleged in the McCarrey report are illusory. If the Government proceeds on the basis of those figures and that philosophy, people with disabilities and their families will be seriously damaged.

Non-government organisations do an excellent job in providing accommodation support services, but there is and always will be a need for government accommodation services, because the Government is always the accommodation provider of last resort. Among agencies - and I do not criticise them for this - there is a natural tendency to try to accommodate those cases which are easier to handle, if one likes, and for which the support services are not so intensive. It can be very expensive to provide accommodation support services for some people with disabilities. Those people tend to be, although not always, within the government sector. What will happen to the people with the highest support needs if the government accommodation support services are disbanded, particularly if that is done on the basis of the illusory figures in the McCarrey report?

There are other cases of people with disabilities who are inclined to indulge in aggressive behaviour. In a small number of cases the disability is combined with a management problem. Those cases naturally require quite high levels of support and financial commitment. Many non-government agencies are not willing to take on those sorts of cases. Who will provide for them? Unless there is some sort of continued government accommodation support service, those people and their families will have their interests seriously damaged.

I come back to the position of this Government and this Minister for Disability Services. They have had two years and they have known about the problem for longer than that. They have the revenue from their own increased taxes and charges as a result of economic growth, and revenue from the finalisation of the Commonwealth-State Disability Agreement. They have had the warning from their own Minister that there would be a human crisis of grave proportions by mid 1996 unless they acted. They have not acted so far, and without the sort of pressure now being mounted by disability service organisations and families caring for people with disabilities, and the passage of this amendment, I do not believe this Government will accept its responsibilities. It has shown a regrettable tendency to blame everyone else - the Opposition and the Commonwealth - and not to accept what it should be doing.

Amendment put and a division taken with the following result -

Ayes (19)

Mr M. Barnett
Mr Brown
Mr Catania
Mr Cunningham
Dr Edwards
Dr Gallop
Mrs Hallahan

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

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

Noes (26)

Mr Blaikie
Mr Board
Mr Bradshaw
Mr Cowan
Mr Day
Mrs Edwardes
Dr Hames
Mr Johnson
Mr Kierath

Mr Lewis
Mr Marshall
Mr McNee
Mr Minson
Mr Nicholls
Mr Ormodei
Mr Osborne
Mrs Parker
Mr Pandal

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

Pairs

Mr Bridge
Mr D.L. Smith
Mr Grill
Mr Graham

Mr Court
Dr Turnbull
Mr House
Mr Trenorden

Amendment thus negatived.

Motion Resumed

MRS van de KLASHORST (Swan Hills) [4.35 pm]: I will talk on two main issues; the first being the problem in Western Australia of persuading people to donate blood. I am becoming a vampire because I am asking all members of Parliament and the people of Western Australia to donate blood.

I will give a brief history of the blood situation in Western Australia. There are eight blood groups ranging from O, A, B and AB down to A Rh positive and negative. The groups can be ranked in order of need in the community. Blood donors and people receiving the donations must have compatible blood groups. All persons requiring a blood transfusion undergo a compatibility test to make sure their blood is compatible with the donor. The first recorded blood transfusion was in 1665 when doctors transfused the blood of dogs into a human being in the hope of saving someone who had lost a lot of blood. They were naturally unsuccessful, and the procedure was fatal. It was not until 1880 that an English obstetrician, Dr James Blundell, gave the first successful blood transfusion. He did not discover the different blood types, but he gave a transfusion to a woman who had lost a lot of blood after a birth. From then on the use of blood for transfusions has slowly grown.

Another snippet of useless information is that approximately 8 per cent of our body weight is made up of blood, and we cannot survive without it. It has no substitute, and we need blood especially for people who have lost blood. Worldwide the annual need for donations is 735 million; Australia-wide it is 1 million; and Perth requires 90 000 donations a year. Each donation is called a unit, and each unit measures 450ml, which equals about two cups of coffee. I have just given my fifty-fifth unit of blood, and every time I donate blood I give about two coffee cups' full.

In Western Australia someone donates blood at the Australian Red Cross blood transfusion service every two and a half minutes, Monday to Friday during normal business hours. The problem in Western Australia is that even with one donation every two and a half minutes, less than 4 per cent of the population of Western Australia eligible to give blood actually gives it. Approximately 95 per cent of Western Australians will need blood sometime during their life, yet less than 4 per cent of people who can donate, do so. This is causing major problems. For example, coronary artery

bypass surgery requires four units of blood; that is about 8 cups of coffee. A hip replacement requires 3 units; that is 6 cups. Burns victims with greater than 10 per cent of burns on their body will need six units, depending on how badly they are burnt and how long their treatment continues. A liver transfusion patient will need 100 units of blood from at least 100 people with compatible blood.

Mr Cunningham: How much is one unit of blood?

Mrs van de KLASHORST: One unit is 450 mls; about two coffee cups. Besides needing whole blood, which can be stored for up to five weeks, the blood bank needs plasma. The plasma is used for burns victims and haemophiliacs. Also, if somebody is involved in a major road accident, the body is traumatised; therefore, it stops clotting. The plasma is needed to stop some of the internal injuries and to get the body working again. Many of the blood donations in this State are used for plasma for road trauma victims.

One of the reasons I became involved in this issue, besides having been a blood donor, was that the mother of a haemophiliac in Mt Helena whose family I had taught at school contacted me. Her son had been waiting for seven months for a knee operation because no blood was available for him in Western Australia. Haemophiliacs need masses of blood each time they have an operation, and the amount required depends on the operation. They must be continually transfused during the operation. I spoke to the director of the blood bank, and the blood bank managed to find enough donations of blood to enable this man to have his operation. Through this experience I became aware that Western Australia is chronically short of blood supplies and, more particularly, is short of blood donors. I refer members to a donor blood count which indicates that supplies of all blood types apart from AB positive and AB negative are seriously low. Recently this type of advertisement has appeared in the newspaper regularly. The situation is so desperate that yesterday's *The West Australian* contained a full page advertisement paid for by the Red Cross - it did not know I would talk about this matter today - to encourage people to become blood donors. The situation is quite a problem.

Mr Johnson: I was the first male donor at the new Whitford blood clinic.

Mrs van de KLASHORST: That clinic opened only in February. I started giving blood when the old Perth clinic was located on the Esplanade. It used to be freezing cold in winter because there was no air-conditioning and the nurses had to pump my arm up and down to get the blood. We have come a long way since then.

Mr Johnson: I gave a whole armful!

Mrs van de KLASHORST: The member for Whitford gave only two cups! This is a serious problem. I have told the blood bank that I will do my best to make people in Western Australia aware that more blood donors are required.

Mr Cunningham: Could we arrange to donate from here?

Mrs van de KLASHORST: Perhaps that is something we could consider. That is why I am mentioning this subject. As members of Parliament we must spread the message to people in our electorates. I have contacted all the local groups in my electorate, including businesses, professional women, Apex WA and Rotary. I have arranged to talk to them all about this problem. I told them I would meet them as their current vampire. Last night I spoke to the business and professional women of Darling Range. As a group they will donate blood the next time the mobile clinic is in Midland.

There are three major clinics in Western Australia - Perth, Fremantle and Whitford. The Whitford clinic requires appointments, but people can drop in at the other two clinics; however, it is always a good idea to make an appointment. The average healthy person can be bled four times a year; that is every three months. There is a wonderful set of people who need to be acknowledged by the community; namely, those who donate 450 mls of blood every fortnight so that the blood bank can strip the plasma from their blood and reinject the blood in order to keep up the plasma supply. Some are relatives of haemophiliacs; others are people who are concerned about our society. We could not ask for more than that from them. It is wonderful that they do this.

The special needs group is the haemophiliacs. After being contacted by the man from Mt Helena to whom I referred earlier, I contacted the then Minister for Health, Hon Peter Foss. In conjunction with the Federal Government we worked out a plan to ensure that artificial factor 8 supplies are available to all haemophiliacs in Western Australia. There is now no longer an immediate chronic shortage, but the blood bank could still do with a lot more supplies.

One of the reasons people have stopped donating blood is the AIDS scare. The moment AIDS came on the scene and was well publicised, many people who used to donate began to think that they could catch HIV from donating blood. I assure everybody that exactly the opposite is the case. Everything in the blood bank is used once and thrown away and destroyed; unlike when I first began to give blood and equipment was sterilised and reused. It is important that people get that message.

When people first attend the blood bank they are asked to fill in a form detailing their particulars, and then have a medical assessment to ensure that they are healthy and that it will not be detrimental to them to donate blood. They then have a short interview with an officer and must sign a statutory declaration. In my case they asked me questions such as whether I was a prostitute, whether I slept with other people, and whether I was sure that any of the partners I slept with were not HIV positive and I had no chance of contracting HIV from them. The men who attend the blood bank must sign a similar form. That is a legal document, and should I lie in any way, it is a criminal offence, enforceable by law. The donated blood is tested for five or six different types of diseases; of course, HIV is one of them. That is done to protect the public. I am sure most people do not mind filling in those forms to ensure that their blood is clean for the community.

Mr Cunningham: Do they take politicians' blood?

Mrs van de KLASHORST: They take mine and they obviously take the blood of the member for Whitford. I am sure they would take the member for Marangaroo's blood as well.

It takes about an hour and a half on the first visit, and about an hour on subsequent visits. Perhaps the member for Marangaroo and I could arrange for someone to attend Parliament House to take blood from members from both sides.

Mr Thomas: Do you still get a free cup of tea?

Mrs van de KLASHORST: Yes. I will not labour the point any further except to say that blood saves lives. When a member donates, it could save someone else's life; but conversely, when someone else donates, it could save a member's life. It is a coincidence that my mother, who is 92, telephoned me today to say that she is going into hospital tomorrow for her two pint top up. I am pleased that someone has donated that blood which keeps my mother as healthy as she can be.

The other point to consider is that accidents such as that at Greenmount Hill and others tend to result in people donating blood and becoming new donors. We would like people to become donors without an accident like that to prompt them. I bring this matter to the attention of the Parliament to see whether members can help to encourage people in Western Australia to donate blood.

The second issue to which I refer today is a topical matter; namely, family and domestic violence. I am sure members have heard the topic of domestic violence being discussed on radio in the past couple of weeks. The incidence of domestic violence has become of great concern to the community in not only Western Australia, but also Australia. It is estimated that domestic violence affects one in five families in the community and is not confined to a particular social class, culture or geographical area.

My message to the people, through the domestic violence task force which has just been established, is that domestic violence is a serious crime and everybody should deplore it. One of the worst aspects of domestic violence is that it generally occurs in the place where one should feel secure; that is, the home. In one's home one should be nurtured, cared for and respected. Partner abuse is the most common form of domestic violence. In most cases it is the male against the female, but I have received telephone calls from

many people telling me that in many cases it is the woman who is the perpetrator. I have met with several men's groups which have informed me that a high percentage of domestic violence is caused by females.

I will inform the House of what the Government is doing about domestic violence. About five weeks ago the Premier and the Attorney General asked me to head a domestic violence task force. Domestic violence is the responsibility not only of the police or the Department for Community Development; it also cuts across many departments including the Health Department, the Education Department, the Ministry of Justice and Healthway. All these departments and government agencies must be involved and not any one department has the mandate for it. The task force meets with the chief executive officers from all the departments once a week. The meetings do not degenerate into a talk fest; the task force is an action group. It is trying to work out a collaborative program which will cut across all the departments concerned to come up with a set of procedures to assist with this problem in Western Australia.

It concerns me that if a woman rings the police because of a domestic violence incident and the police visit the premises and take the perpetrator away, the woman is left on her own. In an ideal world and under an ideal model, assistance would be given to the woman. If a child goes to school and tells his teacher that his mum bashed his dad or vice versa, some mechanism should be in place to check out the story and then to provide support to the victims. If a woman who has been bashed goes to her doctor and the doctor is made aware of the problem, he should be able to refer her to an organisation for assistance. I know there is a problem surrounding people's privacy, but the safety of the victim must be paramount.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! It is not appropriate for members to have conversations across the Chamber in a loud voice which disrupts the flow of the member's speech. If members want to interject and the member accepts the interjection, I will tolerate it.

Mrs van de KLASHORST: I reiterate that the safety of all victims, including the children and extended family members, is absolutely paramount.

A protocol which can be used to assist the victims of domestic violence must be put in place. I see the whole situation as a triangle - the victim and the perpetrator are on one side and the children on another. It is imperative that the incidence of domestic violence in this State decreases and to achieve that aim the perpetrator must be counselled. Even if that family does not get back together again the perpetrator can be given sufficient assistance so that he will not continue with that form of violence when he becomes involved in another relationship. It is often not the case that after some form of intervention the family will come together again. The statistics show that only 40 per cent of families involved in domestic violence actually come together again.

Victims must be empowered to know how to handle violence committed against them, and to recognise an impending violent situation so they can take themselves to safety. I have outlined the facets which will lead to an effective program for domestic violence prevention. The task force believes a long term program, similar to the Quit campaign, should be put in place. We must firstly obtain the up to date figures on domestic violence and, secondly, set about changing the attitude of the community towards domestic violence. Only a few nights ago I was talking to someone at a meeting who told me that it was perfectly all right to attack a person if it was justified. I argued that it was not. It is absolutely important that people's attitudes towards domestic violence are changed, but that will not happen overnight. It is very important that the entire attitude within society is changed and for that reason we must come up with a 10 year plan. It is not within the task force's terms of reference to do this, but it is something that its members decided to present to the Government.

Mrs Henderson: What about the women who are trying to get a bed in the refuges? You should talk to your Minister about that.

Mrs van de KLASHORST: I suggest that the member speak to the Minister to obtain the facts. I am not discussing that now.

Mrs Henderson: It is an element of what you are discussing. It means nothing if people who want a bed in a refuge cannot get it.

Mrs Edwardes: You are misrepresenting what is happening.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order!

Mrs van de KLASHORST: It will be addressed by the Minister.

The task force has been considering the models in Canada and New Zealand. I am interested in a Western Australian model. The communities within this State are very different; for example, Armadale is different from Midland, Midland is different from Broome, Broome is different from Bunbury and Bunbury is different from Albany. One model for the whole of Western Australia would not work. I would like a Western Australian model to be formulated and extending from that, the Armadale way, the Midland way and so on.

Mr Marlborough: You would like different models?

Mrs van de KLASHORST: Different methodology for carrying out the same model.

Mrs Henderson: A punch is a punch is a punch, wherever you are.

Mrs van de KLASHORST: We are talking about assistance and intervention to assist the victims and the perpetrators.

Mr Marlborough and Mrs Edwardes interjected.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The member for Peel knows it is highly disorderly to talk while I am on my feet. I will not allow the situation in which members trade interjections across the Chamber while the member for Swan Hills is trying to speak to the Chair and the Chamber.

Mrs van de KLASHORST: A report will be made at the end of June, so we have a very tight time line. It is anticipated that the report will make some suggestions and put forward ideas to help prevent domestic violence in this State.

I turn now to the educational needs in the electorate of Swan Hills. The local community is most concerned because the number of enrolments at the Eastern Hills Senior High School has grown, and will continue to grow to such an extent that a new high school is needed. I have approached the Minister for Education on this matter, and the message I now give is that the Minister will make a decision very soon. The next high school will be built in Western Australia in 1998. When making his decision on the location of that high school, I ask the Minister to take into consideration several issues. Firstly, the students in the hills area have no other school they can attend. My sons attended this school and had to leave home at 7.30 in the morning in order to start school at 8.45 am. Many children travel long distances to that school. They do not have access to any other school in the metropolitan area. I refer specifically to the Swan Hills area.

It should also be taken into consideration that the feeder schools in the hills area are growing at a rate of 4 per cent a year and the children travel long distances from the feeder schools to attend the high school. Those children have not missed out in their educational needs and they have plenty of accommodation; however, accommodation needs for the future relate to the staff facilities. The library will be too small in a couple of years. The teachers do not have an adequate preparation area, sufficient photocopiers, or a suitable meeting room. Also the administration section is not large enough.

I ask the Government to consider building a new high school in the hills area in 1998. It is important to consider the educational needs of the children at the Eastern Hills Senior High School. Funds should be put aside to upgrade some of the facilities so that the ongoing educational needs are taken care of while the community is awaiting the construction of a new high school. The community is behind this proposal and will raise funds wherever it can. Last year I persuaded the Education Department to buy a 10 hectare block of land in Stoneville. We now need a commitment to build a new high school. Although I would like a new school to be built soon, I understand it is not possible with current budget constraints. We know that the forthcoming Budget will not

be a good one because of the mismanagement in previous years. However, I ask the Minister to consider my comments about a new high school in the hills area in 1998.

Debate adjourned until a later stage of the sitting, on motion by Mrs Roberts.

[Continued on page 805.]

SCRUTINY OF GOVERNMENT CONTRACTING OUT AND PRIVATISATION ACTIVITIES BILL

Second Reading

MRS HENDERSON (Thornlie) [5.06 pm]: I move -

That the Bill be now read a second time.

This Bill provides a long overdue package of measures to protect the public interest in the Government's headlong rush to privatise and contract out a wide range of government services. The Bill is designed to make the Government open and accountable, in line with recommendations of the Royal Commission into Commercial Activities of Government and Other Matters. The Opposition does not share the Government's blind adherence to the ideology that anything done by the private sector must be better and more efficient than that performed by the public sector. The Opposition believes that the Court Government's wholesale contracting out of government services does not take into account the public interest. It believes that the Government has failed to learn from overseas experience, where privatisation and contracting out have resulted in public assets moving into the control of large corporations with profits repatriated overseas and, in many cases, with greatly increased prices for consumers. The drive by these corporations for quick profits has often resulted in poor maintenance of what was a public infrastructure, with resulting high costs for consumers. The Court Government appears destined to repeat these mistakes. The measures in this Bill are designed to end the current ad hoc process of putting out to tender a range of services currently provided by the Government, with no accountability to this Parliament or to the people of this State. Under this legislation these processes will be open to scrutiny by the Auditor General and the public.

The Bill provides that before any service is privatised the responsible Minister shall cause a comprehensive cost benefit analysis to be prepared. This statement will clearly outline the expected benefits to the public through improved services and savings as a result of contracting out. This statement will be audited by the Auditor General before presentation to the Parliament. The impact statement will detail the increased efficiencies to be achieved by the contracting out of the service and any adverse effects of these changes on consumers or clients of the service. Regulations will be prepared outlining in detail the manner in which this statement is to be prepared. The statement shall be provided to Parliament at least 60 days prior to any advertisement or other method of calling for expressions of interest from the private sector for the provision of the service.

Prior to the presentation of this impact statement to Parliament, the Minister responsible for the agency shall ensure the benchmarks for the service to be privatised are prepared. These benchmarks will detail the standard of service required to be provided. They could include, for example, in relation to a bus service to be contracted out or privatised, the area to be serviced by the buses; routes; frequency of the service on weekdays, weekends and at night; location of bus stops; method of providing timetable and route information; mechanism for receiving and resolving complaints; standard of vehicles to be used as buses; standards of maintenance and repair required; cleanliness of vehicles; access for disabled patrons; basis of fare determination and increases in fares; and discounts to be made to pensioners, health care card holders etc. From this example can be seen the comprehensive nature of the work required to safeguard the standards of service which previously have been provided by the public sector.

This Bill provides that public sector agencies have the opportunity, as of right, to put in bids to provide the service they have been providing. The Opposition totally and utterly

rejects the discriminatory, unfair and anti-competitive edict of the Premier that public sector agencies should be excluded from putting in bids when services are put up for tender. The Opposition believes that the only reason for this instruction from the Premier was a concern about the number of tenders that public sector agencies would win on account of their superior efficiency.

This has been graphically illustrated by the Water Authority where internal bids had been accepted and WAWA had succeeded in winning many contracts. Because of the Premier and his Government's obsessive conviction that the private sector is intrinsically better at providing services, the Premier has personally ordered that internal bids be prohibited. If indeed he believed his conviction stood on firm ground, he would of course be prepared to subject it to the scrutiny of fair and open competition with the private sector. This is no level playing field. It is clear discrimination against the public sector and a leg up for the private sector where it might not otherwise succeed in the tender process. In some cases the Opposition understands that current employees whose jobs are to be contracted out have been expressly forbidden from banding together to put in a tender. So much for fair competition!

The Bill provides that community service obligations such as discounts for pensioners, health care card holders, etc, shall be included and provided for in any bids to provide a service on the same basis that these discounts are currently available where the agency is not reimbursed by Treasury.

The Opposition is extremely concerned about the practice of this Government where a company or consultant is engaged to review a government agency, subsequently makes recommendations about the contracting out of a service, and is itself the successful bidder to provide the recommended service. The Opposition believes that this practice breaches the standards of propriety and integrity required in government. It is wide open to cronyism, favouritism and corruption. The Opposition has already drawn this matter to the attention of this House, where Coopers and Lybrand was given a consultancy as part of the McCarrey inquiry, which, in turn, recommended that a review of the human resources division of the Ministry of Education be conducted to examine options for contracting out. The successful bidder to carry out this review was, in turn, Coopers and Lybrand.

The Opposition proposes in this Bill that where a company, or one of its subsidiaries, or a consultant conducts a review of a government agency or part of an agency, that company or consultant shall be prohibited from putting in a bid when a service or asset within that department is contracted out or privatised. The prohibition will stand for two years after the completion of a review. Reviews conducted as outlined above will become public documents and shall be tabled in Parliament. The Opposition believes that such reviews, examinations or reports on government agencies, in the interests of open and accountable government should be readily available to those who wish to peruse them.

The Bill provides that following a call for expressions of interest or for tender bids the Government shall table in Parliament full details of the successful bid including the amount, the nature and detail of the service to be provided by the bidder, and details of any state-owned property to be made available to the bidder including state-owned plant, access to government supplies, and use of and access to state-owned computers and records. This report to Parliament will detail the requirement on the bidder for maintenance of such state-owned plant and equipment.

The Opposition is particularly concerned about the privacy of records held by government agencies about members of the public, as well as other corporate clients of the agency. The Opposition believes that in its rush to contract out, the Government is paying scant regard to opportunities for private sector companies to access such personal information. For example, in proposals to contract out construction and maintenance activities in the Water Authority, what measures have been put in place to prevent access through the computer to the water consumption records of the public? Similarly a proposal to privatise the microfilm service could place in jeopardy the hospital records of members of the public.

The Opposition is concerned that companies winning contracts to provide services will, as a result of their access to government records, computerised information, future plans, supplies, etc, be in a privileged position when the service is readvertised for bids at the end of the contract period. Although this is a difficult issue to resolve, the Opposition believes that steps should be taken at the beginning of the period of a contract to minimise such advantage. Details of the steps to be taken to effect this will be required to be provided to Parliament.

The Opposition is strongly opposed to the wholesale contracting out of government services to the private sector. It is particularly concerned that the Court Government appears to have learned nothing from overseas experience about the risk to the public of downgraded, more expensive services and poorly maintained, deteriorating public assets. The Government in its ideologically driven haste to contract out at any cost has put few measures in place to safeguard the public interest. Its glib talk of better quality services and cost savings has not been matched by any information or quantification of these claims.

The Government has a special responsibility in its stewardship of the public sector. It is dealing with employees who have developed skills over long periods of service. The Government appears to believe that these skills have no quantifiable value and that employers who take on these employees are doing the public sector a favour. On the contrary, such private sector employers are gaining fully trained and experienced employees - a valuable asset indeed. The Government has a particular responsibility to safeguard the public interest. The taxpayers' contributions over the last 50 or more years have built public agencies to their present level of performance. These assets belong to the taxpayers of this State. The Government has no mandate to dispose of or sell off such services and assets without full and complete research into the benefits to be gained by the public. Such work has not been done. We are witnessing a headlong rush to contract out and privatise. The safeguards in this Bill are essential for open and accountable government as recommended by the royal commission. I commend the Bill to the House. Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr Bloffwitch.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY

Motion

Resumed from an earlier stage of the sitting.

MRS ROBERTS (Glendalough) [5.18 pm]: In this debate I wish to speak about water and water privatisation. It is important to outline the context in which we now look at privatisation, and to outline the current position of the Western Australian Water Authority. To put the issue in context we should consider the comments and statements made by members of the Court Government prior to its election in 1993.

The CSA journal records some of the answers offered by the then Leader of the Opposition - the current Premier - when debating privatisation. We should consider his responses to questions about that topic. The journal quotes Mr Court as follows -

We will review public trading enterprise sector and where goods and services currently sold by government enterprises can be adequately provided by the private sector at less cost their sale will be considered.

There are three possibilities: (1) Cut the government's losses and sell it; (2) Improve public sector efficiency and make it far more profitable; and (3) It may be strategically necessary to wear a loss.

I am sure in that context the assumption would have been made that it may be strategically necessary to wear a loss if it were determined that a government agency was necessary to deliver a service, or the private sector could not undertake it. Currently the Government accepts that it is strategically necessary to wear a loss, and the loss occurs by giving things to the private sector without allowing the public sector to compete. Further, when Leader of the Opposition, Mr Court also said -

We do not have a policy of "wholesale privatisation".

In the context of the same election campaign, the then Leader of the Opposition stated on television that this was not Victoria, and that he was not Jeff Kennett - in response to the Labor Party allegation that he would embark on the privatisation of a number of public sector agencies were he elected to government. He denied strongly that allegation. It seems he may have learned a little from the mistakes by Dr Hewson and Fightback. The only difference is that Mr Court completely deceived us and the public when he said that he would not embark on the wholesale privatisation being embarked on by Mr Kennett in Victoria and other conservative leaders in other States.

The position changed once the coalition was elected to government. On 25 November 1993 the Premier sent a circular to Ministers, No 46/93. In that circular titled "Competitive tendering and contracting" the game had changed a little. That circular stated -

CTC is about bringing the discipline of competition to the delivery of public sector services. Services are selected, specified, put out to tenders, comparisons are drawn between bids for the work from current in-house providers, the private sector, and in some cases from other public sector agencies, and a contract signed with the successful tenderer.

The circular listed increased efficiency as a significant advantage of the competitive tendering and contracting process. It stated -

studies consistently show that the introduction of CTC produces savings of 20 per cent or more, whether the winning tender comes from the public or the private sector.

In 1993 the Government was still looking at the public sector competing with the private sector. In 1995 the public sector has been taken out of that equation. If the Government handballs tendering and contracting completely to the private sector those studies which indicated that up to 20 per cent savings could be made no longer apply, because the public sector no longer is competing for the tender and providing a guide as to the true cost. Obviously Ministers had not embarked upon the competitive tendering and contracting process at the speed at which the Premier would have liked, and at the end of last year the tack is changed again, and a further circular No 46/94 dated 20 December 1994 was sent to Ministers. This circular refers to the role of the Public Sector Management Office and the public sector reform cabinet subcommittee. The big change in the direction was as follows -

I would expect to see government agencies moving rapidly to:-

call tenders, without inviting an internal bid, for those non core or support activities for which strongly competitive markets already exist in the private sector.

This was a complete turnaround by the Premier. The public sector can no longer compete with the private sector. The private sector can compete for public sector work, without the public sector having the opportunity to tender. This change came about largely because the Premier started off with the false assumption that all public authorities were inefficient and had poor productivity levels, and that the private sector could do it better. The difficulty of course in the past couple of years is that the public sector has shown through the winning of tenders that it can compete with the private sector. It has embarrassed the Government by winning tenders such as the Hilton sewerage work, and also by competing well in the fleet management tender at the Water Authority - to name just a couple of examples.

The Water Authority of Western Australia is an very efficient organisation with good productivity levels. The Water Authority is probably one of the success stories of the Labor Government, which effectively began the corporatisation process of WAWA which enhanced productivity levels, reduced debt burden and increased the revenue to consolidated fund from that government agency. The chairman's overview in the authority's annual report of 1994 was laudatory of the position of the Western Australia

Water Authority. The chairman stated in his report that the authority remained among the leaders of the major urban water authorities in Australia, that it had the lowest operating costs for metropolitan water and waste water services and the second highest real rate of return on metropolitan assets. He also stated that it met community service obligations of \$154.3m funded through internal cost subsidies. He stated that the authority's contribution to the consolidated fund in 1993-94 was \$23.9m and it offered the benefits of a fully integrated system and the economies of scale. I am not suggesting that the Water Authority is perfect in its current state, but it rates very highly when compared with other water authorities in Australia and the world. More opportunities exist to improve the services and to return even more money to the CRF without increasing costs to consumers above the consumer price index.

Of some concern are comments in the annual report by the immediate past managing director of the Water Authority, Mr Wally Cox, who highlighted two unresolved issues. One was the absence of a framework to identify the need, number, level and cost for a range of community service obligations. The other was the suggestion of further tariff reform, including commercial sewerage charges and country and commercial water charges to ensure tariffs more accurately reflect the cost of service provision and minimise the cost of cross-subsidies. That second issue casts a warning to people in country areas where most of that subsidisation occurs. Mr Cox referred to a future issue which has come very much into the present. He stated -

Government has introduced a policy of contestability for Government services. A number of services currently provided by Government agencies will be exposed to competitive tendering to reduce the cost of service provision. The Authority already uses competitive tendering and contracting extensively particularly in construction. A range of other support services will be exposed to competitive tendering.

What is not said is that the public sector would be prohibited from competing. It is a very different direction from that proposed in that guide to Ministers and CEOs at the end of 1993.

Having briefly commented on the history that has led up to this in Western Australia and also on the very positive position of the Western Australian Water Authority currently and how it compares favourably with other water authorities, it is worth considering some of the debacles of water privatisation in other places. England is a case in point. One of the most controversial privatisations of Margaret Thatcher was the water industry of England and Wales in 1989. Some adverse comment appears in the Press every week about the privatisation of the water industry in England and Wales. The enormous salaries of the directors of the 10 privatised companies and the relentless increases in bills to consumers have continued to be raised in the Press. For each of the 10 private companies running the water industry in England the story is very much the same. I have jotted down a few points from the information I have on all 10 of them. I have selected two to highlight to this Parliament. North West Water is one of the 10 privatised British water companies. It is interesting that it has now an Australian chairman in Nick Greiner, a former Liberal Premier of New South Wales. When North West Water started in 1989 domestic consumers were paying on average £110 per annum for their water bills. Those Bills have now increased to £182 a year - an increase of 65 per cent. North West Water shareholders received dividends of £269m, which was a massive increase on the last return from that area for the Government, which was only £44.3m. The chief executive of North West Water, Mr Brian Oldfield, when it was a non-privatised entity received £58 000 per annum. The current most highly paid chief executive in the water industry in England, Sir Desmond Pitcher, now receives £360 000 per annum.

Mrs Henderson: That is almost \$800 000.

Mrs ROBERTS: Yes. The gain has been in the salaries of the executives and the loss has been to consumers. The average increase in water bills during that period is some 60 per cent. In the case of Thames Water, one of the other private companies, there has

been a 60 per cent increase from £101 to £162 per annum. The profits have jumped from £207.2m to £242m. The non-privatised chief executive was Mr Mike Hoffman, who was paid £181 402 per annum, and now that same chief executive receives £317 000 per annum, which means that same fellow's salary has gone up by an unbelievable amount. The benefits are to the people at the top and the people who pay for the water lose. That is without considering some of the environmental and health aspects that are now beginning to emerge in England. The overall picture is that domestic water bills have risen by 67 per cent since 1989. If one takes into account the United Kingdom retail price index for the same period which rose by 19 per cent, the real price increase to water consumers in the United Kingdom was 48 per cent.

Mrs Henderson: That is what will happen here.

Mrs ROBERTS: That is the story of what has happened all around the world. The super profits to new shareholders have gone up dramatically. The pre-tax profits for 1993-94 are up by approximately £2 000m. The average salary blowout for the private chief executives of all 10 authorities in England is in the order of £250 000.

In the meantime cases of dysentery and hepatitis have increased since privatisation. I have some figures from the Public Health Laboratory Service in regard to dysentery. In the United Kingdom in 1990 there were 2 319 cases, in 1991, 9 830 cases and in 1992, 17 262 cases. I do not believe that is coincidental; one can draw a pretty strong correlation between that and the privatisation of water in England.

It is interesting to look at the English situation and see how members of the Government and its former Ministers have benefited from this privatisation. An article by Michael White reads -

Eight former ministers in John Major's government, including Norman Lamont, John MacGregor and David Mellor, have paid directorships or consultancies in fields linked with their previous government posts, an independent research organisation has claimed.

Twelve ex-Major ministers among the 200 Tory backbench - out of 243 - who hold 276 paid directorships and 356 consultancies with commercial organisations, according to Labour Research, which specialises in analysing company returns. But eight of the 12 are working in fields related to their ministerial expertise.

One can see that Tory Ministers in the United Kingdom were not slow off the mark when it came to setting themselves up in some of these private enterprises which they created.

The next comparison is with Victoria. It is important to look at the experiences of Victoria, New South Wales and South Australia. I do not have time to cover all three but give a brief indication of what happened in Victoria for comparative purposes. It has been determined in Victoria to set up three retail business for its water industry in the form of City West Water Pty Ltd, Yarra Valley Water Pty Ltd and South East Water Pty Ltd. The functions of those companies include individual service delivery, management of distribution networks, financial management of areas in their domain and the handling of water and sewage in those areas. In the 1993-94 Victorian Budget \$14m was allocated to examine the privatisation of the Water Authority. Most of it was taken up in very expensive consultancies, one of which was the Melbourne Water Corporation's scoping study which was done by SBC Dominguez Barry, which is a subsidiary of the Swiss Bank. Another prepared by London Economics in July 1992 was entitled "Restructuring Melbourne Water". Having paid for that independent advice it seems that the Kennett Government, like the Court Government with some of its reports, chose to ignore that advice. The independent advice that Melbourne Water received from London Economics concluded as follows -

The general conclusions from the study are that;

Overseas models do not provide a simple template upon which MW can be restructured, but they do provide some important lessons.

International evidence suggests that market structure and regulation are

more important determinants of efficiency than ownership per se. In particular the privatised structure in the UK, and the French system of franchising have led to only very limited forms of competition and often at substantial regulatory cost.

On the balance of evidence it would appear that corporatisation is preferable to pure public sector monopoly. . . .

Fragmentation of MW would result in significant losses in scale and scope and increased finance charges.

To achieve net cost savings, very strong assumptions need to be made about efficiency improvements from increased competition to outweigh the losses in scale and scope.

Significant improvements in MW's profitability, possibly of the order of 30%-50% may be achieved by retaining MW as a single integrated business, applying disciplined management and taking advantage of competitive forces . . .

One would think that here in Australia we might be able to learn something from the experience in the United Kingdom, but it seems that in Western Australia we are proceeding with the same stupidity. An article in *The Weekend Australian* entitled "State pressured to reopen \$1.5bn water contract bid" refers to what is happening in South Australia. Four big companies, two English and two French, are eying Australia's water utilities. The article states -

In one of the largest contracts ever offered by a State Government, two French companies, Lyonnaise Des Eaux and Compagnie Generale Des Eaux and two British companies North West Water and Thames Water are involved in a controversial bid for the contract to manage Adelaide's water and sewerage systems for 15 to 20 years.

I would hate to see Western Australia go down a similar road. If we do, the same debacle that is occurring in South Australia will occur here.

Water is a special case. It is a public utility that, as a matter of principle, the Australian Labor Party believes should remain in public ownership. It is essential that the Government considers the views of Western Australian citizens on this matter because Western Australians well understand the importance of water. Starting in childhood, we learnt that we live in the driest third of our continent and that water is a precious resource. Water is a very sensitive issue for Western Australians and this Government will rue the day it embarked upon this ideological push to privatise at any cost because I do not believe that Western Australians look forward to the involvement of French and British companies in the delivery of our water services. The cavalier approach that the Government is adopting in this matter is demonstrated by its lack of overview and detail, and its piecemeal approach is an indication that its policy does not stand up to any analysis.

The Premier's position on this issue has shifted time and again. Water is a monopoly. However, this Government is giving the private sector advantages to run a monopoly. It is not like Telecom or other organisations that have been privatised. Some people do not understand that. We cannot just dial a number beforehand and choose which service we want to access, Optus or Telecom, and take some commercial or competitive advantage. We will never have two or three water pipes into and out of our houses which will allow us to determine when we will use one company or the other. Victoria is looking at involving three different companies. I have heard a suggestion that we are looking at involving two companies, one for metropolitan south and the other for metropolitan north which will somehow mean that there will be competition. That is not the way it works. What is effectively handed over are two separate private monopolies.

In conclusion, I draw members' attention to the huge opportunity which, if we follow the Government's ideologically driven privatisation policy, we may miss in Asia. There is an opportunity for us to export water and sewerage technology and expertise to Asia.

What we should be considering is how the Water Authority of Western Australia can best place itself to take advantage of those opportunities in Asia. The French and the British water companies are using the Australian utility reform process to position themselves to access the growing market in Asia for these services. I am reliably informed that the potential for the exporting of our expertise into South East Asia could amount to approximately \$100b. However, it is an opportunity that this Government is ignoring. The French and British companies are aware of the opportunities to offer water and sewerage expertise to Asia and earn profits. If we looked at doing that kind of thing, we might do something for Australia's balance of payments. The WA Water Authority is a comparatively good manager of water. It has an integrated system which is the envy of the French and British companies. It has a high level of expertise in water and sewerage and generally sound environmental practices. Asian cities with large populations are looking at getting overseas countries to offer packages in design and planning, and the operation and monitoring of their water and sewerage services. Ironically, it is the same overseas companies that are attempting to copy our integrated organisation model that this Government is hell bent on fragmenting.

We should learn from the mistakes of others. We should use our expertise to earn money for Western Australia and Australia by improving the balance of payments and providing more jobs. We should not be blindly copying the mistakes and ignoring the opportunities. That approach will result in job losses and increased costs to consumers. Services will be reduced and this move to the user pays system will mean that users in country areas will pay a lot more.

The Government is moving in this area to waste our money in its ideological pursuits. It is a little like Mabo where, because of the political imperative, \$10m was spent defending the Government's case. In this instance, there is no rationale to the privatisation of the authority if we do not get better services and it costs consumers more. I believe the Government owes it to the community to provide a fair and open assessment of its proposals for the Water Authority. The Premier should stick to the criteria for privatisation that he confirmed in this House last week of better services at a lower cost to taxpayers. I have previously presented to the House instances of the Water Authority ignoring reports that it commissioned and paid for which indicate that the privatisation of these WAWA services will cost more. It should tell the truth about what it is doing with the Water Authority and put forward its plans for complete public scrutiny.

MR OSBORNE (Bunbury) [5.48 pm]: I take the opportunity in this debate to address one general theme; that is, the need for the City of Bunbury to receive support from the State Government for the infrastructure it needs to take on the challenge to become Western Australia's second city. This is not just the parish pump pleadings of a local politician; it is in the interests of the entire State because my view is that, after 10 years of very genuine efforts by previous State Governments and this State Government to regionalise and decentralise Western Australia, nothing of significance has been achieved. In the early 1980s, about 72 per cent of Western Australia's population resided in the Perth metropolitan area. I understand that today the figure is around 73 per cent. Therefore, despite all of the genuine and earnest attempts by Governments since then, nothing of real significance has been achieved to decentralise Western Australia's population away from the metropolitan area. That is a problem for all Western Australians because the Perth metropolitan area has reached the natural limits of its growth. We are starting to see more and more examples of that limit being reached in a lowering of living quality, increases in the numbers of social breakdowns and other matters.

The Minister for Resources Development, the member for Cottesloe, was in Bunbury last week. He addressed a meeting of the chamber of commerce on Thursday evening. The meeting was held to welcome members of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Western Australia who were touring the south west region. The Minister, in his address, detailed what I think is now fairly well known; that is, that an enormous amount of resource development is going on in the south west region.

At the moment, some \$966m worth of resource developments have been approved in the

south west region, and it is our genuine expectation that that will be repeated for the next four to five years. About \$4b to \$5b worth of developments are in either the pre-planning or planning stages in the south west region. We have on the move at the moment mineral sands developments at north Capel, a new mineral sands mine at Beenyup, the commencement of construction of the Collie Power Station, and a major potential expansion of the pulp and paper mill industry; and, as I said in question time today, in Bunbury we have a major project to construct an oil rig platform at the Port of Bunbury.

Mr Riebeling: Is that one of ours?

Mr OSBORNE: We will build better ones. It is important to understand that that is an opportunity for Bunbury and the south west region which will continue into the next decade. We will build concrete gravity structures in the Port of Bunbury and float them out to the North West Shelf and the Wandoo oilfield, and that will be good for all Western Australians. That \$100m project will put \$23m of wages into the Bunbury economy inside 12 months and create 400 jobs in the construction industry. Those jobs can be sourced in the south west region because they are concrete jobs, earth moving jobs, steel and scaffolding jobs, and so on.

Mr Riebeling: Concrete jobs!

Mr OSBORNE: Yes; real jobs, and also jobs in concreting. That project is a real boost for the south west region. In addition to the list of resource projects which are on the go in Bunbury and the south west region, what impressed the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Western Australia was the enthusiasm for development in the City of Bunbury and in the region. I draw this matter to the attention of the House because the Minister for Resources Development has foreshadowed the need for the City of Bunbury to look at accepting a population size of between 70 000 and 100 000 people so that Western Australia will have balanced growth. That comment was reported in the *Bunbury Mail* of today, 5 April, in an article entitled, "Decentralisation back on the agenda", which states -

Billions of dollars worth of industrial development proposed for Bunbury has renewed calls for a concentrated push to increase the city's population towards the 100,000 mark.

Comments by Resources Development Minister Colin Barnett at an industry function in Bunbury last week have put decentralisation back on the agenda.

That is the theme of my speech. If we are to put decentralisation back on the agenda in Western Australia and if the Government is to do what is needed - that is, have a strategic and coordinated plan to make Bunbury a second city within Western Australia - the Government must make strong infrastructure commitments to the City of Bunbury. As I said earlier, this speech is not just a local member standing on the box and calling for improvements for his electorate or for the city in which he lives but is a call by someone who is interested in the future of balanced development in Western Australia. It is a matter of State significance.

The first thing which the Government should support in Bunbury is new sporting and recreational facilities. I am glad the member for Murray is in the Chamber tonight because I will commence my comments about sporting and recreational facilities by reflecting briefly on some of the comments which he made. I must say I am glad the member for Murray is not sitting here because he is a full brother of Trizzie Lawrence and I would have been in severe danger of getting a smack on the ankle for what I am about to say; so if the member for Murray stays in the Whip's seat, I will be pleased. The member for Murray did not mention - and I will bring him up to date with several important sporting facts in Western Australia - that the Western Australian Football League is representative of a pretty minor sport in world terms, and the Peel region of Western Australia is a minor player in that minor sport. I had a look at the document to which the member for Murray referred, and because it had "Private and Confidential" on the front cover I looked at it carefully, and I must inform the House that it was not a

comparative document but was just a document written by the Peel Development Commission, in a fairly self-congratulatory tone, which said what a wonderful place the Peel region was and what good footballers it produced. Anyone in this place who knows anything about country football - and that includes the members for Kalgoorlie and Geraldton, and any member from the south west - knows that the Peel region stands about fourth in the hierarchy of country football regions, and all of the great country footballers who have played in the Western Australian Football League have come from the south west competition, the eastern goldfields competition - I see the member for Merredin also agrees with me - and the great northern competition.

A sport which is played in Western Australia and which puts Australian sport right at the top of international sport is field hockey. Hockey is not just a domestic sport; it is a sport, along with track cycling, in which Australia excels on the world stage. We all know that the Australian women's hockey team are Olympic gold medallists and current world champions, and the men's hockey team are Olympic silver medallists and for the last several years have been at or very near the top of world hockey. The reason that I raised the matter of hockey a couple of weeks ago is that one of the great needs in the electorate of Bunbury and in the south west is more facilities for the sport of hockey. The member for Helena, as the Parliamentary Secretary assisting the Minister for Sport and Recreation, was in Bunbury several weeks ago to participate in a dragon boat racing festival, and I took the opportunity of taking her out to the Hay Park sporting centre in Bunbury to show her that 20-year old sporting facility, which is badly in need of upgrade, and also the hockey facilities. Busselton has a wet hockey pitch and Bunbury has a dry hockey pitch, but we have a great need in Bunbury for a wet hockey pitch so that we can continue to make the contribution to Western Australian hockey that we have made in the past. For the past two years, the south west has had a hockey team in the State competition - the South West Strikers - so while the Western Australian Football League struggles to come to terms with the inclusion of regional teams in its competition, the hockey organisation has been there and done that.

There is a great need for improvements to the Hay Park sporting facility. The 50 metre swimming pool is now in an advanced state of disrepair and needs to be replaced, because if we are to continue to hold swimming events of State significance in Bunbury we will need a new pool so that timing mechanisms can be installed at both ends of the pool. The Bunbury Swimming Club has been the champion swimming club for country associations for the past seven years, so there is no question that swimming is a strong sport in Bunbury. In fact, we are looking forward to the Olympics in the year 2000 when one of our own swimmers, Tony Ciffollilli, will, we hope, represent Australia in swimming.

As I have said, the member for Helena also participated in a dragon boat event. Members may be aware that the sport of dragon boat racing is very popular in Bunbury. Last month, we had the sixth annual state dragon boat championships in Bunbury, and at the end of May three teams from Bunbury will go to the international dragon boat championships in Penang. This sport has great potential for the future not just as a sport but also for cultural reasons, because it includes us in the Asian sphere and does an enormous amount for community cohesion in a city like Bunbury. I mentioned dragon boating because a number of projects in Bunbury will be of great assistance to water-based sports. The first project is a paddling centre on Leschenault Inlet. Secondly, and most importantly, is the development of a 1 000 metre masters rowing course in Leschenault Inlet. Wally Foreman was in Bunbury some months ago, and after a tour of the city's sporting facilities he came to the conclusion that there was great potential in Bunbury for a sporting facility of national significance, and that was for a masters rowing course.

Sitting suspended from 6.00 to 7.30 pm

Mr OSBORNE: Before the dinner suspension I was talking about the need for improved recreational and sporting facilities in Bunbury. I talked about the possibility of developing a masters' rowing course in Bunbury which could be used for the dragon boat sport. I hasten to add that this program would not compete with the rowing course which

is in existence at Wellington Dam, the site of the Australian rowing championships this Saturday. When the member for Helena was in Bunbury some weeks ago, I showed her the Leschenault Inlet proposition. I hope that at some stage in the future the Government can find between \$150 000 and \$180 000 to dredge that course and to provide a facility which will be of great benefit to the rowing and dragon boat sports. If the dragon boat course can be located there, the opportunity for Bunbury to be involved in an international dragon boat circuit could be a real one. Three dragon boat teams from Bunbury are going to an international regatta in Penang at the end of May. In association with that event, we will attempt to secure a place on an international circuit for dragon boat racing in Bunbury.

I now refer to a project on which I have worked for several months. It is necessary for the Government to go beyond the more jobs, better management idea that it went to the election with in 1993. Since that election the Government has largely been delivering on its commitments to the people of Western Australia to provide more jobs and better management of the State's assets. Given the great pressures that are occurring in Bunbury, particularly with the developments about which I have spoken, we must do something to guarantee the quality of life in that city. With a lot more housing development, more people coming to visit and more people in the city, our recreational and lifestyle facilities will come under a lot of pressure.

In the middle of last year I began talking to the Premier about a lifestyle project. The Premier encouraged me to keep developing the idea. Some weeks ago I made a major submission to the Government which I hope will be included in the forthcoming state Budget. The project will provide infrastructure improvements for the City of Bunbury to guarantee the lifestyle which makes it such a wonderful place in which to live.

In the north of the city is the Leschenault peninsula conservation park, the Leschenault Inlet, the Queen's Gardens, the back beach area of Bunbury between Symmons and Hayward Streets, and in the south is an area called the west Withers tuart forest. Between the Leschenault peninsula conservation park and the west Withers tuart forest, there are a great number of opportunities for the Government to improve the quality of lifestyle for the residents of Bunbury in the future.

My submission to the Government is in the process of being assessed within the budgetary process. I am optimistic that it will be recognised by the Government. The project will be planned in the next 12 months and major improvements to the back beach area, including picnic areas, a water fun park and a salt water baths, will begin to be constructed in the next financial year. That has been very well received in the Bunbury community and there has been only a little criticism of it, and that has been based on the fact that it is a proposal made by a member of the Government and not based on the merits of the proposal.

Continuing my theme of the need for infrastructure improvements in Bunbury, I mentioned that last Monday I had a meeting with the mayor of Bunbury, Dr Manea, and the city manager, Mr Gary Brennan. I have regular meetings with these two gentlemen and we talk about the future of the city of Bunbury so that we can all be pulling on the same rope. I have received fairly strong representation from the City of Bunbury that it should be acknowledged as a regional capital. If that is done by the Government, it follows as a necessary consequence that the Government must invest in infrastructure in the city.

The Bunbury City Council will very shortly be presenting a submission of its own to the Government which will detail significant amounts of capital expenditure in the City of Bunbury. That includes expenditure on roads, drainage, traffic management and also lifestyle projects like those about which I have just spoken, the Big Swamp wetland project, coastal management work and further work on the townscape. Anyone who has been to Bunbury in the past couple of years will have noticed the major improvements in Victoria and Stephens Streets and that has been achieved by way of an injection of funds, \$200 000, from LandCorp and the city spending \$400 000 to create a Northbridge-South Terrace type of atmosphere in the middle of the city of Bunbury.

Mr Blaikie: There is a new era of confidence in Bunbury. It is quite remarkable.

Mr OSBORNE: That is extremely flattering of the member for Vasse. I can do nothing but agree with the thrust of those remarks.

Mr Riebeling interjected.

Mr OSBORNE: I am overcome by these protestations of support from my colleagues. It makes me feel very humble, but I must continue. The Bunbury City Council, like many local authorities in Western Australia, has a diminishing ability to meet the demands being placed on it. Over the past 10 years the amount of money that the Bunbury City Council has received in financial assistance grants has declined. In 1990-91 the Bunbury City Council got \$1.171m from the Federal Government which in 1994-95 had shrunk to \$957 000. Over that four year period, the amount of money that the Bunbury City Council has received has fallen, and in real terms it has fallen even more dramatically. The City of Bunbury received \$885 000 for federal road grants in 1991-92 and in 1994-95 it received \$608 000. The Bunbury City Council is under pressure from two different directions: On the one hand it is being required to provide more and more facilities and on the other hand it is being given less and less resources with which to provide those facilities.

I am interested in speaking to the Minister for Planning about another provision that Bunbury must try to make for the benefit of the south west region; that is, public open spaces. I have just mentioned the west Withers tuart forest. For those members who are not aware of this forest, it is a belt of 100 hectares of tuart forest to the south of the city of Bunbury. It has more potential - the member for Vasse will probably lose his affection for what I have just been saying when he hears this - than does the Ludlow tuart forest in the Shire of Busselton.

Mr Blaikie: I have heard it suggested that that forest should be named Ian Osborne regional park.

Mr Riebeling: Memorial Park.

Mr OSBORNE: No. Let us just wait. The west Withers tuart forest is a wonderful area of tuart bushland to the south of the city of Bunbury. The Ludlow tuart forest is under an enormous amount of pressure. Many visitors stop there. In the past it has been heavily destocked so the understorey has now gone. It is infested with introduced grasses and weeds and dominated by peppermint trees.

Because so many visitors use it as a barbecue area it is at great risk of being destroyed by bushfire. To the south of the City of Bunbury, the west Withers tuart area is genuinely representative of what tuart forest used to be like.

The Minister for Housing several months ago kindly agreed that some land Homeswest owned in this area would not be developed for housing, and the question of compensation arose. It is easy for Homeswest to be compensated from somewhere else in Western Australia with some land that the Government owns. However, it is difficult for the City of Bunbury to give up a piece of land earmarked for residential development. We must find some way of compensating Bunbury. It is not possible to give it land from somewhere else in Western Australia.

That raises the question of the metropolitan region improvement tax. That fund is available in the metropolitan area so the Government can buy public open space for the benefit of all Western Australians. I recently began talking to the Minister for Planning along the lines of having the Metropolitan Region Improvement Tax Act amended so that the same thing can be done in the country. The planning legislation gives us the ability to put planning structures over the top of a range of local authorities. A region improvement tax along the same lines as the metropolitan region improvement tax would be very beneficial for cities such as Bunbury which are being called on to supply public open space and recreational park facilities for an entire region.

I will conclude by talking about the building better cities program. Again this reflects the need to provide infrastructure facilities for a region. I attended a building better cities

seminar in Canberra last Monday and Tuesday, representing the Minister for Planning and in my capacity as the chairman of the building better cities and Bunbury harbour city committee. I hope the Minister does not send me to another seminar in Canberra, because although it was interesting to look at all the building better cities programs throughout Australia, I was taken aback and disappointed at the way those seminars are run in Canberra. Many members will know there are several building better cities programs in Western Australia - at Fremantle, Subiaco Oval, East Perth and Ascot Fields. They are all connected by a green belt concept. There is one not in Perth; it is at Bunbury. That is a recognition of the fact that Bunbury as a major city has infrastructure needs. The only thing that concerned me about the seminar at Canberra -

Mr Riebeling interjected.

Mr OSBORNE: That is one of the things that bugged me about it. There were a couple of hundred bureaucrats and assorted cheerleaders there, and every one who got to his feet thanked the Federal Government for taking the initiative to get the program going. The fact is that in Bunbury the Federal Government put \$10m into the program and the State Government put in \$23m. It is not really predominantly a federal government program; it is principally funded by the State Government. It concerned me at the seminar that all the members of Brian Howe's cheer squad and the bureaucrats said how wonderful it was that the Federal Government should have created this idea of rejuvenating inner city areas, as if something like that could not be thought of by state or local governments.

I had a number of conversations with some of the people from the federal Department of Housing, and I was impressed; they are very diligent, earnest and hardworking, but I just could not accept that they knew more about Bunbury and what Bunbury needed than did the local people. I believe Canberra can best serve the needs of regional cities like Perth and Bunbury by staying out of the way. One can pretty much guarantee that every dollar that Canberra puts into a city like Bunbury has passed through so many hands that when it started out its life in taxpayers' pockets it was more like \$3 or \$4. The Federal Government says it has put \$10m into Bunbury, but if it had left the money in our pockets in the first place, it would have provided us with a much better service and the Federal Government could have got out of the way and let us get on with the job. I was disturbed by the pervasive centralism of the bureaucracy in Canberra. The buzz words are centralism and coordination. I cannot accept that policy; although some short run technical efficiencies might be gained from centralisation, the constant stimulus of competition between States, and cities like Bunbury finding their own solutions to problems, will give the best outcomes in productivity, job creation and freedom.

I am very interested in some of the documents coming out of the Institute of Public Affairs recently, especially those written by Wolfgang Kaspar. He writes about the principles of competitive federalism and other matters that interest me, such as the principles of subsidiarity, where we must decide which level of government is best suited to providing a service and leave it to do that alone so that we can cut out overlap. It seems clear that when the federation was first designed that was in the minds of the founding fathers. It was clearly stated then that the responsibilities of the Commonwealth Government were to look after the coinage, defence, communications and so on. Unfortunately, since the formation of federation we have seen a continued incursion by the Federal Government into affairs which should be the province of the States. One of my great hopes about the outcome of the current debate on the republic, which is a very useful debate, is that we will re-examine the original nature of the federation, and we will recognise that the changes that have occurred in Australia since then have been to the detriment of States like Western Australia and that the calls for the republic are a guise for more centralism. Many of the forms which are coming out of Canberra are more monarchical in their nature than truly republican.

The theme I have been addressing tonight is the need for infrastructure development in a city like Bunbury. It is most important that all Western Australians recognise that we must do something about the imbalance of population distribution in this State. If we want Bunbury to take on the role of a second city and move towards a population of 70 000 to 100 000, this Government must do something about providing much needed

infrastructure to allow that to happen. An enormous amount of development is occurring in the south west region, and if that region and the City of Bunbury are given the support they need, they can deliver a terrific number of benefits to Western Australia. I will continue to talk to the Government about the need for sport, recreational and lifestyle facilities in Bunbury so that the pressures of growth do not destroy our wonderful lifestyle. I will continue to press the Government to do what is necessary to make Bunbury a genuinely alternative capital city in Western Australia.

MR RIEBELING (Ashburton) [7.48 pm]: I congratulate the member for Bunbury for becoming a republican towards the end of his speech. I am sure we can count on his support when that day comes.

I want to deal mainly with the effect this Government has had on the public housing sector and the impact of privatisation on that department, especially on maintenance and service delivery for Homeswest customers. However, before I touch on that issue, I want to remind members of something which appears to be passing by without anyone noticing. I am referring to a huge tragedy in the north and it is time someone asked, on the record, how this Government will respond to the disaster that occurred during the event commonly known as cyclone Bobby. About five weeks ago cyclone Bobby crossed our coastline near Onslow. As a result of that cyclone, seven seamen - one woman and six men - lost their lives. It is a state embarrassment and a tragedy that the bodies have not been recovered and are still entombed in the boats in which they drowned. I will touch on what occurred in the Onslow area when cyclone Bobby approached and refer to a couple of things that should have happened since and describe how the Government should make sure this type of disaster does not happen again in any of the State's waters.

Before I do, I will put on record that many people in this place may have experienced a cyclone which came to the south of the State many years ago and which created havoc in the south west - Busselton, Narrogin, Bunbury and the like. Compared with cyclone Bobby that cyclone was very small. Compared with cyclone Orson, cyclone Bobby was also quite small, but unique in its structure. Although it was not a category 5 cyclone, Bobby's winds very widely affected the areas for a day and a half prior to crossing the coast. Cyclone Bobby came within 80 kilometres of Karratha where I was situated and the winds we experienced were between 140 and 150 kilometres an hour. I stress that that was some 80 kilometres from the centre of cyclone Bobby.

The two boats which suffered a maximum loss of life among the crew were the *Lady Pamela* and the *Harmony*. Both boats lost all hands on board. This House must now realise that both the Point Samson and the Beadon Creek wharves at Onslow are unmanned. They are not controlled by the Department of Marine and Harbours and they have not been for some time. The officer controlling Point Samson wharf, for instance, was removed as a direct result of this Government's actions. During the Estimates Committee debates in this House I pointed out to the Minister that the Government seemed to be placing greater emphasis on accountability and efficiency rather than safety. The Minister representing the Minister for Transport, the member for Applecross, indicated that the Government was leaving it to the boat owners to provide safety and was, therefore, removing officers from the Marine and Harbours section in those areas. We have two very important small wharves in my electorate, one in Beadon Creek and one at Point Samson. When a cyclone is approaching the area, no-one is in control of those wharves. The situation is left to the fishermen to deal with. That directly resulted in four of the deaths in this case.

When the cyclone approached the coastline, the fishermen who use the wharf did what they always do - tied up along the wharf in Beadon Creek. It is a land-backed wharf and they tie up one part of their boat to that land-backed wharf; other boats tied up to each boat and so on until all the boats were in place. In these instances, from what I have been told, when the final boat is tied up a steel rope is extended across the wharf and a further tie-down occurs on the other side of the wharf. As soon as the last boat is tied up, no other boat can access that wharf; it is blocked off. The seamen make a judgment about when that will occur. The simple fact is that the *Lady Pamela* was in Onslow waters on

the Thursday night. It was told by radio, I imagine, that the wharf had been blocked off. Another skipper was under the misapprehension that someone from Marine and Harbours had ordered that wharf closed. That does not appear to be the case. I imagine that the message was that the wharf had been blocked off by the ropes and they had to secure the boats themselves. It was a fatal mistake to have left the skipper to either secure his boat in an unsafe position in the wharf mouth and let it sink - one other boat also sank that night - or take the ship out and ride out the cyclone. People in the metropolitan area must realise the power of these cyclones. They produce waves of about four or five metres and winds of massive strength. The *Harmony*, which was heading for Onslow did not quite make it; it sank on the way in. The *Lady Pamela* was in fact in Onslow waters. It secured itself as best it could and was sunk.

Since that date, an extensive search for the bodies has been made. When the boats were found a dive on them located in the *Lady Pamela* at least one body. People in the metropolitan area especially must realise that the body was located at least three weeks ago. Since then, no attempt has been made to recover that body. My information is that it is more than likely the remains of bodies are in both boats. That situation is creating massive trauma for the families involved.

I have spoken to one of the widows who has gone from being deeply upset to being exceptionally annoyed that no action has been taken to recover the remains of the crew on those two boats. Today, the Coroner made an order that a boat from the Fisheries Department from Carnarvon be sent to assist the police with the extraction of the bodies. It is five weeks since the cyclone struck and three weeks since the body was found. This is not prompt action on behalf of the Government. It should have stepped in as soon as one body was found and ordered that the Coroner make every effort to remove all the bodies. I have been told that the cost of this boat being transferred to give the police divers some sort of platform from which to work will be \$4 500. The boats have been left for so long that the only way to get the bodies out now is to refloat the boats. It is unacceptable that the Government has sat by for five weeks and, I presume because of the costs, done nothing about attempting to remove the remains of those seamen.

Another cyclone is forming off the north west coast of Western Australia, near Wyndham. I am fearful that if the smaller wharves in our area are left uncontrolled, we will be courting another disaster. The department should immediately set up a task force of several people so that when an emergency arises, such as a cyclone approaching the Pilbara coast, those people can man the wharves for three or four days in order to control boating movements in the area. If a professional person were put in control of the Beadon Creek wharf prior to the last cyclone, clearly that person would have known about other boat operators who wished to access that wharf area. The worst thing that could have happened to those boats is that they would have been sunk. If they had access to the wharf, they may well have sunk. That would have been horrible; the insurance companies would have paid out a couple of million dollars and the boats would have been rebuilt - but the seven people would be alive had that occurred prior to the last cyclone.

I urge the Government to immediately consider the establishment of a task force to enable wharves to be properly manned in cyclonic conditions. If the Minister considers that that is a reasonable request, it would be welcomed in my area. With the disaster in my mind of having six bodies still trapped within hulks at the bottom of the ocean, one of which is still protruding through the ocean surface, one could imagine with what speed this Government would act if those boats were sunk in Perth waters or between here and Rottnest. It is unacceptable to wait five weeks to extract bodies in the north; it is unacceptable to wait that long to extract bodies in the south or anywhere in this State.

Mr Cunningham: It is a disgrace.

Mr RIEBELING: It is a disgrace which this Government appears not to know about. No comment has been made from anyone in the Government about the situation or what the Government has learnt from the disaster. If we learn nothing from the deaths of seven people, we should be shot. The Government should already have instituted an inquiry

into what happened and should have come out with certain recommendations for procedural changes to ensure that this sort of tragedy never recurs.

I move on to the principal issue of my speech; namely, housing. In the past two years in Western Australia through the ideologically driven agenda of this Government we have witnessed increases in costs, especially to rental people following the introduction in a number of areas of marketplace rentals; the reduction of employment within Homeswest of blue and white collar workers; a massive reduction in the quality of services to and maintenance of Homeswest housing; and a severe downturn in customer services throughout the State. From what I have been told those services will be further reduced, especially in country areas where a number of country offices are under threat of closure. I hope the Minister for Housing will respond as I go along to anything he may disagree with.

Since this Government was elected on the platform of "More Jobs, Better Management", we have seen the loss of 400 jobs throughout the Homeswest organisation. That figure includes caretakers, gardeners and white collar workers. Within that period 95 per cent of blue collar workers who were offered redundancy took redundancy. Some in this place may say that that must mean that those workers wanted to go. However, if people are told that they do not have a future within a department and are offered money to go, most will take that offer. The Government has not told us how much those redundancy packages have cost in total. I hope the Minister will provide the House with that figure. Most of those blue collar redundancies were in the area of maintenance and cleaning. My information is that most of those services were replaced by contractors.

I am advised also that the money set aside for the payment of contractors has blown out substantially, and now the contracting is causing the management of Homeswest so many problems that the cost of call back of other contractors to remedy contractors' work has blown out the budget. Some \$300 000 has been overspent already in this financial year. It is my understanding also that because of the blowout in the budget for maintenance very little, if any, maintenance will be conducted by Homeswest over the next three months. A substantial cut has been made to the number of technical advisers; their number has been cut by eight. These advisers assess how much work is worth, and check completed work and whether the State gets value for money. My understanding is that only 12 staff remain in that section of Homeswest. Is that correct?

Mr Prince: I cannot confirm or deny that at the moment, but I will check that. I point out with regard to what you call job losses that those workers have transferred from the public sector to the private sector. In some instances the workers who took redundancy are now doing the jobs on contract.

Mr RIEBELING: I am talking about how work is done. Some 400 workers who used to work for Homeswest, in whatever positions, now do not.

Mr Prince: Yes, but the jobs are still being done.

Mr RIEBELING: Yes, but not by the people who used to do them.

Mr Prince: Not necessarily.

Mr RIEBELING: I am saying that the system which has been put in place is not cost efficient and is causing major problems to tenants in the area of maintenance. I will get to specific instances if I have enough time. If I do not get through them all, I am happy to give the Minister the examples after my speech.

It is disturbing to be told by operatives within Homeswest that their opinion is that the maintenance program is being run down. I have witnessed a number of properties which require major maintenance. It was interesting that the Minister in answer to questions gave a list of times in which Homeswest contractors had to respond to various categories of maintenance, ranging from emergency to standard and another category. In all categories the response time for emergencies is three days. The response times were all low and they sounded good; however, that does not appear to be the fact.

I constantly receive complaints through my office of delays of months in vital

maintenance. The Press recently reported the situation of a home in Broome that was supposed to be ready for habitation. The Press arrived and took in their cameras. All of a sudden the officers remembered that massive amounts of maintenance should have been done on that property prior to anyone occupying it.

Mr Prince: The woman concerned went into the house prior to its being ready for occupation, and prior to the \$3 000 maintenance being carried out.

Mr RIEBELING: That is right; only because of the publicity it attracted.

Mr Prince: She was not entitled to occupation prior to the time she went in.

Mr RIEBELING: It appeared from the press reports that the media coverage prompted Homeswest to review the matter and say that it was wrong and that it should have painted the house and fixed up the cupboards and tiles. In fact, the house the woman was asked to move into was a disgrace. If she knew that that was the case, she told untruths on television. However, she seemed to be supported by the officers of the department who were interviewed also in that incident.

Mr Prince: They have admitted that some errors were made in that matter and it was not handled as well as it should have been. I have written to the lady concerned.

Mr RIEBELING: I am told that there is a plan afoot to close a number of Homeswest offices in the country.

Mr Prince: Which ones?

Mr RIEBELING: The proposed closures being talked about in Homeswest are in a number of towns and I would like a commitment from the Minister that the offices in these towns will not be closed within the next two years. The first one is at Collie. Is the Minister planning to close that office within the next two years?

Mr Prince: It has not been planned to close the office there. The demand in Collie is of such a nature that the office has been reduced in staff numbers.

Mr RIEBELING: I understand well over 350 houses are managed by Homeswest in Collie.

Mr Prince: A great many are vacant and many of them are very old.

Mr RIEBELING: Are there 350 houses occupied in that town? I understand that 40 are unoccupied.

Mr Prince: I think that more than 40 are unoccupied.

Mr RIEBELING: What about Halls Creek?

Mr Prince: That will not be closed, as far as I know.

Mr RIEBELING: Is it not being considered to operate Halls Creek from the Kununurra office?

Mr Prince: If it is, it is not something that has been put to me.

Mr RIEBELING: What about Moora?

Mr Prince: That also has not been put to me.

Mr RIEBELING: What about Katanning?

Mr Prince: I think that is highly unlikely.

Mr RIEBELING: And Manjimup?

Mr Prince: Again, I think that is highly unlikely.

Mr RIEBELING: Is it the Minister's intention to investigate these matters and provide answers on them?

Mr Prince: Yes.

Mr RIEBELING: A major review was undertaken 12 months ago into the operation of the Government Employees Housing Authority. The results of that review have not been

released. Is it the Minister's intention to change the structure of GEHA? It appears that the officers in that authority are nervous about what will happen.

Mr Prince: Yes, it is.

Mr RIEBELING: How will that structure be changed?

Mr Prince: That matter has yet to come before Cabinet and be subject to the Cabinet process. The problem which exists with GEHA is that it has \$178m of debt. This problem has been created over 20 years.

Mr RIEBELING: It is my understanding that the department intends to reduce the number of regions from eight to four. This will create a major shakeup within the public sector and will lead to inefficiencies because the regions will become too large and will be unable to respond to the local conditions.

The removal of caretakers and gardeners from Homeswest premises has caused a problem. The contractors who replaced these people may do the job at a reduced cost, but they provide a lesser service. Under the previous system, the caretakers and gardeners were there not only to do their specific job, but also to assist the tenants, especially the elderly, with maintenance around the units. It is commonplace for me to receive phone calls from the sons and daughters of tenants who complain that the new system is affecting their parents. For example, the contractor provides the tenants with buckets and rakes and they are told that they are responsible for a section of the grounds which they must keep clean and tidy. Most of these people are elderly and they have a great deal of trouble getting around and to expect them to do the work of gardeners is unthinkable.

Mr Prince: Have you raised these concerns with me?

Mr RIEBELING: Every time I have raised a specific concern I have been told that the contractors will be contacted and told that they must make sure it does not happen again. The simple fact is that Homeswest should be monitoring the contractors without having to wait for complaints from tenants or members of their families. Under the previous system these complaints were not received because gardeners were in place. The new system creates problems for the tenants who the Minister said would receive the same service under it.

Mr Prince: If you give me the details, which you have never done, I will have them investigated.

Mr RIEBELING: I have given the details to the department heads and they have responded - that is why the Minister has not heard them. The simple fact is that these problems are occurring on a regular basis under the new system.

Mr Prince: If you raise them with me you might see some action.

Mr RIEBELING: I have done that now and perhaps the Minister will respond.

Mr Prince: Give me the details and I will.

Mr RIEBELING: The privatisation of Homeswest is driven by nothing more than the ideologically driven bent of the Minister. Other sections of Homeswest are now under threat of privatisation and I refer to the records, personnel and payroll, debt recovery and occupied premises sections.

Mr Prince: The debt recovery section has been tendered out to a debt recovery specialist and that has been the case for years.

Mr RIEBELING: That applied to those tenants who leave Homeswest premises. I understand that consideration is being given to transfer the occupied debt levels section to the private sector. What the Minister said is correct: Munns Commercial Collections is a major debt collecting agency for Homeswest, but how efficient is it? What is the cost per debt being recovered by that agency? Does it cost \$250 to collect \$200? What efficiencies are there in that system?

Mr Prince: That system was put in place by your Government.

Mr RIEBELING: That is right, but this Government should continue to monitor whether it is a cost efficient way of operating.

Mr Prince: I can assure you it is being monitored.

Mr RIEBELING: What is the cost per tenant?

Mr Prince: I do not know off the top of my head, but I will find out and you will be told.

Mr RIEBELING: I would like to know the average debt that Munns is collecting. If it costs \$250 to collect a \$200 debt, perhaps the department should look at other means of recovering outstanding moneys.

Mr Prince: Such as?

Mr RIEBELING: Perhaps a clerk can be taught in a relatively short time how to write out a local court summons. It is not a difficult job. It would take 10 minutes to teach someone that; in fact, with the resources of an eminent lawyer such as this Minister, it would take less time.

I refer to an attempt to have a new customer focus, as the Premier put it - to allow people to visit -

Mr Prince: Do you know the result? Approximately 78 per cent of tenants think that Homeswest does a very good job.

Mr RIEBELING: And it does. However, this Government decided to have a new customer focus and it trialled a Saturday opening program. Does the Minister recall that?

Mr Prince: Yes.

Mr RIEBELING: It was trialled in three centres - Cannington, Mirrabooka and Fremantle - over eight months. I understand it was an absolute disaster and that the number of people who used it compared with the cost was absolutely astonishing.

Mr Prince: People did not use it, but what is wrong with offering a service?

Mr RIEBELING: The documentation from Homeswest indicated what would happen, but the Minister went ahead with it anyway.

Mr Prince: It was a trial to see whether people wanted the service and they decided they did not.

Mr RIEBELING: It was a failure at great cost to the State. I am advised there have been two attempts to give the work of Homeswest in the Armadale office to private industry. Both attempts have failed miserably. This Government has not learnt because it is doing it again. For a third time the work at the Armadale office will be given to private industry. I ask the Minister whether that is the case.

Mr Prince: It is being looked at as a pilot to see whether it will work.

Mr RIEBELING: The Government has already looked at it twice.

[The member's time expired.]

MS WARNOCK (Perth) [8.20 pm]: I will address two or three matters that concern my constituents in the City of Perth. I am glad the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and Housing is in the Chamber this evening because I want to talk about something that concerns both of us, and about which we have spoken many times before. I first mention Weld Square, which was in the news during the summer in an unfortunate way, although it has pointed out a problem which, interestingly, has been solved in a way that has involved the whole of the community.

I raised this matter first in this House in May of last year. I suggested at that time that the situation in Weld Square required not only very special handling, but also that Aboriginal people be involved. As people who have been watching the media recently will know, Weld Square has been a meeting place for Aboriginal people. Due to an unfortunate attack on a motorist one night in February, the square, which has been a traditional meeting place for Aborigines for a long time, came to the attention of the rest of the

community. It received some unwelcome publicity which threw light on this continuing problem. Many residents and businesses near the square had complained about some of the inhabitants of the square. I stress the word "some" because not all of those regulars have been causing a problem. I am talking particularly about those people who obviously have a problem with drinking alcohol and who may get into fights as a result of excessive drinking.

Mr Prince: We are talking mainly about the people who come from elsewhere and who do not traditionally go to that park.

Ms WARNOCK: I agree with the Minister. For many months I have been holding and attending regular meetings with various interest groups involved with the square, such as police, social workers, Aboriginal people, people who surround the square, and constituents who work in various community groups involved with the activities of the square.

Mr Prince: That is the right thing to do as the local member.

Ms WARNOCK: I felt before February that we were progressing well and handling the matter in the correct way. However, as so often happens in life, an event occurred which took matters out of our hands. I have written to the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, and also to the Minister for Health and the Minister for Police.

Mr Prince: You have received responses.

Ms WARNOCK: I have indeed. I have also contacted the City of Perth and the Town of Vincent in regard to the culturally sensitive way of handling this matter. I am greatly encouraged - I am sure the Minister shares this view - by the recent appointment to the Nyoongar Alcohol and Substance Abuse Service of a new director, Jim Morrison. He is an old friend of mine, who is immensely capable and seems to be making great progress in finding a solution to this multifaceted problem. Like me, he supports the setting up of a Nyoongar patrol, a grassroots Aboriginal group of people which will regularly tour the area and speak to juveniles who perhaps should not be hanging around the square late at night or who may be under the influence of alcohol or other substances. Mr Morrison is currently seeking funds for this initiative and, once again, I urge the Government to give support to this idea. It is working in the bush, and I am told that it is also working in Alice Springs.

Mr Prince: I suggest you discuss this with the member for Kimberley because he maintains that the idea came from him, out of the Northern Territory and into this State. Others claim credit for it.

Ms WARNOCK: There seems to be some disagreement on that matter, but certainly it is working in Alice Springs. It should be tried in the metropolitan area of Perth. We must find a solution that is not one of the old-fashioned solutions of the past. The solution is not to lock people up at the first sign of trouble, as was done in the past. We must be balanced in these matters, however, and we cannot ignore the legitimate complaints of people who live and work in the area, and who are concerned that they may be accosted at night by someone who has been drinking to excess. Multi-interests are involved, and all those interests must be taken into account.

The matter of the patrol will come before the regional council of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission, and I hope it will be successful in finding funding for this initiative. The patrol will work with young people in Northbridge and those who may have a problem with alcohol. It will be staffed by Aboriginal Outreach workers, and it will take a bus around the Northbridge area three nights a week. It will provide an alternative to some of the activities in the square and the street life in which the young people are involved. Members should not take the view that I object to young people being in Northbridge. I have no problem with that, provided their families know what they are doing. However, it is quite clear that a number of young people are at large in Northbridge at night, who are a concern to their parents and cause concern because of their addiction to various substances. The patrol will occupy itself with these people and it will be provided from within the Aboriginal community, as it is in the country. That is

why I think this will work if it gets a chance. I urge my colleagues across the Chamber to pay attention to the efforts of people such as Jim Morrison, to see whether together we can find a solution.

Mr Prince: You will agree that the Department of Aboriginal Affairs has been very helpful?

Ms WARNOCK: Yes I will. I have no complaints about that. I tend to be an impatient person, but I have been learning to take it easy with all sorts of long meetings and to perhaps arrive more slowly but at the right solution finally.

The second facility needed in this area - I have mentioned it before - is a night shelter and sobering up centre. Some progress has been made in this matter. From recent media reports and from conversations with Mr Morrison, I understand premises have been found in Bennett Street, East Perth, and a request is before the Government. I urge the Government to support this request, because we should all give this venture our firm support.

Mr Prince: It is a fine example of cooperation between Homeswest, the Department of Aboriginal Affairs and the member for Perth.

Ms WARNOCK: I thank the Minister for that. It is an excellent idea and it has been needed in that area for a long time. If a community patrol is operating in that area trying to help people, it must have somewhere to take homeless people and those who may not be able to help themselves because of a drinking or substance abuse problem. I hope those who have been sleeping rough will have somewhere to go at night as a result of this proposal for a 20-bed Aboriginal night shelter, and that the proposal will get off the ground as soon as possible. The sobering up aspect is obviously very important. Some people in the square - I stress that it is only some people - drink too much alcohol, just as there are other groups in the community who regularly have a problem with excessive alcohol. As a result of that problem, they need somewhere to go to sober up in the evening. I understand from my conversation with Jim Morrison this week that the shelter will accommodate 20 Aboriginal people - young and old. A condition of their remaining in the shelter is that they undertake a sobering up process if they have an alcohol problem. I repeat that I hope this centre will be pushed along by the Government, because it is certainly an important initiative and one that has been needed for a long time in that area. I speak very strongly on behalf of Aboriginal people, as well as the people from the non-Aboriginal community who have been writing letters regularly and urging me to write to the Minister on their behalf.

The third factor in the same thrust to change things in the Northbridge area is a constructive idea suggested by Mr Morrison. He is keen to start a youth activities organisation of some kind in the city. He is a man with much energy; and he has many ideas. On his behalf I have written to the City of Perth and asked for help in obtaining a disused building in the central city for such a purpose. It will be a centre to provide a meeting place for young people, and an opportunity for some education and entertainment. It is clear that many young people go to Northbridge to meet their friends. They do not have much to do or much money to spend. That is the situation in which anyone around that age could get into serious trouble.

Mr Prince: It is an attraction to young people.

Ms WARNOCK: Yes. I used to go to the area when I was about 15 years old. I am sure most other people here did that. However, when young people go there perhaps looking for trouble, without much money to spend, they can get into trouble with the drugs that are available. They were not available when I was 15. It is a lure for any young person. The situation is causing a problem.

Mr Morrison's idea is that if young people have somewhere to go to meet their friends, they will be much less likely to get into the sorts of difficulties that people appear to be getting into regularly. I hope his idea will succeed because too many young people are not only getting into trouble but also causing great fear among older people who go to Northbridge at the weekends. I would like to see alternatives provided. I hope the

alternatives suggested by Mr Morrison will be successful. I have written a letter to Craig Lawrence, the Chairman of Commissioners of the City of Perth. I hope to hear from him soon in the affirmative that some disused government building in the city will be provided as an entertainment or meeting centre for young people. It will help to solve a social problem, one which has been worrying a great many of my constituents lately. I am sure the Minister is well aware of the problems that have been brought to my attention. I have been passing them to the Minister - as properly I should, as the member for Perth.

Another matter to which I draw the attention of the House is one which has reached the media lately and concerns the City of Perth. I refer here to noise pollution. The problem arose out of a phenomenon which I, like many other members, applaud; that is, the return to inner city living. As I have mentioned many times before, there was a time in the not too distant past when the city was full of people who lived there. People lived in blocks of flats on St George's Terrace. Owing to the property boom in the 1980s and the zoning policies of the Perth City Council people were moved from the central city. They went elsewhere. Now, the move is to bring people back. I applaud that. However, as someone who has lived in the city for 30 years, I find that the new arrivals are having a great deal more difficulty living in the city centre than some of us who have been living here for a long time.

Mr Prince: Particularly if they live near a nightclub.

Ms WARNOCK: Exactly. The noise pollution issue has arisen out of a clash of lifestyles. I have written to the Minister for the Environment in another place, urging him to overhaul the Environmental Protection Act and the noise abatement regulations. For some time, the police and local government officials have been concerned about the inadequacies of the Act. This is not a secret for any member who has a concern in his or her electorate about noise pollution that has arisen suddenly. Perhaps a pub has been done up after being virtually moribund for several years. Perhaps it has been turned into a trendy meeting place; the customers arrive, and the people living locally find that it is not such a congenial area for them. This has happened in the City of Perth. The situation has drawn attention to the noise regulations that are inadequate to effectively control noise. The situation has been emphasised recently by the phenomenon of inner-city living.

Mr Prince: Are you suggesting that the Homeswest tenants are being unreasonable in objecting to the noise?

Ms WARNOCK: That is the point I want to make. They are not unreasonable. How can they expect that, having lived in the suburbs most of their lives, it would be different living in the centre of the city? It is different, and one must become accustomed to the level of noise not experienced in the suburbs. I am interested in the noise regulations because many things can be done to make those regulations work effectively. Preventive measures can be taken to ensure that the same problem does not arise as that experienced with Gobbles nightclub and the Homeswest tenants.

The return to the inner-city has been encouraged by the present Government and the previous Labor Government. It is worth encouraging; apart from anything else, it makes the city much more interesting to live in, if a person happens to be an inner-city resident; and it is extraordinarily important for visitors and people who want to make a living from an inner-city retail business. The retail trade in the city has been flat for many years. The return of the inner-city population and various other policies will serve to encourage the retail sector.

Mr Prince: Perhaps there should be a declaration of a tourism precinct.

Ms WARNOCK: Perhaps we can discuss that at another time. I have a lot of material to get through.

It was inevitable that the move back to inner-city living should strike teething troubles. Indeed it has. The problems became obvious with the clash between Homeswest residents and the nightclub. The residents to whom I refer are in the old Railway

Institute building in Wellington Street. They clashed with Gobbles nightclub which has been in Wellington Street for 34 years. Members old enough to remember the place have been there at some time. They will know that it has a reputation as a place of entertainment which operates very late at night. The patrons inside the club are the last people who would think about the noise and the disturbance they might cause to anyone outside. Naturally, the management of Gobbles was somewhat upset to find that their new neighbours were complaining about something that had been going on for 34 years. Equally, the neighbours were upset about missing sleep regularly, since Gobbles has a very late licence about two nights a week. I think it has virtually an all night licence on Fridays and Saturdays. The result of the relatively long running argument about who was to blame for the problem was, first, a noise abatement notice from the City of Perth, followed by a compromise proposal from Homeswest to pay part of the bill to soundproof the nightclub. That was extremely reasonable. Homeswest made the mistake in the beginning by not laminating the glass in the Homeswest apartments.

Mr Prince: The design was carried out when you were in government.

Ms WARNOCK: The decision probably was made just after the Minister came to government. However, the glass should have been laminated. When I spoke to the architect recently he said that it was not an architectural decision, but a decision made elsewhere. I assume he meant that it was made by Homeswest. In the meantime, Homeswest has agreed to pay part of the bill to soundproof the nightclub. That is a very good compromise solution. Compromise is not a dirty word in politics; it is an extremely essential word. One view - and the Minister expressed it earlier on - is that Homeswest should have warned its tenants about the potential noise; and that it should have soundproofed the flats by laminating the windows. Another view is that people who come to live in the city should know better than to expect it to be like the suburbs where, I assume - since it is so long since I have lived in the suburbs - one hears motor mowers on Sunday mornings, and the sound of the newspapers plopping on the lawns very early in the day. A great deal more than that is heard in the city. People who come into the city after living in the suburbs might find it difficult to become accustomed to the different noises. Part of the attraction of the city is the fact that more people are around; there is more life, noise and activity. Of course, that brings with it more traffic, and at night it is a more difficult situation for people who are not used to it.

It is important that new inner city residential developments are designed and constructed so that noise is kept out as much as possible. All architects and builders should be warned about it in advance. I feel that a new spirit of compromise and cooperation is necessary between new neighbours. I am pleased to see that Homeswest has taken a step in the right direction on this occasion.

Mr Prince: There are cost constraints.

Ms WARNOCK: I am aware that is why the laminated windows were not installed in the beginning. I have suggested in my correspondence with the Environment Minister, the Environmental Protection Authority and the City of Perth that a series of changes should be made to the Environmental Protection Act in regard to noise pollution. I have suggested, for example, that police officers should be defined as authorised persons within the meaning of sections 82, 83 and 87 of the Act so they can take charge of domestic noise complaints and be able to enter a premises to effectively control noise that is being made late at night. There is an extraordinarily cumbersome procedure at the moment to deal with noise levels at night. I also believe that noise pollution could be assessed in three different categories: Domestic, construction, and entertainment noises. They cause different types of noise and problems and they should be assessed separately.

We should take special note of construction noise. This is something of which people who live in the suburbs or in the country may not be aware. To respond effectively to complaints about construction noise out of normal hours, a better step would be to ban the operation of construction companies between 10.00 pm and 7.00 am. Provisions for emergency work such as work on the freeway that might be better done at night when there is less traffic could be incorporated in the Bill provided the people doing the work

are prepared to negotiate with affected residents. I live just 50 yards from the Mitchell Freeway and we were not informed of recent roadworks on the freeway, and many people who lived nearby thought an earthquake had struck because at 2.30 in the morning bulldozers started operating. There should be an effective compromise. Work should be banned between certain hours, and if a company must work after those hours it should pay attention to informing the neighbours who are likely to be affected.

I have mentioned this in relation to the Homeswest buildings. Greater attention should be paid to the design of new buildings. I have suggested a five star rating system for noise minimisation, like the energy rating system that one gets on some whitegoods. For example, when a person buys premises he or she would be told that it has a five star rating, which means it would be properly insulated for any noise that might arise in an inner city development. One of the first questions I asked about the proposed development on Mounts Bay Road by the FAI Insurance Group related to noise insulation. The company said it had taken that into account. That should be part of any new legislation. We have many more residences in the inner city and we should pay attention to noise pollution.

The reference to the building site regulations arises out of another and separate complaint from a constituent, not in the inner city this time but in East Perth. She wrote to me at the end of last year about her anger about a building company operating very late at night. If members can believe this, it started operating at 2.30 in the morning. I do not know how members feel about having their sleep disturbed by drills at that time, but I would be very disturbed. She made a complaint to the City of Perth, which is how these noise complaints are handled. The regulations are made by the State, but noise complaints are handled by the local authority. She was annoyed at the very clumsy mechanism which exists at present for dealing with this issue. The relevant council officer who was rostered to deal with noise complaints seemed extremely reluctant, perhaps not surprisingly, to get out of his bed at 2.30 am and deal with the company. The resident told me that she went over the road to deal with the company herself. It did not, to put it politely, readily respond to her complaints about the noise it was making at 2.30 am, nor did it readily respond to the complaints made by the council. Builders should not be able to work at that time of the night. In a residential area everybody has a right to sleep at least between the hours of midnight and 7.00 am. I do not believe that any but the most urgent work should be done at that time of night, which is why I believe we should have a regulation that work shall not be done.

A very difficult situation can arise for an inner city resident who is trying to battle with a builder. The resident claimed in her letter to me that she had two and a half hours sleep because of noise from a block of units being constructed in East Perth. She stated -

At 2AM I was awoken by the sounds of a tractor working at the above site under lights. Two workers were working there on the new carpark under the complex. When I at first was woken by the racket, I told myself that it surely would soon cease. But it didn't and so at 2.50 AM I phoned the after hours number to register a complaint and to have an inspector come out.

She goes on about how extraordinarily difficult it was to get that inspector out of bed at that time of night. She then went over to the block to speak to the people who were operating the tractor. My constituent continues -

The two young men apologised profusely but said the "Boss was on our backs" and that they had to complete the job as soon as possible or risk "losing \$7 000.00." They also stated that they would be finished in half an hour. This turned out to be a blatant lie and was only said to get rid of me. When I returned to my place across the street I spoke with 2 people who were leaving their unit to go somewhere else to sleep.

She goes on at some length about the difficulty of trying to deal with late night noise complaints. I can understand her distress having frequently been awoken myself with similar sorts of difficulties. It is a fact of life in the inner city. I do not want to be too depressing about it, because I want to encourage people to come back and live in the city.

I have had a favourable response to my suggestions from both the City of Perth and from the Environmental Protection Authority on how we should deal with reforming the Environmental Protection Act in regard to noise pollution. It is something I believe must be done. I am told in letters from the Environmental Protection Authority and from the City of Perth that not only are they interested in the suggestions I have made, but also they are seriously discussing them. I hope legislation will come up in this House later in the year.

I have had other views put to me by constituents who know that I am interested in this. They believe protective measures should be taken, rather than measures such as insulating one's house. They believe the difficulty of enforcement after the fact is an important issue. They believe in preventive measures, to the extent that noise should be controlled, and that rather than insulating buildings it is more important to see that noise is controlled. We should take that into account in any rejigging of the Environmental Protection Act relating to noise.

I will quote from one of the letters from my constituents who is concerned I should not overdo the matter of trying to suggest new ways of dealing with noise pollution. He closes by saying -

It may interest you to know that the town of Davis, California (a model town planning-wise, incidentally) bans "any sound that disturbs the peace". Admittedly, police may have been going too far when they arrested someone for snoring too loudly (no kidding).

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr Ripper.

INDUSTRIAL LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Resumed from 20 December 1994.

MR MARLBOROUGH (Peel) [8.50 pm]: In the last week in Western Australia we have seen the beginning of the decline of the Government. Not only is that reflected in its performance in this House, but also it has been reflected nationally in how the Western Australia branch of the Liberal Party is affecting the new federal leader and his ambition to become the next Prime Minister of this country. It is the same sort of climatic change, I suggest, that preceded the end of the dinosaurs. It took a while but the change was inevitable. The dinosaurs were unable to change their habits and in the end they were wiped out.

In the past week we have begun to see that change. The divisions that have been highlighted in the coalition branches in Western Australia are very much based on personalities, and beyond those personalities are the types of policies that they support. Those types of policies are causing concern to the more progressive elements of the Liberal Party about where they will be in the next 12 months. Those sorts of policies are insinuated in this industrial relations Bill. Here we see the most cynical member of this Government, the Minister for Labour Relations, participating in catch-up legislation to amend his original Act. He indicated in this House to the people of Western Australia and to the government benches, he would carry out his plan to diminish the rules and powers of the Industrial Relations Commission. Those rules gave workers the ability to represent themselves through trade unions. He put in place legislation which would allow secret arrangements to be entered into through workplace agreements; so secretive that, once signed by an employee, they could be locked away for the next five years and could not be looked at or spoken about. Either one of those events could lead to mandatory penalties and imprisonment.

This Minister has been caught out on that legislation in a number of ways. The Minister says that he would like to see workplace agreements legislation applied to both members of Parliament and judges. He failed and fell at the first hurdle. Let us look at why that should happen. In the 15 months the industrial relations legislation has been in place less than 1 per cent of the work force of Western Australia has signed workplace agreements.

By any measure that must mean that this legislation is an absolute failure. All of the employer groups that look to this Minister and Government to deliver to them a weak, maimed and underpaid work force see now that is not able to happen because ordinary Western Australians, regardless of whether they are members of unions, will not accept workplace agreements. As I have said, that is why this failed Minister for Labour Relations has brought this catch-up legislation into this House.

Smart, progressive employers who wanted to create industries that could feed into Australian and Asian growth areas, driven by Federal Government policies, could not afford to have legislation in place that would see a divided and disgruntled work force that was out of step with management because management was using the full force of the new industrial relations Act to beat it around the head. Progressive management has said no to this legislation. The Minister has had hardly any response to it. Less than 1 per cent of the work force has accepted this legislation.

What does he do with this attempt to amend? He looks at the work force and asks, "Where can I gain maximum effect to implement my strategy of head kicking the trade union movement and work force?" This strategy places particular emphasis on attacking vulnerable workers, young people going into the work force and starting life, and working women. Through this legislation this Government has downgraded the conditions of these groups, which is a big part of the reason why this Government is now on the nose. History shows that in a democracy a government which continues to treat people in such an unkind and uncaring fashion will not last, because it cannot fool with an intelligent society. People do not have to be told by members of Parliament what is right or wrong. They have their own sense of what is right or wrong. Unless a government can take the masses with it through the process of governing, they will leave it and look elsewhere. We saw this morning and in *The Australian* yesterday that this leader is on the skids internally because he has championed the most uncaring Minister that this State has ever seen. He is the champion of this Minister, who belongs to his faction of Richard Court, Crichton-Browne, the member for Riverton and the Attorney General, which rules the political process on the other side of the House. What happened, Mr Minister?

Several members interjected.

Mr MARLBOROUGH: Mr Acting Speaker, as a boy from London you have done well. You were a good mayor of Wanneroo and maybe to become a Minister would not be a bad move.

The community realises that not only will this sort of legislation take the State nowhere, but also that it will hold this State back. This legislation is there simply for the greedy. This industrial relations Act was always based on feeding the greedy and unintelligent and convincing a small group of employers, many of whom had paid to finance the coffers of the Liberal Party up to the last State election. The other day I said that a party with no ideology at all will not last because of the functions of a group of individuals with no basis in ideology or direction. The Government has no direction to save it. The more progressive thinking members of the Government, both at the federal and state level, and others within the Liberal Party ranks in this State are recognising that this legislation will simply lose them the next election.

It does not matter what pea and thimble trick the Minister for Labour Relations tries to play in this Chamber to plug the holes in the cauldron. It will not work. It will not work because the workers who are affected by this legislation have at least two vestiges of salvation left to them. First of all, they will turn to the trade union movement that has represented them faithfully for 100 years and which, regardless of what some members of the Government think, will continue to represent them well beyond this Government's time in the sunlight. They have that going for them and thankfully, they also have federal legislation to protect them. That is embarrassing to the Minister whose workplace agreement have been an absolute failure. That is the first hurdle at which he has fallen. As I said, thankfully the workers are able to turn to the federal legislation and seek some protection. That is what is happening. There is now a number of federal awards

covering such key areas in this State as education, nursing, transport and the Public Service and awards also for workers in the private sector who are also turning to the federal arena for protection.

As an indication of how cynical this Minister for Labour Relations is, when he was confronted with the argument by my colleague, the member for Thornlie, that the federal legislation had forced him into bringing forward these amendments, he agreed. This cynical and uncaring Minister also said that he believes there will be a change in the Federal Government in 12 months and that change will enable him to remove these amendments. He is already so conceited in his own ability to do what he likes that he said that he will remove these amendments that he is supposedly putting in place today to protect workers from the original legislation. In the earlier debate, the member for Thornlie told the Minister that he may regret his actions.

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

Mr MARLBOROUGH: Yes.

The ACTING SPEAKER: That is totally out of order.

Mr MARLBOROUGH: The Minister was accused by the member for Thornlie of putting in place a section of the Bill that would allow workers who have earned more than \$60 000 to go to the federal commission for unfair dismissal and she said that it must stick in his throat that he has had to pass legislation to do that because it has been ruled that his state legislation did not comply with federal standards. She said also that she predicted that the Minister would be back in this place in 12 months to repeal the legislation if a change of government occurred at the federal level to which the Minister replied that he would. Is it not interesting that the Minister is not bringing in changes to his legislation because he has had a change of heart and a touch of kindness has come past his eyes like pasteurised milk? He is so conceited about his own powers and abilities he is happy to have reported in *Hansard*, when confronted by the member for Thornlie, that if there is a change of Federal Government in 12 months' time, he will remove the ability of workers to go to the federal commission which would put the emphasis on the employer to prove his case. That is the reason that this Government is on a slide. That sort of thing does not go down these days even with such people as the member for Cottesloe. In fact, it is now becoming part of Liberal Party legend that the member for Cottesloe and others continually fight the Minister for Labour Relations in his attempts to beat employers and employees around the head with legislation and that they are doing everything in their power to fight him because, by any measure, he is a failure.

When the Minister is confronted by the fact that less than 1 per cent of the work force has signed workplace agreements, he said that 1 500 people a month were signing. That still means that less than 1 per cent of the work force have signed workplace agreements 14 months after his putting in place some of the most draconian legislation that workers have ever faced in this State. He is so insecure in his own legislation that he has convinced the Minister for Education that he should deal with the State School Teachers Union behind closed doors. The Minister for Education has decided that all of the matters which affect the education system and teachers' ability to work within the system will be dealt with in private. The Minister for Labour Relations went to the Minister for Education, who is a clone of the Minister for Labour Relations - off the same assembly line; Tweedledum and Tweedledummer - and told him to negotiate behind closed doors. He said that because he has been constantly dragged into the federal commission and was having to spend money in the Federal Court to appeal against federal government legislation and because he is being constantly bombarded by his fellow Ministers in the Cabinet room, the way to handle the teachers' union is to do it behind closed doors. He told him to offer a 5 per cent wage increase and to provide the details at some time in the future.

This is a defeated Minister. He has walked out of the Chamber. He has been on the slippery dip for over a week and he will never recover. The public has made a judgment

about workplace agreements put in place by this Minister for Labour Relations, the member for Riverton, matches or matchbox - whatever one wants to call him. It has said that the industrial legislation will go nowhere. This is catch-up legislation. It devalues the name of amendments to the Act. It should be called what it is - catch-up legislation. It is cover my backside legislation. He cannot cop any more ammunition being fired at him by members from his side or from this side of the House. It is get me out of here legislation. Not one amendment has come forward to this House because the Minister believes in it. On every occasion the Minister has said, "I am basing my present position on the fact that there will be a change of Federal Government, and given the opportunity in the future, I will withdraw the legislation. Where it does not meet my standards -

Mr Kierath: I said only one part of it.

Mr MARLBOROUGH: The Minister did not say only one part of it. Everyone has now worked out the Minister's general demeanour. The Minister's general demeanour is set in concrete. The mad dog image sticks, and the Minister will not change it. Not only do we on this side of the House have that image of the Minister but also the Minister's colleagues have that image. The best that the Minister for Labour Relations can do these days is say, "This attack is from the Labor Party's power base - the trade union movement and the blue collar workers." The sad truth is that the State School Teachers Union is not affiliated with the Labor Party, the Public Service unions are not affiliated with the Labor Party, the Police Union is not affiliated with the Labor Party -

Mr Kierath: The CSA?

Mr MARLBOROUGH: No. The Civil Service Association is not affiliated with the Labor Party. That indicates how out of touch the Minister is. The Minister wants to hide in his bunker and say, "Just tell me the things I want to hear and then I will speak only the things I want to speak and that I am comfortable with. Hide the truth from me. I can walk around in total ignorance, thinking that everyone is following me in total ignorance." However, the people following the Minister are now stepping backwards; while this Minister is walking in one direction, the community and his own party are going in another direction. No longer can the Minister for Resources Development go into the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Western Australia and face any progressive management on the basis of this man's legislation because it is a laughing stock and a joke up and down St George's Terrace.

Mr Kierath: Is that right?

Mr MARLBOROUGH: Is the Minister telling me that is not right? Does he want me to name some of the people to whom I have spoken and to whom the Minister for Resources Development has spoken? Does the Minister for Labour Relations want me to tell the story all over again about what happened to him when he went to Alcoa in my electorate with his legislation? Does he want me to tell him blow by blow what the senior management of Alcoa told him to do with his legislation? Alcoa has to compete in the world market, and it cannot afford to have a work force that is out of step with the views of its management on the world and the production of alumina, and it has decided that the best way to keep its workers in step is to involve them in the process. That company knows that it cannot involve workers in the process if it tells them, "Screw up your wages and conditions, screw up your annual leave, screw up your shift penalties, screw up your long service leave, and cop this!" No worker in Alcoa has signed one of the Minister's workplace agreements and no worker will. I will tell members what happened. The management told the Minister to get on his bike and ride away. The management told him to not come down and interfere with the big boys but go play in his kindergarten where he is most comfortable.

Mr Marshall: Why did they change their opinion at Pinjarra and switch - the percentage increased to 60 or 70 per cent?

Mr MARLBOROUGH: The member for Murray should stick to tennis. The workers at Alcoa, with a very progressive management, have always believed that the way to change their working conditions is to have good communications between management and

workers and work as a team. That cannot work under this Minister's legislation. Any manager worth his salt knows it cannot work. Any man looking after a household knows that if he beats his wife too often, she will not be willing to be part of the team; she will obtain an order against him or walk out of the household. She will not cop it. This legislation will produce the same effect. It says to workers, "Go into the work place and be beaten around the head, but I still want you to think that somehow you are being protected and somehow your conditions, your wages and your future are intact." This Minister has said in this House that no worker should be able to go through a factory gate thinking that he has a secure job. It is no wonder intelligent workers are walking away from this Government in droves. As I said earlier, it would be simple if the Minister's story were true and if the blue collar trade union movement, being on our side of politics, was the only group that was concerned, but the teachers, the CSA and the public sector unions do not fall into that category. In fact, many of them, at a very senior level of management, are as affected by this Minister's draconian approach to industrial relations as are the lowest common denominator blue collar workers.

I turn now to the events in the Health Department. In the last two weeks, this Minister has been so determined to have his way and so reliant on a majority of seven in this place that he has not cared that he has broken every law in this State. He has tried to tell this House that he spoke to the head of the Health Department, Dr Brennan, who has now also been moved, and the head of that department made up his mind about a number of things once the Minister had left the room. After this head of department had heard the Minister's point of view about how the department should be run, and as soon as the Minister had left the room, he said, "Did I actually have a meeting with the Minister? Did I actually hear the Minister's point of view? No, I did not. I have just had a brainstorm. I have had three or four years of running this department and have been brought here from Tasmania with a track record of changing the Health Department, and I now know how I can fix the Health Department. We have to get rid of two officers, Solomon and White, and I have to resign as well within a week."

The Minister stands in this place and expects the world to believe that magically, after four years this head of the Health Department had the answer at his fingertips and all he was waiting for was for this Minister, the Messiah, to convince him to go in that direction. This head of department has had four other Ministers for Health but no other Minister could convince him to do that. This Minister was the only one who had the ability to convince him to get rid of his two deputies Solomon and White. This head of department must have been waiting for weeks for the Minister to come around to see him. This most frustrated head of department which this Government has ever had must have walked around for four years saying, "I wish some Minister for Health would come along so that I can tell him that I have had a bright idea that the way in which to fix up the Health Department is for me to resign and for my deputies Solomon and White to be moved out of the department. Having suggested that to the Minister, I will not tell the Minister that if he accepts my suggestion and says that is the best idea I have had all week, he is breaking the Public Sector Management Act because he has been party to telling me what I should do."

The reality is that every senior public servant in this State - and let us not downgrade them because they should be congratulated for their intelligence - has woken up to the Minister. The talk of the town at the senior Public Service level is that public servants cannot believe this Minister about anything. They cannot believe him about their future. They cannot believe him about how they can manage their department under him. However, it does not matter whether it is the Minister's department. The Minister believes he has the right to interfere in every department.

This legislation is simply catch up legislation. It is part of the mentality of this Government, headed by the cruelest, most unkind, most uncaring Minister for Labour Relations, supported by the Attorney General, by the Premier and by Noel Crichton-Browne who is now completely on the nose with all Western Australians and with the progressive elements of the Liberal Party. That is why those elements will continue in the weeks ahead to make sure that the key cornerstone underpinning that cruel, unkind,

uncaring brute is removed. They will not be content - neither will we, nor the people of Western Australia - until Noel Crichton-Browne is removed from the Senate and all those who support him are affected. Maybe he will have a brainstorming session and suggest that they go with him.

[The member's time expired.]

Mr Minson: I thought you were going to expire.

MR KIERATH (Riverton - Minister for Labour Relations) [9.20 pm]: I think the member for Greenough had it right! As the Minister for Health I am gravely concerned about the member for Peel's blood pressure and his antics. I tried to make some notes in reply to the member for Peel. Other than perhaps touching on some workplace agreements in the Alcoa situation, I could not find anything else that bore any relation to the Bill before us. Even in relation to workplace agreements, I could not find anything in the Bill that related to the issues which the member for Peel raised. I will go back to the comments of the spokesperson on this Bill for the Labor Party in this House, the member for Thornlie. If I remember correctly, she indicated that this was the second wave of industrial relations reform. I assure the House that this is not the second wave. This Bill is considered to be a procedural, technical Bill.

Mr C.J. Barnett: It is just a ripple on the water, not a big dumper.

Mr KIERATH: It is not a bombie. That will come with the second wave of industrial relations reform. This Bill contains a series of procedural amendments. The second wave is yet to come. I hope it will be introduced in this House within a month. The member for Thornlie went on about something being wrong in having negotiations with teachers and asking them to withdraw their federal log of claims. I do not see anything wrong with that. The teachers are really saying that they want the advantages of the state system and they also want to move federally. They can have a choice of one or the other, but they cannot have both. If they believe their future lies with the federal commission they should give up the rights under the state system, but they should not try to maintain a foot in both camps. There is nothing wrong with that philosophy. If the State School Teachers Union wants to use the benefits and advantages of the state system, it should give a commitment to do so, but it should not at the same time try to take a federal award. That allows teachers to eat their cake and have it too. They can get a decision in a state commission and if they do not like it, they can pursue a federal log of claims. There has been a lot of powerbroking and infighting, and a good few people in the Labor Party who were involved in that got their marching orders. I am sure the member for Morley was involved in that in those days because of his involvement in the Trades and Labor Council.

The member for Thornlie also raised the Public Sector Management Act and the issue of merit based appeals and appeals for unfair dismissal. We are only trying to say that the merit based appeals are coming to an end. So long as people receive fair treatment, they need to accept the decision that has been made. In relation to the Public Sector Management Act, this Bill contains a number of different procedures that were put forward by the relevant Ministers. The amendments relating to teachers were put forward by the Minister for Education. Those to do with the Public Sector Management Act were put forward by the Premier who is the relevant Minister. The area to do with the railways qualifications board was put forward by the Minister for Transport and in the area of resignation from trade unions and unfair dismissals, was brought forward by me in my capacity as Minister for Labour Relations. The Bill contains a series of technical amendments brought together for convenience and it was designed to overcome a few technical areas to which we were asked to attend.

It is interesting to listen to the ALP members bleating in this House because one of the strongest advocates about the unfair dismissal part of the Bill is the TLC. I have been bucketed for my comments, but I stand by them. The unfair dismissal provisions in Brereton's federal Act are wrong. They are inherently unfair. One day that Act will be repealed. It will either be struck out in a challenge that we will begin at the end of May or the provisions will be modified through a change of government. I can assure the

House that one day those provisions will be changed, but I cannot predict when that will occur. Members of the TLC and the employers united and approached me and said, "You may have strong views in this area and you may think that your way is best, but there are some practical difficulties. This provision has been imposed on us by the federal Labor Government." Is it not interesting that the TLC should be complaining about the provision of Brereton's Act and appealing to a coalition state Labour Relations Minister to take out the worst aspects of the federal Labor Party's legislation so that the state system can be accessed?

Tony Cooke said that the unions could go to the state commission and represent their members. It is very fair and efficient and people get very good results. When cases of unfair dismissal go to the federal level, they must go before the Industrial Relations Court and only legal practitioners can appear there. Some employers have said that to defend some cases for unfair dismissals has cost \$50 000 in legal fees. The Labor Party may well have a brief to appear on behalf of lawyers to make up for the work they may well have lost in compensation cases, by creating expensive work in the area of federal industrial relations; however, we are not about that and neither is the TLC. It wants a cheap, informal system that is fair and reasonable to the ordinary worker, not something that costs an arm and a leg and is at the whim of the rich. It wanted a system that had some form of equity at a local level. I cannot believe the bleats coming from the Labor Party members in this House on this issue. Tony Cooke engaged me in public debate time and again demanding that I shift my position. When he, the employers and I met - I meet with them regularly - I said, "If you can get your act together and come to the Government with a united approach, it would be very hard for us to say no." This was one issue on which they came in a united approach and as a Minister I then found it very hard to say no.

Mr Brown: You are all heart. It is the same submission put forward when the previous Bill came through here. They told you that it was a lot of rubbish.

Mr KIERATH: The member for Morley is still living in the past. We see the typical performance of the Labor Party. Labor members live in the past. They are not even half modern. They cannot bring their mind to the present, let alone take their attitudes to the next century.

The member for Thornlie made some comments in relation to workplace agreements for members of Parliament and judges. The original Bill that went to the upper House contained a clause for members of Parliament and judges to have workplace agreements. However, the filibustering of the ALP caused the removal of that clause in that House. I am still committed to this and I hope another Bill to be introduced into this place later this year will reinstate those provisions. The member for Thornlie also looked at the Coles-Myer decision and requested that the relevant provisions in this Bill be made retrospective. I have no intention of doing that. To make legal something that was previously illegal is bad law. The only time I have been involved in anything that even remotely approached retrospective legislation was when we had to move fast in making changes to workers' compensation. I made an announcement in this House, part of which I took from the federal ALP when it makes changes and says the legislation will follow. I said there would be changes and the legislation would follow and it would be backdated to that day. In other words, I say today that the law will change and everybody knows it will change. I will not go back in time because people thought it was legal or illegal and made decisions, and turn around the law. That is very bad law, and I will not have a bar of it in any way, shape or form.

The member for Thornlie made a comment about the teachers' tribunal. The former Labor Government made an in principle decision to abolish that tribunal when it was in power. It did not get the legislation into the House. I checked the records. Cabinet made a decision to abolish the teachers' tribunal. For the member to come into this House and complain about that is hypocrisy in the extreme.

Mrs Henderson: Who did that?

Mr KIERATH: The member did; she was complaining about it.

Mrs Henderson: I did not.

Mr KIERATH: It was mooted by the previous Government.

Another matter raised by the member for Thornlie was the provisions relating to union membership. I get a lot of complaints about union membership rules because most people think that when they become unfinancial, they cease to be a member. In most organisations, as I am sure you, Mr Acting Speaker (Mr Johnson), are aware, when one becomes unfinancial, one ceases to be a member after a period of time. One group of organisations in this State has learned how to manipulate those rules to the extreme. Someone may be unfinancial for three years, and the unions say not only must one pay the back dues, one must also give three months' notice in advance before he can resign. How ludicrous. Who could ever think up a rule like that except someone who did not want people to resign? Let us face it, if a person has reached the stage where he wants to resign from an association, he is not about to pay three months' additional fees for the privilege of doing so. People usually want to get out as quickly as they can. That is a device that has been manufactured by members such as the member for Morley to prevent people from resigning from unions. That is one of the reasons we wanted to change those provisions.

Mr Brown interjected.

Mr KIERATH: I have had so much material from members opposite that I could go for a couple of weeks.

I could not find anything in the member for Cockburn's speech that actually related to the Bill before the House. He said a few things relating to previous legislation that we have passed. The member for Mitchell tried to make some comments, but most of them related to the Workplace Agreements Act and not necessarily to the amendments before us. I want to take him up on the question of temporary positions of technical and further education lecturers in the south west. He well knows those people were not permanent employees. They had a temporary contract of employment for a year which could be renewed each year. That contract was terminated before they signed a new one. It was finite. The fact that the process may have been repeated for a number of years does not necessarily turn those positions into permanent ones.

I was advised that it was for the very reason that they did not want permanent contracts of employment that those conditions were used in the first place. Just to put the record straight, this was the situation: If someone was occupying a position and had been through merit based appointment, they were quite okay. Under the Public Sector Management Act now, people in those positions must go through merit based appointment. Where they have not been through a merit based appointment process, they are required to do so. It was not to do with the fact that workplace agreements were being offered or anything else; it was to do with the provisions of the Public Sector Management Act.

In typical fashion the Labor Party always takes two unrelated facts and puts them together to try to create fear and confusion. I want it to be very clear that those who have been through a merit based promotion system were offered workplace agreements. It is interesting to hear the Labor Party bleat when a workplace agreement offers conditions that are better than an award. They are quite happy to have an award that is better than a workplace agreement. They predicted that workplace agreements would result in a cut of 25 per cent in wages and conditions.

Mrs Henderson: So they have.

Mr KIERATH: They have not. In fact the exact opposite has been the case. Over 99 per cent of workplace agreements have resulted in higher levels of wages for the workers. Members opposite do not like competition or choice. The member for Mitchell said that some workplace agreements were bribes. He said the fact that they offered better conditions than the award was a bribe to entice people. Members opposite cannot have it both ways. As I have said in this House, if a workplace agreement offers less than an award, very few people will ever go into them. Conversely, and this was the challenge I

put to the Labor Party, if a workplace agreement offers more than the award, people will vote with their feet. They will choose something that offers them the best. The award system is not capable of matching the flexibility of workplace agreements. That is what members opposite cannot come to grips with. They cannot contemplate it.

Mrs Henderson: That is utter bullshit.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr Johnson): Order! The member for Thornlie.

Mr KIERATH: It is not very proper for the member to swear in this House.

Mrs Henderson: It was a descriptive term.

Mr KIERATH: In my view it is swearing. The member can dress it up however she likes. I do not think it is called for in this House, and if she were a half decent person, the member would apologise for saying it. I dare say she will not apologise. I will leave members to make their own judgment.

The member for Mitchell also waded into the teachers' dispute, and it is interesting that he became rather vitriolic. The facts are that we offered the teachers a pay deal of 5 per cent across the board through the normal processes - through the traditional ways - and a further 10 per cent if they wanted to look at workplace agreements.

Mrs Henderson: Blackmail!

Mr KIERATH: The member for Thornlie cannot help herself again. She says that because a workplace agreement offers 10 per cent more than an award it is blackmail.

Mrs Henderson interjected.

Mr KIERATH: Yes, it is, because the teachers will have the choice. They can get the 5 per cent by the traditional method and they have a choice individually of taking up the 10 per cent. The member for Thornlie is worried that, given a choice, many teachers may take the additional 10 per cent because they can go from being some of the worst paid teachers in Australia to being the best by far.

It is interesting that this Government can put a package on the table that will take teachers from being the worst paid to the best paid in the country and use workplace agreements to do it. That is what the Labor Party hates. It could not be done under an award. The only way of achieving that was under a workplace agreement. That stuck in the member for Mitchell's throat; he had a great deal of difficulty swallowing it. He then went on to say it would create two classes of people. He also embraced the 8 per cent pay claim by nurses. Again it is interesting to look at that matter. The nurses in their 8 per cent pay claim have abandoned the state and national wage principles, which are enterprise bargaining principles and can be negotiated. I have tried to negotiate with them and they have sent me a letter withdrawing from all negotiations because they want to try to strengthen this special case. I said that would be a high risk strategy because it would be okay if they won their case, but if they lost, what would they have for their members? I asked why they could not continue discussions - on a without prejudice basis - with the Government while they were running a case in the federal Industrial Relations Commission; if they fail, they will still have some form of package to put to their membership. They refused. They have no intention of negotiating or putting in the appropriate effort that the union leadership should put in to achieve pay increases for its members. I can understand if they do not like the system in place. However, they have an obligation as leaders of that union to negotiate the best possible deal for their members. What did they do? They reneged and refused to be part of the negotiations at all costs. That is a high risk strategy and in the end it will be damaging to nurses.

The Government has said it will not stand by and see the nurses being hard done by. If the Australian Nursing Federation will not do the right thing by the nurses, the Government will. It will develop a package that fits government policy and the national and state wage cases and deliver nurses a pay rise of between 5 and 10 per cent. I feel confident it will be of that order, if not more. By 12 May we will have a package on the table to put to nurses. Again, we will see whether the nurses choose the wonderful federal award which caused a downgrading of their annual leave conditions.

Mr Brown: Are you critical of that?

Mr KIERATH: I am trying to point out the pitfalls of going federal. It is not all roses, as some people are beginning to find out. The nurses told me that they felt bitter. They believed the Labor Party and when they went federal they got done, and they are very angry about it. As I said, the Government will put an offer on the table and we will see whether the nurses choose a workplace agreement or the award.

Mr Brown interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr Johnson): Order, member for Morley.

Mr KIERATH: The member for Morley cannot help himself. He is used to being a bully and a nuisance.

Mr Brown: He cannot say that with a straight face.

Mr KIERATH: He has had wonderful training in the Trades and Labor Council. They tell me he was not too bad in the prison officers union, but he got worse when he became involved with the TLC. It is musical chairs down there. The member for Morley came in here; Rob Meecham took over, but he has since been shunted off to do something in South East Asia because Tony Cooke wanted his position.

Mr Brown interjected.

Mr KIERATH: The member for Morley was hanging onto his job while he was campaigning to come in here.

Mrs Henderson interjected.

Mr KIERATH: I was using a bit of Labor Party licence because most of its members did not address the Bill. If it is good enough for members opposite not to address the Bill, it is good enough for me.

Mrs Henderson interjected.

Mr KIERATH: I will take the member for Thornlie's point and return to the Bill. As I pointed out, some of the points she raised did not tackle the Bill, but I must confess most of her points could be loosely associated with the Bill. The member for Cockburn and the member for Peel did not raise one issue associated with the Bill. The member for Fremantle referred to unfair dismissals and whether the provision was an adequate or alternative remedy. We have seen the Leader of the Opposition attempt to make legal judgments on constitutional challenges.

Dr Gallop: He was right.

Mr KIERATH: He said he had advice and when he was asked whose legal advice it was, he confessed it was his own. If I were faced with a choice between legal advice from Crown Law and the Leader of the Opposition, there would be no choice; I would seek advice from Crown Law every time.

Dr Gallop interjected.

Mr KIERATH: The comments of members opposite are interesting. We will see what happens with industrial relations challenges. It is true that most of the advice has come from Crown Law and it is very sound advice.

Dr Gallop: Did you use them for Mabo?

Mr KIERATH: I will predict now that in the High Court challenge we will win some of the grounds. There are some grounds we believe we might lose. We have cooperated with the other States to make sure we have all appealed the same areas. There are some areas other States want to tackle that we did not think had a good chance of success, but to show solidarity with the other States we have decided to go along with them.

Mr Brown: That is big hearted! The Minister is too generous!

Mr KIERATH: We will punch some very large holes in Mr Brereton's bucket. Members opposite should mark my words. The member for Morley referred to the Public Sector

Management Act and unfair treatment versus merit. I think I have already answered that matter.

Mr Brown: You have not answered it.

Mrs Henderson interjected.

Mr KIERATH: The member for Thornlie was not here. The member for Morley referred to union membership and the provisions associated with terminations which I think I have also answered.

Mr Brown interjected.

Mr KIERATH: I pointed out that people such as the member for Morley put in devices to prevent people from resigning from the union movement when they want to. It is his attitude to compel them to be members, even if they do not want to be part of that union, and to continue to force them to pay their union membership fees. His unions commissioned lawyers Dwyer Durack to send a notice of summons seeking unpaid fees. However, it makes the members angry that the union should bring in a firm of lawyers to prosecute them. They think, as do most reasonable and sensible people in this State, that if we tell someone we want to resign and we become an unfinancial member then our names are purged from the membership list. They have no idea the union has insidious provisions to bind them into owing debts they did not believe they owed. All the provisions in this Bill do reinforce that commonsense view of most people - that if they become unfinancial and say they want to resign they should be able to resign from a union rather than have some artificial device to keep them there.

Mr Thomas: Who makes the rules?

Mr KIERATH: People like the member for Morley are past masters at manipulating union meetings and getting the votes and support they want.

Mr Thomas interjected.

Mr KIERATH: It is interesting the member for Cockburn should say that because when I worked in the commonwealth Public Service I was a member of the Architects, Engineers, Surveyors and Draftsmens Association. On a very rare occasion the commonwealth Public Service voted to go on strike. The only night in the week the union held its meetings was on Wednesday nights which was the one night of the week overtime was available. People had to give up that overtime pay to attend the union meeting. As a result only hard-core members attended.

The member for Peel referred to Alcoa of Australia Ltd. It is true, Alcoa does not need workplace agreements because under federal legislation and as a result of its ability to negotiate with the work force it has done many of the things workplace agreements do. It has adopted annualised salaries and traded off penalty and overtime rates in some instances. It has put in place thresholds which must be achieved before overtime can be earned. What most people term conditions in workplace agreements, Alcoa has achieved under the federal system. I congratulate Alcoa for that. Most people with commonsense would say that it is the only way to go: I am not so ideologically hung up. I do not care which system people choose, so long as they achieve genuine workplace reform. I have always said that. That is why the Government decided on choice. If I believed that was not the case, I would have abolished the existing award system and put in the workplace agreements system, as the Victorian Government did. However, this Government believes in choice and that people should be able to choose the system that best suits them. I do not have any ideological hang-up about that as the Labor Party does. It believes the only way anything can be achieved is by the award. We have seen how outdated those awards are.

The member for Peel raised the issue of workplace agreements. I do not know which school of mathematics he went to. He said that 17 000 is 1 per cent of the work force. I do not know where he gets his figures from -

Mrs Henderson: It is less than 1 per cent.

Mr KIERATH: That shows how stupid the Opposition's figures are. Members opposite should work out what 100 times 17 is. They will find that according to their figures there are more people working for a living in Western Australia than there are people residing in the State. I suggest members opposite go back to school and learn how to count.

In just on 15 or 16 months, 17 000 have voluntarily agreed to opt out of a state award into a workplace agreement. The award system has been around for 90 years and state awards have a little over 200 000 people in them. That equates to between 2 000 and 2 500 people a year in a system which is compulsory; whereas 17 000 people in a little over a year have chosen the government system, which is voluntary. It is interesting that in a little over a year the numbers are fast approaching - they are 5 000 or 6 000 off - the total membership of the Miscellaneous Workers Union. I saw one of its banners which stated that the union was 100 years strong.

The Government simply wanted to provide a choice. This Bill will make minor changes in the area of workplace agreements. The number of judges, members of Parliament and chief executive officers would make hardly any difference to the overall numbers. Therefore, for the Opposition to accuse the Government of using the Bill for that purpose is ridiculous.

I wish I could say that I thank all members for their comments, but I cannot. However, I thank those members who made comments on the Bill before the House. I suppose that the others have had their say; they have expressed their point of view, although it has not had a great deal to do with the Bill. I look forward to their support during Committee.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

Committee

The Chairman of Committees (Mr Strickland) in the Chair; Mr Kierath (Minister for Labour Relations) in charge of the Bill.

Clause 1 put and passed.

Clause 2: Commencement -

Mr BROWN: When will all the provisions of this Bill - in particular, part 3 - come into operation? Presumably the Government is desirous of bringing this Bill into operation as soon as is practicable, given the fact that we are discussing it as a consequence of a motion to suspend standing orders during the Address-in-Reply debate. Firstly, what is the Minister's grasp of some of the provisions of the Bill? Secondly, is there an intention at some time during Committee or the third reading to deal with the substance of the arguments on the provisions of this Bill?

I raise these matters because I am concerned that when one reflects on what happened in debate on this Bill, unless we obtain some substantive answers from the Minister, we may find that the entire discussion is nothing more than an attempt to avoid the real import and intent of the provisions of the legislation. I am concerned also because of what the Minister had to say in his reply to the second reading debate. It appears that if he is not sure, he makes it up as he goes along. I am a shade worried about that, because if one of the Government's intentions is to have legislation that people understand, it is important to deal with the facts rather than a Minister of the Crown saying the first thing that comes into his head, or making it up as he goes along. The Minister has either done that or, if he has paid for researchers to research some of the material he referred to during his reply to the second reading debate, he should seriously consider the quality of the research he is getting because it is hopelessly inaccurate.

Mrs HENDERSON: A very important issue arises in relation to the proclamation of part 3. This part of the Bill provides for the jurisdiction of the Industrial Relations Commission to be substantially reduced. That reduction will occur only at a point where public sector standards are either promulgated or may be promulgated. In other words, there is no clear dividing line to set the point at which the jurisdiction of the commission ceases to operate.

It is clear to members that the clause should be redrafted. The suggestion is that it should be the point at which the Commissioner for Public Sector Standards actually comes up with an idea of a standard and puts that proposal to the Minister and, even before the Minister has finished considering it or decides not to support, it is possible for the jurisdiction of the Industrial Relations Commission in relation to the area covered by that standard to be ousted. The day on which that part of the Bill comes into operation is crucial to the drafting of those standards. I am interested to hear the Minister's advice about the progress of those standards and whether he intends to proclaim that part of the Bill until all the standards have been determined and he has recommended and adopted them.

Mr KIERATH: The member for Morley is right. The reason this clause is in the Bill is that at the same time as part 3 comes into operation, part 7 of the Public Sector Management Act must come into operation. That is the reason for the provision to deal with part 3 separately from the rest of the legislation. Part 3 will not be proclaimed until part 7 of the Public Sector Management Act is proclaimed.

Mr Brown: When will that be?

Mr KIERATH: The member will have to address that question to the Minister for Public Sector Management. I have explained that other Ministers are responsible for various parts of this legislation and I cannot say when part 7 of the Public Sector Management Act will be ready to be proclaimed. This clause allows for the right link up to occur at an appropriate time. Problems will arise if they are not proclaimed at the same time and that is the reason that this part of the Bill has a different proclamation date from the rest of it. I understand that the Commissioner for Public Sector Standards will make up a series of standards which he considers are adequate and they will be proclaimed at the same time. He will have the authority to issue new standards. When part 7 of the Public Sector Management Act is proclaimed an endeavour will be made to have all the required standards in operation at that time, but there will be provision to allow further standards to be implemented at a later stage.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 3 put and passed.

Clause 4: Section 7 amended -

Mrs HENDERSON: When I returned from a function in my electorate the Minister was in full flight and he could not graciously accept that the Opposition had indicated support for a number of the parts of this Bill. We had unreservedly given that support. Instead of acknowledging that, in his usual highly offensive manner, he berated every member on this side of the Chamber who spoke during the second reading stage. One thing he said was inaccurate and to put the record straight I will quote what I said in my speech yesterday about the teachers' tribunal -

The Opposition is pleased to see the removal of the teachers' tribunal from the Act -

What can be more clear than that? In fact, as I mentioned in the debate yesterday the tripartite labour consultative council which was established by the Labor Government recommended that and Cabinet endorsed its recommendation during the course of 1992. It would not have taken very much for the Minister to acknowledge, but instead he said that the Opposition opposed the abolition of the teachers' tribunal.

Mr Kierath: Last night the member for Armadale said that, like her colleagues, she opposed the Bill. I told her that her colleagues supported most of it, but she said she did not care and that she opposed the Bill.

Mrs HENDERSON: Is it not twisting the truth for the Minister to take a general comment like that and say that the Opposition opposed the abolition of the teachers' tribunal? The Opposition supports the abolition of that tribunal. After all, it initiated that move and it will continue to support it.

Mr Kierath: In your case, I apologise.

Mrs HENDERSON: Not just in my case. There was not one member on this side of the Chamber who opposed the abolition of the teachers' tribunal. The fact that the member for Armadale made a comment does not allow the Minister, in his churlish way, to twist it around to gain political mileage. The Opposition supports the abolition of the teachers' tribunal and the access of teachers to the broader definition of industrial matter that is in the Industrial Relations Act. This clause allows the teachers to have full access to the Industrial Relations Commission and the Opposition commends and supports it. I could not let go unchallenged the comments the Minister made when I returned to the Chamber. The reason the Minister has taken this action is not that he is sympathetic to the teachers' position or that he supports their application to the Industrial Relations Commission, but that they are seeking a federal award. They are doing that because they do not trust this Government. Most workers who have had the opportunity to flee to the federal system have done so. The irony is that the Minister, of all people, has virtually destroyed the state system and there will be nobody left in it in two years' time.

The teachers have elected to go to the federal jurisdiction and the Minister said that they had every right to do that. Why is the Government spending thousands of taxpayers' dollars engaging QCs to oppose that application every step of the way if he supports the teachers' right to go to the federal commission? The Government appealed against their successful finding of a dispute and engaged a QC to argue against it and lost. What is it doing again? It is appealing against the next stage; that is, jurisdictional issues relating to whether there should be different award structures for primary and secondary school teachers. The Government will do anything to delay and obfuscate.

The State School Teachers Union set aside \$60 000 to fight its claim. It has already spent several hundreds of thousands of dollars because of the Government's action in wasting taxpayers' money engaging QCs. The teachers' union has no choice - it must match the Government's argument in the federal commission. The Minister has the hide to come into this place and seek to give the impression that he supports its right to do that. I support their right to go to the federal Industrial Relations Commission and it does not surprise me in the least that they are doing so. It is total misrepresentation for the Minister to claim that they want to keep one foot in each camp and are trying to abuse the system. Once the teachers have a federal award, if they want a decision on a breach of that award they will go to the federal Industrial Relations Commission. At the moment that is the only place they are likely to go for unfair dismissal. The only reason people covered by state awards go to the federal commission in the case of unfair dismissal is the paucity of the state law which is vastly inferior to the federal law. The Minister should be aware that others in this Chamber will not sit by and listen to him twist the truth as he does every time he introduces legislation into this Parliament.

I call on the Minister, on behalf of taxpayers, to stop appealing against every move by teachers to be covered by a federal award. If they want to join teachers in other States and be covered by a federal award, they have every right. The Minister may say afterwards that they received lesser conditions than they would have under a state award, as he has said time and again about the nurses. However, they have every right to take that action. When the nurses went to the federal Industrial Relations Commission, the previous Labor Government did not spend taxpayers' money trying to stop them. The Government did not engage Queen's counsel to argue every single technical point of jurisdiction, and this Minister does not have the right to waste taxpayers' money trying to stop the teachers. His colleague does not have the right to hold over their heads the threat that teachers will not receive a pay increase unless they withdraw their application seeking federal coverage. What kind of State Government tries to stop people exercising their rights to argue a case in the federal Industrial Relations Commission? The Government agrees that they deserve a 5 per cent pay increase, because they have not received an increase for a number of years and they have fallen behind, particularly in relation to members of Parliament. A number of members in this Chamber know very well that is true. Before they became members of Parliament their salaries as teachers were probably not much different from that of a backbencher. Now there is a yawning gap. The Minister has recognised that they deserve a minimum 5 per cent increase, and

yet he has told them they must withdraw from their action or they will get nothing. Furthermore he has said that unless they keep every aspect of the negotiations secret, the Government will not talk to them. Goodness knows how they can keep negotiations secret while talking to 14 000 of their members. I hope the Minister is keeping close tabs on that because from all around the State the schools are indicating that they are not interested in this blackmail or in this technique of seeking to divide teachers, by giving a 5 per cent increase, and another 10 per cent if they are prepared to desert their colleagues and sign agreements to satisfy this Minister's obsession with workplace agreements. This is the crucial clause which gives teachers access to the Industrial Relations Commission at a state level. They have a right to go to the federal Industrial Relations Commission, and I wish them luck in their case. I think they will succeed, and everyone in this Chamber should be aware that this clause is included only because the Minister wants to stop them going out of the state system. The decision of the commission that they had a genuine dispute because the Western Australian system is inferior, will be rectified by this amendment and it will put the Western Australia system on a par with the federal system in the definition of industrial matters. I suspect the Minister will not succeed and a decision will soon be made to give the teachers a federal award to protect them from the ravages of persons such as the Minister for Labour Relations and the Minister for Education. Let there be no doubt that the Opposition supports teachers having access to the wider definition of industrial matter and the Industrial Relations Commission, and their right to seek an award in the federal commission. It does not support the blackmail which this Minister has used in his efforts to frustrate them.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 5 to 11 put and passed.

Clause 12: Section 80X amended -

Mrs HENDERSON: This clause relates to opportunities for teachers to use the teachers' tribunal as constituted under the Industrial Relations Commission to deal with matters of promotion appeals. With the abolition of the teachers' tribunal goes that right to appeal against promotions of others. I shall be interested to hear the Minister's response, because I understand the drafting of this clause is quite confusing. It implies that the teachers lose that opportunity and they will be like normal employees who have access to the commission and can no longer appeal against promotions. The Bill also contains a clause under which public servants who currently have access to a promotions appeal board will lose that access. That also comes under the Industrial Relations Commission. However, public servants have traditionally had a registered agreement between their union, the Civil Service Association, and the Government. It was registered in the Industrial Relations Commission and allowed them an administrative process of promotion appeals.

The system of the promotion appeals board had effectively fallen into disuse as a result of this administrative arrangement which was backed up by a registered industrial agreement. Even though this section of the Industrial Relations Act may be deleted, it does not impact on the ability of public servants to continue the current arrangements, except that the Minister has also deleted the provision for appeal against promotions on the basis of merit. I am interested to know the Minister's understanding of where this leaves teachers in relation to promotions appeal.

Mr KIERATH: This is a complicated matter. It is a trifecta, and three situations can occur. It is part of the Education Act and is defined as the Education Department, it refers to the repeal of the section relating to the Government School Teachers' Tribunal, and also relates to the proclamation of the Public Sector Management Act. It relates to division 4 of part IIA which is to be repealed when part 7 of the Public Sector Management Act is proclaimed. Until then, this needs to stay. However it needs changes because of the repeal of the Government School Teachers Tribunal. There will be a change to the definition of Education Department.

Mrs Henderson: Where does this leave teachers who wish to appeal against promotions?

Mr KIERATH: The situation will remain the same until proclamation of part VII of the

Public Sector Management Act. They will have access to the Industrial Relations Commission, but part VII must be proclaimed.

Mrs Henderson: I understand that the abolition of the teachers tribunal will not wait for proclamation of the Public Sector Management Act, or the proclamation of this Act. Currently teachers go to the teachers tribunal to appeal, but that tribunal is to be abolished. Where will teachers go on appeal under the provisions of this Bill?

Mr KIERATH: I am advised that industrial matters will be handled by the Industrial Relations Commission. However, it still requires the proclamation of part VII of the Public Sector Management Act.

Mrs Henderson interjected.

Mr KIERATH: This is what I am advised. This part of the legislation has been put forward by the Minister for Education. It is a complex matter because it involves not only the repeal of the provisions but also the powers of part VII of the Public Sector Management Act. This is a transitional procedure until that part is proclaimed.

Mrs HENDERSON: As usual, late this year literally dozens of teachers will be recommended for promotion. The list of recommended applicants will be published. Other teachers will have the opportunity to appeal and argue that they should have been the recommended applicant for the promotion. Currently, teachers can appeal to the teachers' tribunal. This clause abolishes the teachers' tribunal. Members may not be aware that recently an agreement was reached between the State School Teachers Union and the Education Department to allow the appeal process by means of a panel, part of which comprises members of the teachers' tribunal. The panel hears all appeals that used to go to the teachers' tribunal. The agreement is not registered; it is not like the arrangement with the CSA which is a registered agreement between the association and the Government, providing an administrative appeals process. Teachers do not have such a process. They have an informal memorandum of understanding with the department which established the panel to deal with promotion appeals. From July or August each year the panel is very busy hearing appeals. It is an important process every year.

This part of the Bill will abolish the teachers' tribunal. That previously mentioned informal arrangement took power from the tribunal, but it drew on the same people - those appointed to the teachers' tribunal - and they, in turn, became members of the panel. I want an assurance that that arrangement will continue. This has nothing to do with the Public Sector Management Act. It is to do with the teachers' tribunal, as constituted under the Industrial Relations Act and the memorandum of understanding between the Teachers Union and the department. I seek reassurance that the teachers' ability to appeal on promotions will not be abolished by this clause.

Mr BROWN: I wish to walk the Minister through the Bill to see if he agrees with my argument, and to clarify precisely what this provision seeks to do.

Mr Kierath: I am happy to go through the issues, but the member should not cover other clauses - as did the member for Thornlie.

Mr BROWN: I refer only to this provision. Clause 12 seeks to amend section 80X(1) in two ways; that is, to amend the manner in which it refers to the Education Department, and to introduce a new definition of teaching staff. Section 80X appears at part IIA, division 4, of the Industrial Relations Act. As I understand it, the intent of the amendment is to bring staff within the promotions appeal board system.

Mr Kierath: Clause 16 relates to dividing up the Education Department. Teachers will be subject to the education part of the Act, but the teachers appointed to the Department of Training will be subject to the Public Sector Management Act. It is a complicated provision. It includes a number of transitional provisions relating to changes to the Industrial Relations Act and the proclamation of section VII of the Public Sector Management Act. This is not an appropriate time to debate the matter.

Mr BROWN: Except to the extent that later on the Bill seeks to delete division 4 of part IIA. It seeks to delete the promotions appeal board process, so that no-one will have

access to that process. The clause seeks to abolish that process when the Public Sector Management Act is proclaimed. Clause 12 will provide temporarily for the employees of the Department of Training who have access to the Promotions Appeal Board provisions until such time as the Public Sector Management Act is proclaimed.

Mr Kierath: That is a reasonable interpretation.

Mr BROWN: What will be the promotions appeal system for teachers when part 3 of this Bill is proclaimed? That question was asked by the member for Thornlie but she received no answer. Will there be an appeal system relating to promotions under the new arrangements once they formally come into operation? What provision will exist for teachers to appeal where they believe a decision on promotion has been wrongly made? I am keen to establish from the Minister, perhaps by way of interjection so I do not sit down in anticipation of an answer, once this Bill is proclaimed and in operation exactly where teachers will have an opportunity to lodge appeals on promotions.

Mr KIERATH: This clause is not about promotions for teachers. I will provide the answer on that when we get to other clauses.

Mrs HENDERSON: The Opposition sympathises with the difficulties the Minister is having with this complex Bill. It is an overlaying of at least two other Bills and it is hard to read. Nevertheless, we are bringing forward genuine questions on behalf of people in the community. If the Minister is unable to give the answer tonight, we are more than happy to do what has happened in the other Chamber on a number of occasions; that is, the debate has been adjourned and the Committee has returned to that clause later. The Minister's colleague in the other place, Minister Foss, did precisely that with this legislation on a couple of occasions.

Where there are questions on which the Minister needs to get further advice the Opposition is happy to wait for that advice. We are not happy for the Minister to sit and not answer questions. Unfortunately, the information from the Minister's notes did not answer the question. For the Minister to imply that this clause is not the appropriate clause may be a smart sort of answer, but division 1 of part IIA of the Industrial Relations Act establishes the teachers' tribunal and this clause repeals that and abolishes the teachers' tribunal. When this Bill is proclaimed what avenues of appeal in relation to promotions will teachers have? Teachers want to know that. That is a reasonable request. If the Minister is not able to answer the question tonight, I respectfully suggest that we adjourn debate on this clause and move on to another clause.

Mr BROWN: I will reiterate the request. My concern is that if we do not get an answer today, when we debate the Bill in its later stages either later tonight or at another time, we may be told that we have dealt with those particular questions and therefore there is no need to answer; in which case we will never get an answer to the question. If the Minister says that he does not know the answer to the question because it is an amendment proposed by the Premier, perhaps he could seek advice from the Premier. However, in the absence of being told that we will receive a response I am not about to sit down and let this amendment go through. It is not an unreasonable proposition to ask a legitimate question and to get an answer in relation to the legislation. Presumably each of those clauses in the Bill has been thought through by the Government. Presumably that has been done in such a way that the Government can implement its philosophy and ideology on the public sector.

Presumably the Government has a view on promotions appeals within the Public Service, including promotions appeals by teachers. Presumably that is the essential reason the Government is moving this amendment. To say other than that would be ludicrous. Therefore, if it is a well thought out and planned change that is allegedly for the better, it should be possible for the Minister to explain exactly what is proposed for the very important promotions appeals for teachers in this State. I certainly encourage its explanation because some years ago changes were made to the legislation by the former Court Government. At that time the provisions relating to taking into account seniority of service were deleted from the Act. The question then arose of what weight, if any, should be given to seniority. That was not explained in the second or third reading

debate. I took the opportunity, wearing another hat at that stage, to write to the then Minister for Labour, Ray O'Connor, and seek a response as to what the new criteria meant. After some prompting of a couple of letters urging a response, a letter came back indicating that, although seniority was deleted by the Government of the day, merit was included and that when considering merit one had to take experience into account. When I asked in subsequent correspondence, whether it meant that one had to take into account seniority, and whether seniority and experience meant the same thing or whether there was a distinguishing feature, there was absolute silence, despite all the prompting that went on for some months. That history lesson taught me that it is important in these debates to extract for the record exactly what the Government intends by changing these provisions. For the sake of the record, if nothing else, I and the teachers in this State would appreciate a very straightforward answer as to what the Government proposes will happen to promotion appeals when this Bill comes into operation. As it is not a difficult question or some scientific formula that requires great expertise, I do not understand the hesitancy of the Minister to answer the question, unless the Minister does not know the answer, in which case that is fair enough. The Minister has said that this Bill emanates from a variety of Ministers and that he may well have to consult with the Premier to obtain an answer. If that were his answer today I would be satisfied, and we could have the precise answer to the question at another time. We need to know either that the Minister does not know the answer to the question or that the Minister does know the answer to the question but is simply unwilling to give it at this time for some unknown reason. We have all heard over and over again about the time taken to deal with Bills. I am happy to deal with this Bill very quickly indeed. If fair and reasonable questions about the impact and interpretation of this Bill cannot be answered or are refused to be answered, it is appropriate to do everything possible under standing orders to extract that information. Let us move on quickly to the next clause but not before reasonable questions have been answered. Will the Minister in the interests of expedition answer the not very difficult question?

Point of Order

Mrs HENDERSON: Mr Chairman, I seek your guidance on Standing Order No 272, which allows for a clause to be postponed unless it has been considered and amended. I understand from the footnotes of the standing orders that "consideration" does not prohibit this standing order from being used where a clause is under consideration and where discussion has not yet been completed. Mr Chairman, with your guidance I seek to move under that standing order to postpone consideration of this clause in order to enable the Minister to come back with an answer. I presume in the normal manner I would be able to put my arguments in moving that motion. Is that appropriate?

The CHAIRMAN: I cannot give the member the call because she has exhausted her opportunities of speaking to the clause. That does not preclude another member from getting the call. Standing Order No 272 provides that any clause may be postponed unless the same has been considered and amended. This clause has not yet been dealt with, so it has not been considered and amended. However, it is part way through in that people have started discussing it. The footnotes of the standing orders refer to the precedent for postponement of a partly considered clause and refer back to the reference one needs to consult.

Committee Resumed

Mr KOBELKE: From the debate that has taken place there is some uncertainty as to the meaning of the clause. Given that the Minister has indicated the complexity of the Bill and the fact he is not assisted by a well versed officer, it is understandable that the Minister cannot provide a final answer at this stage. It therefore seems appropriate that we take advantage of Standing Order No 272 which you, Mr Chairman, have indicated allows for the postponement of this clause. The footnote refers to the precedent for postponement of a partly considered clause. In 1981, the then Minister, Mr Hassell, sought leave to postpone further consideration of a clause which had been partly amended until the Chamber had amended other clauses. The Chairman told him that that move was available to him and that the clause would be dealt with at a later stage and

speaking rights would continue to apply as if it had been dealt with at that time. I will not enter into a debate on the postponement of this clause. I will allow other members to do that. I therefore move -

That consideration of the clause be postponed until a later stage.

Mr KIERATH: I am disappointed with the Opposition's attitude. The member for Morley came closest to requesting something half sensible. I explained to the member for Thornlie that this clause had nothing to do with the information that the member for Morley was seeking.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I hope the Minister realises that he should be speaking to the postponement motion.

Mr KIERATH: I am. I am hoping that my explanation might make members opposite cease their futile tactics. However, I do not hold much hope. I explained earlier that this clause is complicated. Although the member for Morley referred to the heading "To be repealed" I said that although it is headed "To be repealed", it will not be repealed until part 7 of the Public Sector Management Act comes into force - section 80X stays. I thought that would be plain to most people in this House. I do not know off the top of my head all the provisions of part 7 of the Public Sector Management Act. I did not have carriage of that Act; the Premier had carriage of it. I do not mind filibustering tactics but this tactic is the most puerile and childish that I have seen for a long time.

Mr Ripper: We are about to finish for the night. You could undertake to provide the information that has been requested before the Committee debate resumes.

Mr KIERATH: The member has not been here. I have said I will answer the question at other stages of the Bill.

Mr Ripper: But you want this clause carried before you do that.

Mr KIERATH: Yes.

Mr Ripper: Why don't we report progress and you can provide the information?

Mr KIERATH: I said earlier that the question the member asked relates to sections in part 7 of the Public Sector Management Act. I have no knowledge of that Act. The Premier had carriage of that Act when it was debated in this House. It is not now in the House. I can get a copy of the Act if the member likes and read it and give him the answers. I thought if the member had been involved, he might know the answers; however, it is obvious he has no idea. I am happy to provide the information at the third reading stage. This clause allows for three transition arrangements. It allows for the repeal of division 4 of part 2A; it is related to the proclamation of part 7; and it refers to the amendment of section 73A of the Education Act. I will obtain the information for the member for Morley from the Premier and I will provide it to him at the third reading stage.

Mrs HENDERSON: I am beginning to wonder whether the Minister is reading the same Bill as we are reading. I have in front of me the Bill and the briefing notes prepared by his department. It states that this clause is intended to repeal division 1 of part 2A of the Industrial Relations Act. Division 1 establishes the Government School Teachers Tribunal. This clause with which we are now dealing abolishes the Government School Teachers Tribunal. When we abolish that tribunal, the teachers will move into the general Industrial Relations Commission. They would normally come under the Promotions Appeals Board which is available to public servants.

Mr Kierath: They would come under part 7 of the Public Sector Management Act.

Mrs HENDERSON: Teachers do not; only TAFE teachers do. The Minister is confused. Nowhere does it say that teachers come under the Public Sector Management Act. This clause deals with the abolition of the tribunal.

Mr Kierath: I said earlier that clause 16 relates to the Education Department teachers per se.

Mrs HENDERSON: The Minister is confused. This is the clause that abolishes the

tribunal and puts them into the mainstream Industrial Relations Commission and they will come under the Promotions Appeals Board in the same way as public servants do. However, this Bill abolishes the Promotions Appeals Board. That is not a problem for public servants because they have a registered industrial agreement between themselves and the Government which will allow them to continue an administrative arrangement for promotions appeals. The teachers do not have such a registered industrial agreement. They have an informal agreement - a memorandum of understanding. This is precisely the clause that deals with that. Clauses 10, 11, 12 and 13 are all related to abolishing the tribunal with clause 13 deleting section 78(1)(b)(i) of the Industrial Relations Act. I am trying to get an answer for teachers. I spoke to teachers today and they have spent hours perusing this Bill. They want safeguards for their access to promotions appeals. That is not unreasonable. It is not reasonable for the Minister to imply that we are filibustering or seeking to extend the debate by asking this simple question. This question affects thousands of teachers across this State and unfortunately, the Minister does not have the answer. We do not expect the Minister to have the answer to every question. We have asked merely that the debate on this clause not be closed so that we can receive an answer. We are more than happy for the Minister to consult. The Minister's colleague in the other place, the Minister for Education, expressed some puzzlement about this clause and said he was not aware of the arrangement between the State School Teachers Union and the Education Department but would seek that information. It behoves this Minister to do the same thing because I think he is confused about what he is talking about.

Mr BROWN: I support the proposition that this clause be postponed. It is important that in Committee when important legislation is being debated we try to come to grips with the intent of what the Government is putting, and we can do that only if we understand what the Government is putting. The Minister has indicated that he is not aware of those details and will seek them from the Premier. I am pleased to receive that assurance. However, I am not happy that the Minister has said he will provide that information at the third reading stage. The Minister and I both know that the procedure at the third reading is that members on this side of the House comment on a Bill, followed by the Minister, who closes the debate.

Mr Kierath: I am happy to provide the information to you privately. You cannot expect me to be any more reasonable than that.

Mr BROWN: If the Minister is saying that he will provide that information to us prior to our next consideration of this Bill so that we will have that information before us and understand it, I am happy to sit down. Is that what the Minister is saying?

Mr Kierath: I have said that three times.

Mr BROWN: I am happy with that.

Question put and a division taken with the following result -

Ayes (18)

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

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

Mr Ripper
Mrs Roberts
Mr Taylor
Mr Thomas
Dr Watson
Mr Leahy (Teller)

Noes (25)

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

Mr Johnson
Mr Kierath
Mr Lewis
Mr McNee
Mr Minson
Mr Omodei
Mr Osborne
Mrs Parker
Mr Prince

Mr Shave
Mr W. Smith
Mr Trenorden
Mr Tubby
Mrs van de Klashorst
Mr Wiese
Mr Bloffwitch (Teller)

Pairs

Mr Bridge
Mr D.L. Smith
Mr Grill
Mr Graham
Ms Wamock

Mr Nicholls
Mr Day
Mr Marshall
Dr Turnbull
Mr Court

Question thus negated.

Mr RIPPER: We have just had the extraordinary situation where the Minister was unable to answer a question put by the Opposition about an important matter; namely, the ability of teachers to appeal promotions decisions.

Mr House: You were not here so how do you know?

Mr RIPPER: I can read a clause and I can talk to other people about what has been going on. I can see from the Minister's responses how he has been dealing with the issue. This clause will abolish the teachers tribunal, and the Opposition has asked a reasonable question; namely, how will teachers' appeals against promotions be available once this legislation goes through the Chamber? The Minister should be prepared to provide that information and answer that perfectly reasonable question, and since we are approaching the conclusion of debate tonight, a perfectly reasonable way in which to handle this matter would be for the Minister to seek to report progress at this stage, without taking a vote on this clause, because this Committee should not make a decision on a clause when an important question about its operation remains unanswered. We know what will happen; the Minister will take this clause to a vote. The Minister has indicated that he will provide some information before the debate resumes. That is not the best way to go about it, but it is better than not providing the information. I serve notice that the Opposition will seek other opportunities on other clauses to debate this matter if the information from the Minister is not satisfactory. Perhaps the next time that the Minister deals with the Committee stage of a Bill he will bring along an adviser because he does not know it all and today's debate has revealed that regrettable lack of knowledge on the Minister's part.

Mr Kierath: Unfortunately, the member for Belmont was not here when I explained the operation of this clause, and that is a great tragedy, yet he comes into this Chamber and plays political games. The information which the Opposition seeks has nothing to do with this clause. It relates to another part of an Act which this House has already considered. However, I have said I am happy to get that information and provide it to the member.

Mr RIPPER: Before or after the clause is dealt with by the Committee?

Mr Kierath: It has nothing to do with this clause. It can be decided after this clause is dealt with.

Mr RIPPER: It has, and that is where the Minister and the Opposition disagree. Promotions appeals have been dealt with through the teachers tribunal, and the Minister is seeking to abolish the teachers tribunal yet he is not able to say how promotions appeals will be dealt with.

Mr Kierath: Did you get the answer in the other place?

Mr RIPPER: I do not know about the debate in the other place.

Mr Kierath: You could not get the answer in the other place from the Minister for Education, nor from the Minister representing the Minister for Labour Relations.

Mr RIPPER: That is an extraordinary statement. Does the Minister think that is a good thing?

Mr Kierath: It has nothing to do with the schools.

Mr RIPPER: It has everything to do with it. The fact that other Ministers have failed to answer does not excuse this Minister for Labour Relations; it places a bigger onus on him. What extraordinary arrogance from this Minister. We will not keep the House here

beyond the present time. However, we do think the Minister could have handled the matter in a much more satisfactory way that would allow this Chamber to have full information before it is asked to vote on a matter. The next time the Minister should bring an adviser to the Committee stage.

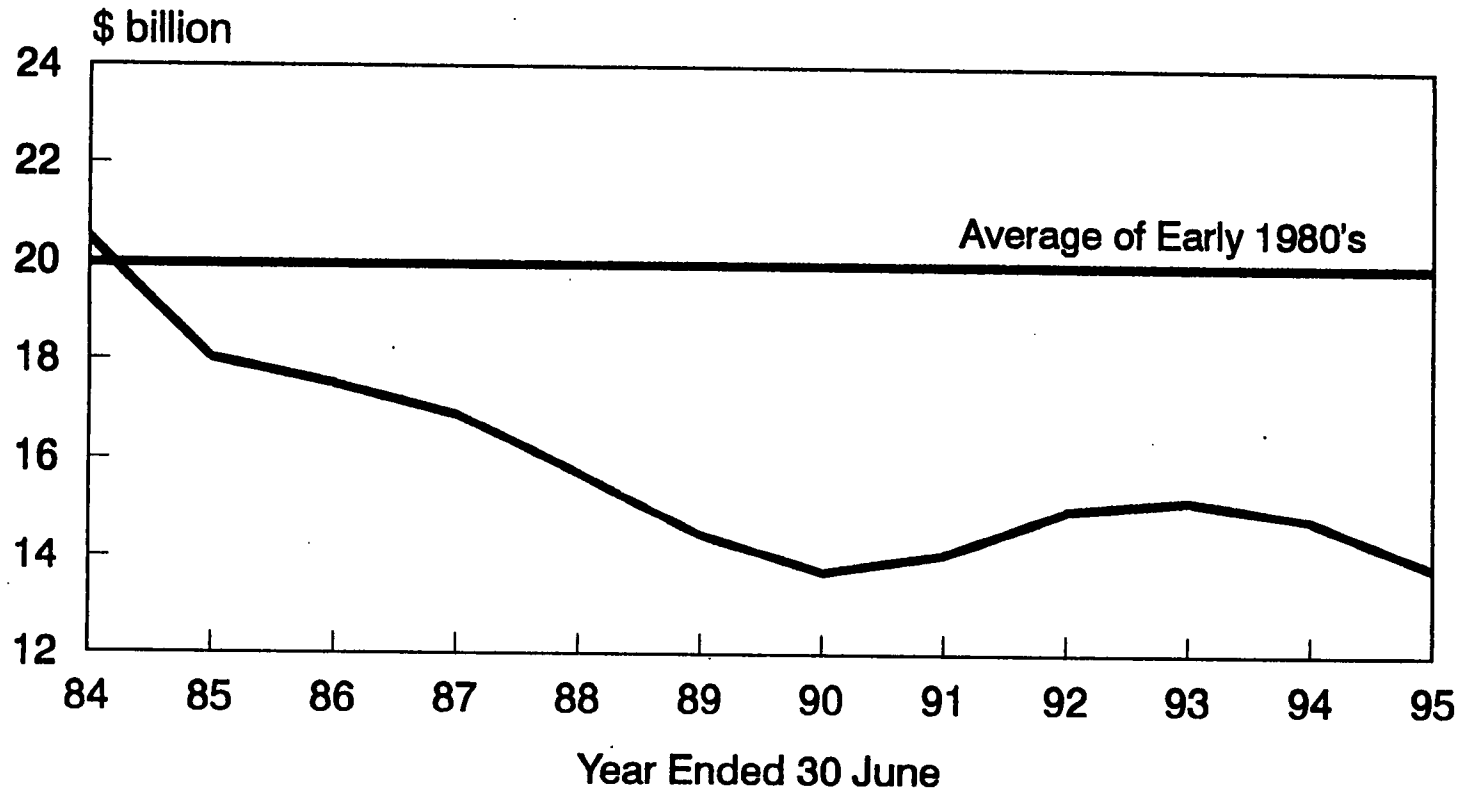
Clause put and passed.

Progress

Progress reported and leave given to sit again, on motion by Mr Kierath (Minister for Labour Relations).

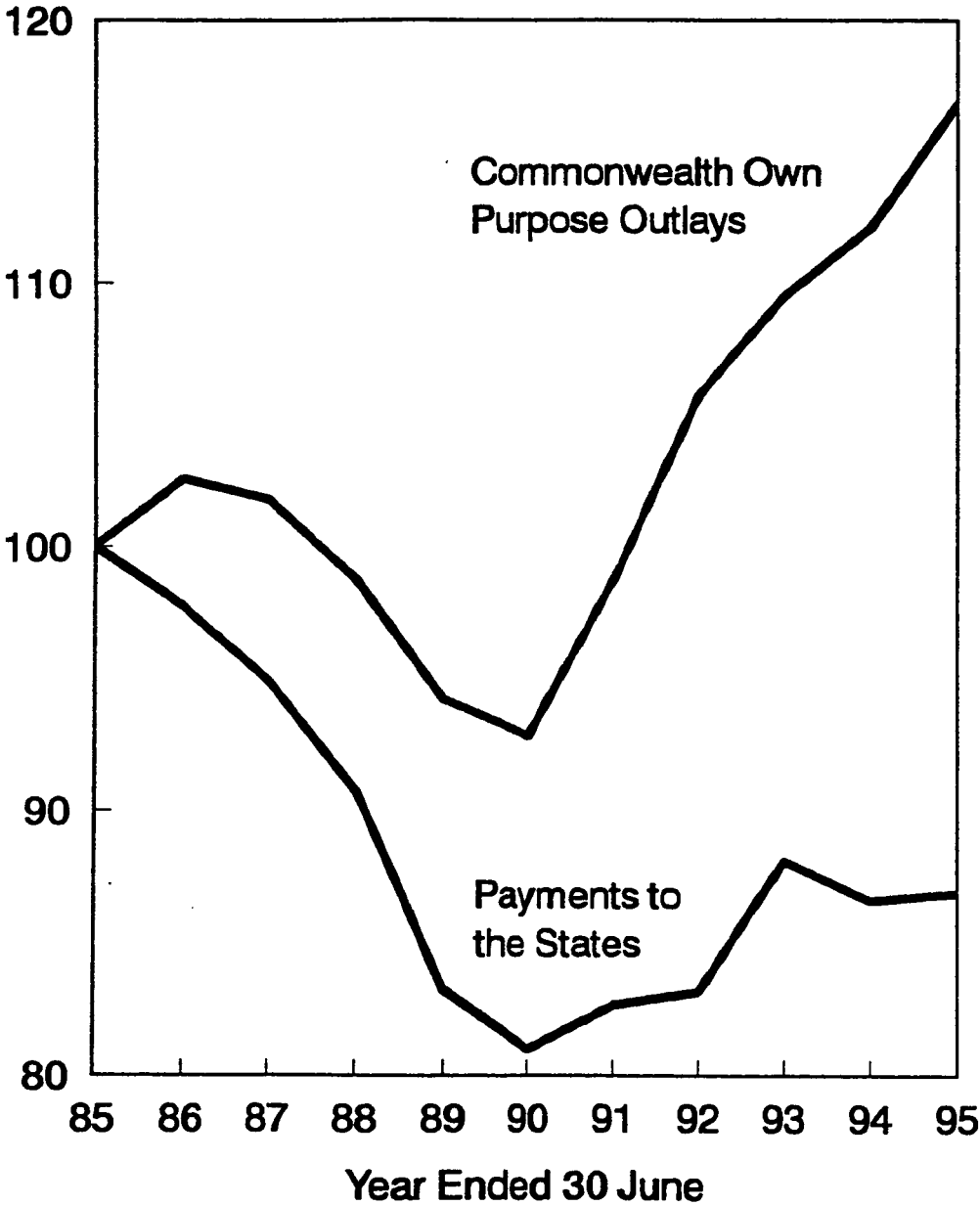
House adjourned at 11.11 pm

General Purpose Grants As a Share of Commonwealth Taxes



COMMONWEALTH OUTLAYS

REAL PER CAPITA INDEX



Comparison of State/Commonwealth Contributions to Disability Services

	89/90 (\$ 000's)	90/91 (\$ 000's)	91/92 (\$ 000's)	92/93 (\$ 000's)	93/94 (\$ 000's)	94/95 est (\$ 000's)	TOTAL 6 Yrs (\$ 000's)
State Recurrent Contribution	\$78,548	\$81,318	\$85,132	\$89,099	\$92,787	\$92,973	\$517,857
Commonwealth Contribution (Disability Service Programme)	\$34,746	\$38,158	\$39,068	\$40,225	\$40,996	\$42,539	\$235,732
Ratio State/Commonwealth	2.20	2.13	2.18	2.22	2.26	2.19	2.20

Notes:

1. 89/90 and 90/91 for State contribution include estimate of \$5.8m for HDWA and DCD contributions
2. 92/93 and 93/94 for Commonwealth Contributions are estimates
3. Figures not available pre 1989/90 for Commonwealth and State funds from HDWA and DCD for comparative purposes.

**Disability Services SPP
\$ Per Capita**

	NSW	VIC	QLD	WA	SA	TAS	NT	ACT
1993/94	14	11	15	10	24	22	15	11
1994/95	15	13	15	11	24	23	16	11

**Disability Services SPP
All States**

	\$'000	1994/95 \$'000
1991/92	5,000	5,210
1992/93	114,488	118,084
1993/94	250,316	255,322
1994/95	270,379	270,379

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

PRISONS - CANNING VALE; CASUARINA
Section 9 Inquiries

5. Mr BROWN to the Minister assisting the Minister for Justice:

- (1) How much did the two section 9 inquiries into Canning Vale and Casuarina Prisons cost?
- (2) Have a number of those investigations been concluded?
- (3) As a consequence of the concluded investigations, are charges likely to be made against any officer or other person?
- (4) What was the subject matter of each investigation?
- (5) How many officers and other persons have been advised by the Ministry of Justice that no further action will be taken on a specific line of investigation?

Mr MINSON replied:

- (1) The direct cost is estimated at \$100 000.
- (2) Yes; however, those referred to the police are continuing.
- (3) Some charges have been laid, some matters have been referred to Crown Counsel and some are under investigation by police.
- (4) The terms of reference of the two section 9 inquiries are as follows -
Casuarina Prison
 - (a) The duties and activities of employees of the Ministry of Justice at Casuarina Prison, Orton Road, Kwinana;
 - (b) the performance of those duties and activities and, without limiting the generality of the foregoing, their effect on the prisoners at that prison;
 - (c) All issues relating to finalisation of and reporting on the inquiry pursuant to section 9 established by written instrument under the director general's hand on 30 September 1994; and
 - (d) Any other matters which touch upon or bear upon (a), (b) or (c) in any way.

Canning Vale Prison

- (a) The impact of the prison reform package and the effect thereof on staff morale and performance at Canning Vale Prison, Nicholson Road, Canning Vale;
- (b) the staffing arrangements and staff performance at that prison;
- (c) the process of attainment of the appropriate qualification for the rank of first class prison officer in the said prison;
- (d) all issues relating to finalisation of and reporting requirements on the inquiry pursuant to section 9 established by written instrument under the director general's hand on 29 September 1994; and
- (e) any other matters which touch upon or bear upon (a), (b), (c) or (d) in any way.

These terms of reference have generated a range of investigations including matters of a public sector management nature and a number were referred to the police.

- (5) Seventeen.

JUVENILE OFFENDERS - BAIL STATISTICS

20. Mr BROWN to the Attorney General:

- (1) How many juveniles released on bail during the financial years -
 - (a) 1991-92;
 - (b) 1992-93;
 - (c) 1993-94;
 - (d) 1994-95 to date;
 were charged with committing further offences while on bail?
- (2) How many juveniles were -
 - (a) charged with an offence;
 - (b) released on bail;
 during each of the following financial years -
 - (i) 1991-92;
 - (ii) 1992-93;
 - (iii) 1993-94;
 - (iv) 1994-95 to date?
- (3) How many juveniles were held in custody for one or more nights because their family was unable or unwilling to meet the bail conditions during the financial years-
 - (a) 1991-92;
 - (b) 1992-93;
 - (c) 1993-94;
 - (d) 1994-95 to date?

Mrs EDWARDES replied:

- (1) This information is not readily available because of the number of different agencies involved and the fact that there is not currently a single statistical collection point.
- (2)

(a)	(i)	1991-92	8 004
	(ii)	1992-93	6 170
	(iii)	1993-94	6 789
	(iv)	1994-95 (to date)	2 655

 - (b) As indicated in (1), definitive statistics on juveniles released on bail are not readily available. The Children's Court is only one agent involved in the process.
- (3) This information is either not available or not readily available. Before changes in the Bail Act as implemented through the Criminal Procedures Act 1993, the required details were not recorded as a matter of routine. Since the changes, there has been no separate recording of reasons for juveniles being held in custody for one or more nights.

Since March 1994, there have been 2 700 admissions to Rangeview Remand Centre and each individual file would have to be checked to establish the number of juveniles held because the family was unable or unwilling to meet bail conditions. A sample of the month of January 1995 showed that out of 52 admissions, parents or family were unwilling to bail on 11 occasions.

PRISONS - ESCAPES

30. Mr BROWN to the Minister assisting the Minister for Justice:

- (1) Since 1 July 1994 how many prisoners have escaped from Western Australian prisons?
- (2) What was the security rating of each prisoner that escaped?
- (3) Which prisons have prisoners escaped from?
- (4) Was an investigation carried out after each escape to determine how the escape occurred?
- (5) If not, was an investigation carried out after any of the escapes occurred?
- (6) Did any investigation reveal security weaknesses, which caused or contributed to the escape?
- (7) How many escapees have been apprehended?
- (8) What was the period of time each escapee was at large?
- (9) Have any of the escapees been charged with additional offences since escaping or between the time of the escape and apprehension?
- (10) If so, what charges have been laid?

Mr MINSON replied:

- (1) 68.
- (2) Minimum security 66, maximum security 2.
- (3) Broome, Bunbury, Eastern Goldfields, Karnet, Pardelup, Roebourne and Wooroloo.
- (4) In accordance with long term practice, both maximum security escapes were investigated. Minimum security walk out escapes are not formally investigated, but reports from the superintendents are routinely forwarded to the Director, Prison Operations for his attention.
- (5) Yes.
- (6) A review of security procedures relating to both maximum security escapes has been initiated.
- (7) 63.
- (8)-(10) The information requested would require an examination of each prisoner's file.

MT WALTON HAZARDOUS WASTE DISPOSAL SITE - PLUTONIUM STORAGE

42. Mr GRILL to the Minister for Commerce and Trade:

- (1) Is there currently any plutonium stored at the Mt Walton hazardous waste disposal site?
- (2) If so, would the Minister give details of the amount and source of the plutonium?
- (3) Under what authority is plutonium stored at the site?
- (4) What protocols are in place for storage of such material?

Mr COWAN replied:

- (1) No.
- (2)-(3) Not applicable.
- (4) The site operates under ministerial condition applied under the Environmental Protection Act 1986. Packaging, transport and disposal

operations are approved by the Radiological Council of Western Australia and comply with the code of practice for the near surface disposal of radioactive wastes in Australia, 1993.

JUSTICE, MINISTRY OF - DETENTION CENTRES ESTABLISHMENT, UNDER YOUNG OFFENDERS ACT SECTION 119; LAVERTON, SECURITY MEASURES

60. Ms WARNOCK to the Attorney General:

- (1) What arrangements have been made for the training of staff for a detention centre provided for under section 119 of the Young Offenders Act?
- (2) Have regulations been made providing for the establishment and operation of detention centres provided for under section 119 of the Act?
- (3) When are such detention centres planned to be operational?
- (4) Have detention centre visitors been appointed as provided by section 166 of the Act?
- (5) What criteria are used for determining eligibility for appointment as a detention centre visitor?
- (6) What security arrangements and physical security measures are to be used to maintain security at the proposed detention centre at Laverton?

Mrs EDWARDES replied:

- (1) Staff appointed to the centre have been drawn from both juvenile and adult systems and already have had considerable experience. In addition, staff were given two weeks of intensive training in order to prepare for the work camp. This training included topics such as policy and procedures of the work camp, enabling legislation, supervision of detainees, conflict resolution, managing critical incidents, managing adolescents' rehabilitation, senior first aid, WA Fire Brigade and counselling and communication skills.
- (2) The necessary regulations were gazetted on 3 March 1995.
- (3) At present, there is only one detention centre, Camp Kurli Murri, as provided for under section 119 of the Young Offenders Act. The camp opened on 13 March 1995.
- (4) The appointment of visitors is currently being undertaken.
- (5) It is proposed to appoint four visitors for each detention centre and the work camp. Two of the detention centre visitors for each centre will be of Aboriginal descent. Aboriginal visitors will be nominated by the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission and the local member of Parliament will be approached to nominate the other visitors. It is expected that visitors will be mature individuals with an interest in juvenile justice.
- (6) Security of detainees at Camp Kurli Murri will be maintained by direct staff supervision.

WOMEN - EVALUATION OF WOMEN'S PLANS REPORT

250. Dr WATSON to the Minister for Women's Interests:

- (1) When will the Minister release the report of results of the Evaluation of Women's Plans developed from 1992 onwards?
- (2) If she will not, why not?
- (3) Who conducted the evaluation?
- (4) At what cost?
- (5) To what use will the evaluation be put?

(6) And when?

Mrs EDWARDES replied:

- (1) An interdepartmental committee has been convened to examine future directions of the women's plans strategy, based on findings of the evaluation. Release of the evaluation report will be considered once the committee has developed recommendations for this program.
- (2) Not applicable.
- (3) English, Kretzchmar and Associates.
- (4) \$14 990.
- (5)-(6) See (1).

**RACING AND GAMING, OFFICE OF - "HELP-DESK" SERVICE FOR
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY, CONTRACT**

410. Mr TAYLOR to the Minister representing the Minister for Racing and Gaming:

- (1) Further to question on notice 65 of 1995, on what basis was the private sector firm chosen to trial the "help-desk" service for information technology in the Department of Racing and Gaming?
- (2) Will this firm be excluded from the tender process and, if not, why not?

Mr COWAN replied:

The Minister for Racing and Gaming has provided the following reply -

- (1) Under the Office of Racing and Gaming's approved business plan procedures, two firms were contacted regarding the pilot. The firm given the contract was selected on the basis of its quotation.
- (2) Not applicable, as no decision has been made about the future of this function.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

CRICHTON-BROWNE, SENATOR NOEL - DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

57. Mr McGINTY to the Premier:

I refer the Premier to his remarks in the House yesterday and to remarks made on ABC radio yesterday by former federal Liberal Minister Fred Chaney about the Premier's political partner Senator Noel Crichton-Browne. Mr Chaney said, "It's interesting that the Courts continue to give him (Crichton-Browne) such overt support and I think that's been really one of the sad features of the last 10 to 15 years that when people have come forward and complained about the way the party has been organised, the way it's been run he has always been able to count on the support of either Sir Charles or Richard and I think that's a shame . . ."

In regard to the question of public confidence in the integrity of his Government I ask -

- (1) How long has the Premier known of the wife-bashing allegations?
- (2) When will the Premier stand on his own feet and stop supporting Senator Crichton-Browne?

Mr COURT replied:

- (1) About two weeks ago when the anonymous letter was circulated. That issue has been well covered.
- (2) As regards supporting Senator Crichton-Browne or any of the other endorsed Liberal members, I have said on many occasions, I support all members of the party. The Leader of the Opposition might want to say whether he supports all his members.

Mr McGinty: You support Crichton-Browne?

Mr COURT: The Leader of the Opposition supports all his members, does he?

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr COURT: The Leader of the Opposition does not have an answer. Does he support all his members? The answer is no, he does not.

LAND - KWINANA FREEWAY-FORREST ROAD, SPORTING COMPLEX PROPOSAL

58. Mr BOARD to the Minister for Planning:

The Minister will be aware of a proposal headed by Cockburn City Council to build a major sporting complex on a parcel of land at the intersection of the Kwinana Freeway and Forrest Road. Will the Minister bring me up to date on the current situation?

Mr LEWIS replied:

This proposal has been on the books, as it were, for many years. The land was formerly zoned industrial under the metropolitan region scheme. In the more recent south west corridor major amendments in the south west area it has been zoned for parks and recreation, which will facilitate the longer term planning for major recreational centre at that very important part of the south west region. The land is currently owned by the West Australian Land Authority. Obviously an obligation exists for the Western Australian Planning Commission to acquire that land. I like to think that in the near future, in concert with the councils in the southern area, a plan can be worked up for the development of that land and the ultimate vesting in the longer term in those councils.

CRICHTON-BROWNE, SENATOR NOEL - PRESELECTION

59. Mr McGINTY to the Premier:

In the light of the Premier's frequent claims that he would act immediately on any allegation of impropriety by members of the Liberal Party, and his failure to act on the member for Wanneroo; the member for Kingsley, retained as Attorney General; the member for Albany, promoted to Cabinet; and the member for Melville, promoted to Parliamentary Secretary, and in the light of Senator Crichton-Browne's confession that he is a wife beater, will the Premier finally display some leadership and in the interests of Western Australia ensure that the senator's preselection is withdrawn, or is the Premier, as the member for South Perth maintains, afraid of Senator Noel Crichton-Browne?

Mr COURT replied:

My advice to the Leader of the Opposition is that he look after Mike Beahans' interests and the Labor Party. The Leader of the Opposition has, over many years, been directly involved in a number of preselections and moves inside the Labor Party. He was not in the Chamber yesterday when we outlined the position he adopted in a number of areas. Gavin Troy, Jeff Carr, Joe Berinson and the late Pam Buchanan all know about his power in the Labor Party. He sought their renewal and, in the Labor Party, renewal means knifing them and getting rid of them. The Leader of the Opposition has played a dominant role as the backroom boy, behind the scenes. He is laughing when no-one else on that side of the House is laughing because they know the role he has played over the years. I suggest he look after his own preselections because he is on record as saying that he will get involved in the preselections in his party.

Mr Taylor: I hope he does.

Mr COURT: The member for Kalgoorlie hopes he does because he organised his preselection.

Mr McGinty interjected.

Withdrawal of Remark

The SPEAKER: Order! I believe I heard the Leader of the Opposition refer to crooks on the back bench. I direct him to withdraw that remark.

Mr McGINTY: I withdraw.

Questions without Notice Resumed

Mr COURT: The member for Kalgoorlie knows that his preselection was organised by the Leader of the Opposition. He does not deny it.

Mr Taylor: That is not quite right.

Mr COURT: It is not quite right, but it is close enough.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order! There are far too many interjections. I remind members of what I said yesterday. I have two choices of action to take against interjections which drown out the person seeking to answer the question. The first is that I can act against individual members and the second is that I can act against them collectively.

Mr COURT: The Leader of the Opposition is the ultimate backroom numbers man. Was the ballot rigged for Mike Beahan?

Mrs Hallahan interjected.

Mr McGinty interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order! I formally call to order the member for Armadale and the Leader of the Opposition.

Point of Order

Mr KOBELKE: I hope you will clarify that ruling. I heard you, Mr Speaker, call to order the Leader of the Opposition and the Premier. Am I correct in suggesting that you called both to order because they were speaking over the top of you.

The SPEAKER: Order! The member must have hearing problems because I formally called to order for the first time the member for Armadale and the Leader of the Opposition.

Questions without Notice Resumed

Mr COURT: The Leader of the Opposition will not tell us in this Parliament whether he supports all of his members.

Mr McGinty: You refused yesterday to stand by your Ministers on your front bench.

Several members interjected.

Mr COURT: To the contrary I have said on countless occasions -

The SPEAKER: Order! The Leader of the Opposition is interjecting. Members will notice that to begin with I made no comment on it. However, it is difficult for me to give him some latitude when he is being drowned out by his colleagues. There are many ways of looking at the interjection process.

Mr COURT: I have asked the Leader of the Opposition whether he supports all of his members and he will not say. Does he support all of his members?

Mr McGinty: Do you support all of your members?

Mr COURT: I am prepared to say that I support all of the members of the Liberal Party and of the National Party. However, the Leader of the Opposition will not say whether he supports all of his members. Does he?

Mr McGinty: Of course I do. You are stupid.

Mr COURT: Is the Leader of the Opposition saying, "Of course you do"?

Mr McGinty: It took you 24 hours to realise you had to answer the question to stand by your deputy.

Several members interjected.

Mr COURT: I have never wavered from my position. Does the Leader of the Opposition support all his members?

Mr McGinty: Do you support Crichton-Browne? He is a wife basher and you have given him 100 per cent support and that is why the member for South Perth is sitting at the back.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr COURT: I will tell members what a coward is. He is a person who comes into this Parliament and who is surrounded by people -

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order! I formally call to order the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr COURT: The Leader of the Opposition has members around him who have personal problems which are very public, but the Government is not capitalising on that. The Leader of the Opposition is prepared to come in here and lead an attack based on anonymous information. The Leader of the Opposition must make up his mind about what his party's standards will be; currently, they are in the gutter.

Dr Gallop interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order! That quantum of interjection is unacceptable and I suggest to the Deputy Leader of the Opposition that he not interject in that way.

Mr COURT: The Leader of the Opposition is very reluctant to support his members.

EMPLOYMENT - JOB GROWTH FORECAST

60. Mr McNEE to the Premier:

- (1) Will the Premier inform the House on the latest news on job creation in Western Australia?
- (2) Does the Premier expect this to be reflected in tomorrow's official employment statistics?

Mr COURT replied:

- (1)-(2) I cannot predict what will happen tomorrow. Morgan and Banks Pty Ltd, an employment firm, has a job index from which they surveyed 2 200 companies in this case. Its report which came out today indicates that Western Australia has an exceptionally bright quarter ahead with a strong expectation of job growth. Perhaps the company is too optimistic in saying that nearly 40 per cent of Western Australian companies expect to increase their staff levels in the next three months, which is second to New South Wales. It says that Western Australia leads the country in its expectations to take on greater levels of temporary staff and that its economic growth is the strongest of all States and well above national growth. The only way to bring down unemployment levels is to have consistently high levels of new private sector investment coming into the economy. It has been indicated by the economic indicators that there has been a flattening out since Christmas in the area of economic activity; for example, in housing starts.

Dr Gallop: Western Australia is doing well on the front page of every paper in Western Australia.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Dr Gallop: Western Australia's reputation is looking good.

The SPEAKER: Order! I formally call to order the Deputy Leader of the Opposition.

Mr COURT: Things may be reasonably flat over the next six months, but the good news is that a lot of new investment is coming through and the Government will do everything it can to encourage more. On the question of new employment, this morning I had the opportunity to visit the Coflexip factory in Fremantle. The speed with which that agreement was put together and put into practice was very impressive. The company was planning to commence production in October, but it hopes to bring that date forward by a couple of months. Its expectation is that it will be a bigger operation than originally planned. It is that type of investment associated with the resources sector which will help to improve Western Australia's long term employment prospects. The Government is pleased with the forecast, but it would be too optimistic to say that over the next six months there will be a dramatic improvement.

CRICHTON-BROWNE, SENATOR NOEL - RESTRAINING ORDER, COPY
FROM MINISTRY OF JUSTICE

61. Mr BROWN to the Attorney General:

I refer to an ABC television news report last night that former Liberal Party President and Fraser Government Minister Ian Viner, QC, paid for and received a copy of the restraining order issued against Senator Noel Crichton-Browne from the Attorney General's department. In view of that development, what action has the Attorney General taken to ensure that the junior officer in her ministry is not made the scapegoat for the release of the document?

Mrs EDWARDES replied:

It has been reported over the last few days - the first time in Saturday's edition of *The West Australian* - that a Ministry of Justice official was asked to explain the reason for handing over the document. That was done by the Director General of the Ministry of Justice. I was advised by the director general last night that an application form was completed by R.I. Viner and the copy of the restraining order was handed to a person who had signed that application form.

HOSPITALS - FREMANTLE
Strategic Plan

62. Dr HAMES to the Minister for Health:

- (1) Is the Minister aware of comments by the Leader of the Opposition regarding the health service strategic plan and Fremantle Hospital?
- (2) Will the Minister inform the House of the scope and intent of the plan?

Mr KIERATH replied:

- (1)-(2) My advice to the Leader of the Opposition is to trade in his crystal ball. Every time he gazes into it, he is 100 per cent wrong. It is true that Fremantle Hospital decided to develop a strategic plan. When doing so, it asked everybody associated with the hospital, including the Leader of the Opposition, for their views on what should be included. The Leader of the Opposition cannot help himself. First he waded in and tried to frighten everyone by running the bogymen of privatisation. I would not mind if he had the support of his federal colleagues, but the federal Minister for Health, Dr Lawrence, has said there is no problem with privatisation so long as the patients benefit. I agree with her. The benefit to the patients is the key issue. That is not the case for the member for Fremantle. He has trotted out the argument that jobs will be lost but, whether it involves doctors or nurses, the jobs must still be done. The only question is whether they will be done in the public sector or the private sector. This

ideologue on the Opposition benches says that it must be done in the public sector and cannot be done in the private sector. He is quite prepared to see long waiting lists, so long as his mates in the union have the public sector jobs. This Government wants to eliminate those waiting lists; it does not care whether the work is done in the public sector or the private sector, so long as the length of waiting lists is reduced. The member for Fremantle cannot help himself. The only example of real privatisation of a hospital in this State is Hollywood Private Hospital. A Federal Labor Government sold that government hospital. I give credit where it is due because, with hindsight, I think it was a wonderful decision. Under public ownership people had to wait 12 months for treatment at that hospital, but under the private sector patients wait for only 6 weeks. Who do members want to be identified with - an ideologue who wants long waiting lists or a Government that wants to reduce waiting lists in the health area? It is a real dilemma for the member for Fremantle because, on the one hand, there is the Miscellaneous Workers Union, of which he was once secretary and whose members he must look after and protect their jobs; and, on the other hand, there are the people of Fremantle who elected him to look after their interests. Those interests are best served by reduced waiting lists for hospital treatment. I ask the member for Fremantle to put aside his union background and to put the people he is paid to represent first, by supporting the Government in any moves it makes to reduce waiting lists.

**DISABILITY SERVICES - MacKINNON, CHARLES, COMMITTEE
APPOINTMENT
*Accommodation Crisis***

63. Dr WATSON to the Minister for Disability Services:

I draw the Minister's attention to today's rally concerning the serious crisis in accommodation for people with disabilities in Western Australia and ask -

- (1) Why has former McCarrey Commissioner Charles MacKinnon been appointed to a committee to oversee the privatisation of all hostels and group homes operated by the Disability Services Commission in this State?
- (2) Does the Minister see the irony in implementing McCarrey recommendations for privatisation when there is a serious accommodation crisis in the community?
- (3) How does the Minister justify selling these homes, presumably to persons with some profit motives, when the effect is to reap a financial benefit from one of the most disadvantaged groups in our community?

Mr MINSON replied:

- (1)-(3) Mr Charles MacKinnon has been appointed to a committee but he has not been appointed to a committee which will necessarily oversee any privatisation. He is a very competent man who will examine a range of options. In answering the second part of the question, I cannot help harking back to the answer that we have just heard. We have a crisis in disability services accommodation. I said at the meeting that was held at the South Perth Civic Centre about a week ago that I did not care who provided the service so long as it was provided. The ideologues opposite are telling us that -

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Kalgoorlie and the member for Kenwick will come to order.

Mr MINSON: The ideologues opposite would have us believe -

Mrs Henderson interjected.

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

Mr MINSON: - that the only way we can provide any accommodation is for the Government to provide it.

Mrs Henderson interjected.

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

Mr MINSON: I am proud to stand here and say that I will get the maximum value for the taxpayers' dollars and the maximum value for those people who need accommodation. I do not care if the Government provides it, provided it does it better than anyone else. I do not care if it is provided by people who do it for profit, provided the quality is maintained and the price is right.

Dr Watson: Profit from disability; that is what you are saying.

Mr MINSON: If the quality is maintained and the efficiencies are such that it is cheaper, I do not mind. A range of private, non-government organisations, such as the Cerebral Palsy Association, Rocky Bay Inc, Activ Foundation Inc and Nulsen Haven Association, are providing a service -

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order! I formally call to order the member for Thornlie for the second time.

Mr MINSON: I do not care from which of those three sectors we provide the accommodation, provided, firstly, we get the maximum amount for the disabled, and, secondly, the quality is maintained.

Dr Gallop: Minister, may I ask a question?

Mr MINSON: No. Charles MacKinnon is heading a committee -

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order! I formally call to order the Leader of the Opposition for the second time.

Mr MINSON: - that will examine a range of options; and without any apology at all, I will get the best value and the best quality for people with disabilities. I reiterate that I do not care from which of those sectors it comes, but the people who have the highest priority are the people who were outside this building this afternoon, and I will not be dictated to by ideologues like members opposite.

Dr Watson interjected.

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

Dr Watson interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order! I will call the member for Kenwick to order again if she persists.

CAMBRIDGE, TOWN OF - MUNICIPAL OFFICES CONSTRUCTION

64. Dr CONSTABLE to the Minister for Local Government:

- (1) Is the Minister aware of the lack of support among residents of the Town of Cambridge for the location of the proposed municipal offices and is he aware that the commissioners made the decision without consultation with the community?
- (2) Will the Minister undertake to stop the construction from going ahead until after the local government elections on 6 May in order to enable the newly elected council to find a more acceptable and suitable location?

Mr OMODEI replied:

(1)-(3) I cannot direct the Commissioners of the City of Perth. They are

empowered under the City of Perth Restructuring Act. Questions have been asked about consultation in relation to the City of Perth restructure. I am advised that yesterday at 9.00 am the Commissioners of the City of Perth met Norma Calcutt of the Friends of Bold Park; Michael Moore of the Coast Ward Ratepayers Association; Manny Petrelis of the Western Suburbs Business Association; and Robina McConnell of the advisory committee, to discuss the location of municipal offices. They discussed the quarry site, the old quarry site, the golf course site, Perry House region park, the old Leederville town hall, the Floreat Forum, the old nursery site and the site opposite the Floreat Forum.

At 12.15 pm yesterday a contract was let for the full construction of the municipal offices -

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Balcatta!

Mr OMODEI: The contract was let to Kilcullen and Clark for \$5.325m -

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Balcatta!

Mr OMODEI: Today, the commissioners sought legal advice from Minter Ellison Northmore Hale -

A opposition member: How much did that cost?

Mr OMODEI: I do not know -

Several members interjected.

Mr OMODEI: As per the legal advice -

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Peel!

Mr OMODEI: They have a legal obligation -

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

Mr OMODEI: - to carry out the restructuring provisions of the Act. I took the time today to walk around every site. Today I also had a very good look at and walked over the quarry site. Consultation has occurred. I met the groups on at least eight or 10 occasions in the last 12 months. Having walked around the sites, I endorse the decision of the Commissioners of the City of Perth.

BUNBURY PORT - DRY DOCK CONSTRUCTION

65. Mr OSBORNE to the Minister for Resources Development:

One of the outcomes of the recent approval to construct an oil rig platform for the Wandoo field is the excavation of a large basin at the Bunbury Port. For the platform to be floated from Bunbury the seaward wall of the basin must be breached, and if further rigs are to be constructed this wall must be restored, at a cost of several hundred thousand dollars. However, for the expenditure of several million, steel gates could be installed, thus creating a dry dock facility which could assist in the establishment of a shipbuilding industry in Bunbury.

The SPEAKER: Order! The middle part of this question is excessive. The member should terminate it directly.

Mr OSBORNE: Will the Minister support the development of a dry dock at the Bunbury Port?

Mr C.J. BARNETT replied:

Mr Speaker -

Several members interjected.

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

Mr C.J. BARNETT: The answer is yes.

Several members interjected.

Mr C.J. BARNETT: It was a tough question but I was up to it! Completion of the concrete offshore structure, which is about an \$80m project employing 400 people, will result in the earth wall being broken. To rebuild the wall costs about \$600 000 each time. The alternative of permanent steel gates will cost between \$5m and \$10m. Whether that can be achieved will depend on how many concrete structures are built; so the emphasis at the moment is to try to attract further projects to this technology. There are about six prospects. As they come in they will contribute towards the steel gates ultimately. The Minister for Regional Development is trying to access federal infrastructure funds. That is the way to go, but it will depend on the number of projects which arise to fund it.

HOSPITALS - ROYAL PERTH

Bed Cost Comparison; Services Privatisation

66. Dr GALLOP to the Minister for Health:

I refer the Minister to the document "Inpatient Bed Day Cost Compared to Private Hospital Charges" produced by senior management at Royal Perth Hospital which estimated that the cost per bed day at Royal Perth Hospital is \$321, which is significantly lower than daily accommodation fees at private hospitals at \$505 for a single room, and \$460 for a shared room.

- (1) Why does the Minister want to privatise 40 services at Royal Perth Hospital when it is already performing better than the private sector?
- (2) Is it not the case that the Minister is the ideologue on this matter?

Mr KIERATH replied:

- (1)-(2) I cannot believe this.

Dr Gallop: We can't either.

Mr KIERATH: I expect more from someone who aspires to be Minister for Health. I expect the shadow Minister for Health to do his homework. The same person who presented that comparison between private and public hospital bed days also presented me with the list of 40 odd activities we are looking at privatising. Health dollars are scarce and we must use our services in the most efficient and productive way. Savings are to be made in those 40 services. It is true that in my meetings with the CEOs and chairmen of the boards of major teaching hospitals, Royal Perth Hospital gave me a paper claiming its beds were cheaper than those in private hospitals. I said I would get the department to check out that claim to see whether it was true. That is perfectly reasonable. The shadow Minister for Health is caught out again. He is the ideologue who is opposed to any form of privatisation. He does not care whether it will provide a better service for patients. He is the sort of ideologue who says that even if the private sector provides a better service he does not want it simply because it is provided by the private sector. The Government is not hung up with ideology. It wants the best for patients in this State; it wants the best that money can buy. We do not care whether it is public or private; we want the best service that we can get our hands on. I will give this undertaking to the member for Victoria Park: Our first term in government will result in a better health system than the former Government was able to deliver in 10 years.