



WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Parliamentary Debates

(HANSARD)

THIRTY-FIFTH PARLIAMENT
SECOND SESSION
1999

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Wednesday, 5 May 1999

Legislative Assembly

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THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Bloffwitch) took the Chair at 12 noon, and read prayers.

VACATION SWIMMING CLASSES

Petition

Mr Tubby (Parliamentary Secretary) presented the following petition bearing the signatures of nine persons -

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

We, the undersigned petitioners, call on the Minister for Education to abandon plans to contract out vacation swimming classes as it could risk:

- . the current high standard of teaching
- . the affordability of classes
- . the availability of classes, particularly in country areas

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

A similar petition was presented by Mr Prince (Minister for Police) (16 signatures).

[See petitions Nos 203 and 204.]

NORTHAM FIRE STATION

Petition

Mr Trenorden presented the following petition bearing the signatures of 1 308 persons -

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

We, the undersigned, the residents of Northam, wish to strongly support the continuation of a 24 hour permanent staff at the Northam Fire Station as they are a vital resource to the Town of Northam and an essential support to the volunteers. They provide an immediate response in the event of an emergency in the Avon region. That there is no reduction in staffing levels.

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

[See petition No 205.]

COMMUNITY PROTECTION, CARNARVON

Petition

Mr Sweetman presented the following petition bearing the signatures of 1 078 persons -

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

We, the undersigned concerned residents of the Carnarvon area request that the following legislative measures be introduced into law as a matter of urgency to protect our Community and our families:

1. The establishment of local Remote Detention Centres or Boot Camps for repeat juvenile offenders convicted of crimes or refused bail pending a court appearance. Such incarceration must be independent of the consent of the juvenile concerned, their parents or guardians.
2. That juveniles who have attained the age of 14 years be sentenced as adults but otherwise remain liable to be incarcerated in juvenile detention centres.
3. Children under 10 years of age found offending, being involved in anti-social behaviour or roaming at large at night be detained in a hostel until they can be returned to or picked up by a responsible/sober Parent or Guardian.
4. That the Residential Tenancies Act be amended to allow Homeswest to fast track evictions of unruly and anti-social tenants.
5. That segregated and appropriate forms of housing be provided for those Homeswest tenants who choose not to assimilate or conform to acceptable community standards of common decency.
6. The reintroduction of section 53 of the Police Act to re-criminalize drunk and disorderly conduct.

7. That pension payments to families who are being adversely affected by alcohol be paid predominantly in food and clothing vouchers.
8. That an alternative school class room be established off school grounds for students exhibiting behavioural problems, truancy and for students under suspension from school.

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

[See petition No 206.] [See also Deputy Speaker's ruling on page 7884.]

REGIONAL FOREST AGREEMENT

Tabling

MR COURT (Nedlands - Premier) [12.07 pm]: Yesterday I gave a commitment to table the Regional Forest Agreement document when the counterparts had been exchanged and signed. I now present for tabling the original copy of the Regional Forest Agreement, which has been signed by me and the Prime Minister.

[See paper No 920.]

CORRECTION TO TABLED PAPER

Consultants

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Bloffwitch): I have received a request from the Premier to amend the report on consultants engaged by the Government for the six months ended 30 June 1998, which was tabled in the House on 18 March 1999. The report stated that Mr Bob Shields was paid \$17 786 in relation to his role with the Victoria Quay development for the period October 1997 to October 1998, when it should have stated that Mr Bob Shields and the Fremantle Property Group were paid \$67 692.67 for this period.

An addendum to correct this error will be attached to the next report for the six months ended 30 December 1998. Accordingly, under the provisions of Standing Order No 233, I advise the House that I have authorised the necessary correction to be made and the correction to be made to the tabled report.

INTERGOVERNMENTAL AGREEMENT ON THE REFORM OF COMMONWEALTH-STATE FINANCIAL RELATIONS

Statement by Premier

MR COURT (Nedlands - Premier) [12.09 pm]: I present for tabling the Intergovernmental Agreement on the Reform of Commonwealth-State Financial Relations which was signed by the Prime Minister and Premiers and Chief Ministers of all States and Territories at the 9 April 1999 Premiers Conference. The agreement represents a significant breakthrough in the reform of commonwealth-state relations which will provide the States with a secure and growing revenue source to better fund services such as health, education and welfare. The reforms laid down by the agreement are subject to passage of the relevant commonwealth legislation through the Senate.

Under the agreement, States will receive all the revenue from the commonwealth goods and services tax, commencing 1 July 2000. The GST will replace commonwealth financial assistance grants, commonwealth safety net franchise fee replacement revenues, state financial institutions duty and debits taxes, a range of state stamp duties, and reduced revenues from state gambling taxes. Access to the GST is expected to benefit all States in the long term, as the GST is expected to grow faster than the commonwealth grants and state taxes which it replaces. States will take over responsibility for providing financial assistance grants to local government, and will be required to maintain the current arrangements for these grants. Local government will benefit from the new arrangements.

There will also be other changes in state expenditure responsibilities: States will be required to set up a new first home owners scheme to help offset the effect of the GST on house prices; States will have to pay the Australian Taxation Office for the cost of collecting the GST; and state off-road diesel subsidies will cease - responsibility for diesel subsidies will lie with the Commonwealth. The Commonwealth will provide guaranteed top-up payments in the initial period to ensure no state budget is worse off. The distribution of the GST among the States will be recommended by the Commonwealth Grants Commission using fiscal equalisation principles, in the same way as financial assistance grants are presently allocated.

Other provisions of the intergovernmental agreement provide that the Commonwealth and States will attach the agreement to their legislation; changes to the GST rate and major changes to the GST base will require unanimous agreement of the Commonwealth and States; a ministerial council of Treasurers will be established to oversee the operation of the GST and the intergovernmental agreement; the Commonwealth will not cut specific purpose payments as part of the reforms; reciprocal taxation arrangements are to be introduced within the commonwealth, state and local government sectors on a revenue-neutral basis; and States will legislate to allow the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission to monitor prices in areas of state responsibility for a three-year transition period.

I now table the Intergovernmental Agreement on the Reform of Commonwealth-State Financial Relations. For the sake of the member for Nollamara, I note that it is signed by all Premiers and Chief Ministers, including those States with Labor Governments.

[See paper No 921.]

FINANCIAL SECTOR REFORM (AMENDMENTS AND TRANSITIONAL PROVISIONS) BILL (No 1) 1999
FINANCIAL SECTOR (TRANSFERS OF BUSINESS) BILL 1999

Statement by Minister for Police

MR PRINCE (Albany - Minister for Police) [12.11 pm]: I rise to make a ministerial statement in my capacity of Minister representing the Attorney General. I seek leave to table today the commonwealth Financial Sector Reform (Amendments and Transitional Provisions) Bill (No 1) 1999, the commonwealth Financial Sector (Transfers of Business) Bill 1999, and explanatory memoranda in relation to both Bills. The first Bill is tabled as it will, when enacted, make substantial changes to the Corporations Law. The second Bill is tabled as it is a relevant part of the package. A third Bill in the package dealing with the rates of income tax payable and amending the commonwealth Income Tax Rates Act 1986 is not tabled as it is not relevant. The Bills were introduced and read a first time in the House of Representatives on 11 March 1999.

The Bills implement the second stage of the reforms recommended by the Financial System Inquiry, the Wallis inquiry. The first stage of the reforms introduced a new framework for the regulation of the financial system from 1 July 1998. The second stage does two things: First, it transfers regulatory responsibility for building societies, credit unions and friendly societies from the States to the Commonwealth; and, secondly, it brings permanent building societies and credit unions into line with other authorised deposit-taking institutions, including banks, and establishes a single regulatory framework for life insurance companies and friendly societies. The first Bill is of interest as schedule 3 inserts into the Corporations Law provisions for the transfer of financial institutions - that is, permanent building societies and credit unions - and friendly societies. The Bill also contains a number of other relevant clauses, particularly schedule 8.

As members will be aware, the Corporations Law is uniform legislation enacted by the Commonwealth which, because of section 7 of the Corporations (Western Australia) Act 1990, is applied as a law of Western Australia. The Corporations Law now regulates all corporate matters in Australia under one unified law, and has been in place since 1 January 1990. The transfers of business Bill introduces powers to allow the Australian Prudential Regulation Authority to approve voluntary transfers of prudentially regulated businesses or require their compulsory transfers in appropriate circumstances.

[See papers Nos 918 and 919.]

YOUTH AWARDS SHOWCASE

Statement by Minister for Youth

MR BOARD (Murdoch - Minister for Youth) [12.14 pm]: I rise to inform the House of progress in the development of the Western Australian youth awards program. This inaugural year has seen great success. The program centres on awards given to young people, not in an elitist way but for participation and contribution. It is about patting our young people on the back for what they are doing in our community. Primarily the awards are aimed at raising awareness in the community and, particularly, the media about what the bulk of young people is really about in Western Australia.

The main issues which came out of the 38 youth forums held around Western Australia were that young people felt they were getting a raw deal in negative media coverage and were not being acknowledged for the many positive contributions they make to the community. The aims of the WA youth awards are to showcase the efforts of young achievers, aged between 13 and 25 years, who have made notable contributions to their communities, and to foster a better public image of young people.

The awards are part of an all-embracing program with six categories of achievement, initiative, inspiration, leadership, community service and the environment. Nearly 500 nominations were received from across the State. With the participation of youth advisory councils throughout Western Australia putting forward nominees, it is anticipated that nominations will increase significantly. A further category of WA youth media awards received nominations in the metropolitan and regional categories for photographic, print, radio and television sections. In addition, the Youth Minister's positive image award recognised the selfless actions of unassuming young Western Australians.

The WA youth awards do not try to replace valuable programs such as Citizen of the Year and others, but add to them and give young people the opportunity to go forward and to receive some positive media coverage. The members of the media have been very supportive of this awards initiative. Advertisements were donated by *The West Australian*, Channel Seven and Radio 96 FM. In the past few days, *The West Australian* has been featuring the winners, and Channel Seven will be televising the awards presentation night on Sunday, 30 May at 2.00 pm. In addition to the media support, there were many corporate sponsors of the awards throughout Western Australia.

It is a common misconception that a large proportion of young people are breaking the law. In fact, the statistics show that less than four and a half per cent of Western Australian youth between the ages of 10 and 24 years have been convicted of a crime. Young offenders, although needing the assistance that government and the community can provide, are not representative of the youth population as a whole; yet most media attention tends to be centred on them. The growing negativity towards young people is not justified.

Although the finalists and winners are outstanding in their achievements, they represent only a few of the tens of thousands of young Western Australians who are making positive contributions to our community. The Youth Awards Showcase provides not only a forum to recognise these young people publicly, but also huge potential to develop a closer link with their positive achievements.

BILLS - INTRODUCTION AND FIRST READING

1. Appropriation (Consolidated Fund) Bill (No 1) 1999.
2. Appropriation (Consolidated Fund) Bill (No 2) 1999.
3. Loan Bill 1999.
4. Treasurer's Advance Authorization Bill 1999.

Bills introduced, on motions by Mr Court (Treasurer), and read a first time.

MEMBER FOR KINGSLEY - LEEUWIN NATURALISTE PARK*Personal Explanation*

MRS EDWARDES (Kingsley - Minister for the Environment) [12.20 pm]: On Thursday, 22 April the member for Maylands asked question without notice 371 about the Leeuwin Naturaliste Park. In the course of the reply, the two locations mentioned were Nos 814 and 1062. The Department of Conservation and Land Management has now advised that these two locations should have been identified as locations 418 and 1060. I apologise to the House for the error.

PRISONS AMENDMENT BILL*Second Reading*

Resumed from 18 March.

MR PRINCE (Albany - Minister for Police) [12.22 pm]: When this matter was last before the House I had risen to respond to matters that had been raised by members opposite. Unfortunately my file and papers are not with me, so I hope they arrive soon.

Mr Riebeling: I can help you - you were not making any sense last time!

Mr PRINCE: That is because I was responding to what the member for Burrup said.

The substance of the Bill is to empower Government to consider the construction and management of another prison in this State by other than the public sector directly; in other words, by a contract mechanism that would involve bringing in the private sector either to build, own or manage a prison, or a combination of those forms of models that have been used so successfully elsewhere, and not only in the area of prisons. I understand that the objection from the Opposition is not that a new prison is not needed or necessarily with regard to its location, which is proposed to be Wooroloo, but rather that any prison of any nature at all should be owned by the public sector, managed by the public sector and staffed by prison officers, as are other prisons in the State. I hope I am not mistaking the objection from the member for Burrup as he expressed it.

The experience around the world in comparable jurisdictions, as well as in Australia, has been that private prisons have been successful. A number of problems have been experienced in private prisons in Queensland, Victoria and in some States of America and have been highlighted over the years. However, the fact remains that with any form of private prison the success rate over a period of time - the number of prisoners who pass through the institution, the level of realisation and training they receive and the recidivism rate - starts to look good when measured over a reasonable period. They are not initially successful, but they are over a period. That conclusion has been reached after considering the privately run prisons in both the United Kingdom and some of the American States, and in Victoria, Queensland and New South Wales where they have been successful. There is somewhat of a mixed history of their initial introduction into Australia because different models have been followed. However, they have been successful during the period in which they have been allowed to operate.

It is this Government's view that a new prison is required. The increasing numbers of prisoners shows the effect of some of the legislative changes that have been made in the past six years, as well as the changes in sentencing by the judiciary. At least one more substantial maximum and medium security prison must be built. That must be commenced immediately because a state of crowding currently exists in most of the maximum and minimum facilities, and more beds must be urgently provided. The 700-plus bed prison proposed at Wooroloo is designed to take up that problem.

Mr Riebeling: Why was it not planned for years ago - because you are such good managers and you know what the prison population will be?

Mr PRINCE: As I said publicly on a number of occasions when I was acting for the Attorney at the beginning of the year, when the problems at Casuarina and elsewhere were occurring, or in their aftermath, I make no apology nor do I expect any other member of the Government to make any apology for dealing with matters such as education in schools; the payment of teachers, which is far better than it has ever been; and the increase in the amount being spent, for example, on computers in schools and for new schools. Western Australia is the only State in Australia that is building new schools and it has a population which requires that. For the first time, full education, from preprimary through to year 12, is available throughout the whole of this State. Phenomenal amounts of money have been spent in the education of our young, and that is extremely important. The extra amount of money that the Government put into Health is equally phenomenal and I make no apology for the money that has gone into the facilities and the payments that have been negotiated with essential staff such as the nurses and doctors. Those areas of high priority have absorbed an enormous amount of the budget during the past five to six years. I think the people of Western Australia would agree that they are areas of higher priority. People who commit crimes of such a serious nature that the judiciary in an independent process determines they should be locked up,

do not in that sense rank as highly as the young in their educational needs or as the people who are ill and require some form of medical treatment.

Mr Riebeling interjected.

Mr PRINCE: A number of projections were made as to the likely prison population, given the changes in law, and that is to some extent a reasonable indication of what may be required. However, levels of criminality in society generally in all the Australian States and Britain, Europe and the United States have been increasing for the past 10 or 15 years. The number of people who engage in criminal activity has been increasing. The number of people who have been caught is increasing significantly in this State as a result of the Delta reforms. Those things do not lend themselves to an accurate projection of how many more people will wind up in jail, but it was known that an increase would occur. However, we made decisions about priorities for where public money should be spent in education and in health. It has nothing to do with votes. It has much to do with providing good education to the children of this State, and providing good health and medical services to the people of this State, especially those who are unwell; those are things to which the Government has given a far higher priority than the provision of new prison beds.

As I said in January - I will say it again - I would not expect any member of this Government to apologise for having those priorities. I would be surprised if any member of the public criticised us. Prisoners should be dealt with humanely, carefully and in a secure fashion, depending upon their security classification. However, when it comes to matters of priority and spending the scarce public dollar, when we also have the problem of an inherited Labor-originated debt, we give priority to areas other than prisons.

Mr Riebeling interjected.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The member for Burrup has interjected on many occasions. I ask him to cease.

Mr PRINCE: The Government is now in a position to move ahead with the construction of a new medium-security jail. That is now under way. This legislation will enable that to be done as an exercise with the private sector both building and operating the institution. As I said, experience elsewhere indicates that is successful. That is certainly the view of the Government on the inquiries that it has undertaken, and that is why this Bill is brought before the House.

Mr Brown: Will the minister not reply to the rest of the matters that were raised?

Mr PRINCE: The member must have missed what I said earlier. Regrettably, the file has not been given to me. I apologise that I am not in a position to reply to the detail.

Mr Brown: Does the minister want an adjournment?

Mr PRINCE: I understand that there is no other business that can proceed at present.

Point of Order

Mr RIEBELING: Members on this side of the House are ready to proceed. We were advised that this Bill would be brought on today. The minister now says that he cannot answer the questions we raised during the second reading debate because he does not have the file with him. I do not know why we should be expected to proceed with the Bill. It is a disgrace that we must endure listening to a minister who does not know what he is talking about.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: There is no point of order. The minister has replied to matters raised during the second reading debate. If he has not answered all the members' questions, there will be further opportunities during the committee stage to address them.

Debate Resumed

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

Committee

The Chairman of Committees (Mr Bloffwitch) in the Chair; Mr Prince (Minister for Police) in charge of the Bill.

Clause 1: Short title -

Mr PRINCE: The reason that I am without advisers at the moment and was without notes and files to enable me respond in detail during the second reading debate is that the officers concerned understood that the Juries Amendment Bill would be dealt with first this morning. However, at the last minute it was discovered that an amendment was required, which requires notice on the Notice Paper. That was not able to be done. Therefore, that issue dropped off the order of business, and this was the only other matter left to come on at short notice. I apologise and regret that.

Mr RIEBELING: I do not know whether the minister has a copy of the Bill with him.

Mr Prince: I have the Bill.

Mr RIEBELING: We are now faced with a debate on this Bill. I do not know why the Juries Amendment Bill would need to come back before the Chamber. I thought we dealt with that last night.

Mr Prince: It reached the third reading stage and did not go any further. It must be recommitted because some amendments need to be made.

Mr RIEBELING: Members on this side of the Chamber have no problem with proceeding with the Juries Amendment Bill. If the minister has some problems with that, that is his business. However, we now want to deal with the details of this legislation, which involves a huge amount of expenditure by the State on a private prison system, which we think is a mistake. We hope that the minister's advisers will be able to tell us exactly what -

Mr Barnett: You had the opportunity to put your argument and we have the responsibility to respond to it, so let us get on with it.

Mr RIEBELING: Is the Leader of the House the minister? I thought I was directing my comments to the Minister for Police. Perhaps the Leader of the House should make sure the advisers are present when these pieces of legislation are brought on. However, we have a lengthy period to deal with this legislation. Will the minister advise us when his advisers are expected to arrive?

Mr Prince: They are on their way. I hope they will be here in a matter of minutes.

Mr RIEBELING: This Bill is an attempt by this Government to privatise our prison system.

Mr Prince: No, it is not. It is about one prison, not the system.

Mr RIEBELING: Okay, privatising one prison. This Government was elected on its ability to manage. That is one of the key reasons it was elected. People believed that it would manage. However, the management of state prisons is a job that it has not done well at all. Its record in the management of prisons has been appalling. The minister struck upon the reasons for that quite clearly when he said that the priorities of this Government were such that it would spend more money and time on hospitals, education and the like. That is a political decision that is made. However, that is based on the fact that there is no imperative to treat prisoners well. That is no excuse for bad management of our prison system. In December last year we witnessed a situation that we have not witnessed in this State for about 15 years.

Mr Prince: Since you were in power.

Mr RIEBELING: We lost government because the Liberal Party was promising better management. After six years of mismanagement of our prisons, we ended up in such a chaotic state that we had a riot of great magnitude. The responsible minister was away on holidays somewhere, and the Minister for Police had to answer the queries of the public. That was not the first time that queries of that type had been raised. The lack of resources being put into our prison system has been raised time and time again. Resources have been deliberately run down by this Government. Therefore, a crisis situation requires a crisis solution. One solution that this Government has been working on for the past six years is this legislation. This Government wanted to push ahead and create a private prison, even if it was not wanted, because for some reason it dislikes having the responsibility of running its own prison system.

This legislation should not be supported because this Government, through its deliberate action, has not set out a proper case for the need for a privatised prison system. It has set out quite clearly that if a system is run down, at the end of the day a new prison will have to be built. At the moment in Roebourne, we have a situation in which 68 people last month had no beds; they were sleeping on the floor.

Mrs van de Klashorst: All the more reason that we need a new prison.

Mr RIEBELING: That is exactly why we need it. However, why has the Government allowed that situation to exist?

Mrs van de Klashorst interjected.

Mr RIEBELING: We have seen six years of total abuse and legislation which is designed to expand the number of people in our prisons. If the member thinks that the correct way to manage our prison system is to wait for six years and a riot and then build a 750-bed megaprison, she is wrong in the extreme. Most people who write about the management of prisons say that prisons of the size the Government is planning are not manageable. In modern-day prison management, they are too big. The prisons that were built at the turn of the century were the size of Fremantle Prison and of the large prisons in Europe. This new prison will be the largest prison ever built in Western Australia.

Mrs van de Klashorst: And we should be very proud of it.

Mr RIEBELING: Proud! Proud of a monstrosity that cannot be managed, which is what the Government will be building! The pity is that we will inherit it in 18 months when we come into government. Members opposite will give the State this white elephant that we will be stuck with for 20 or 30 years until such time as we can put a better system in place.

Mrs van de Klashorst: What would you have done?

Mr RIEBELING: We would have managed the situation. We would have increased the prison capacity as needed over the years.

Mr PRINCE: How?

Mr RIEBELING: We would have managed it properly over the years. For the past six years, the Government has done nothing about increasing the prison capacity.

Mrs van de KLASHORST: The title of this Bill is the Prisons Amendment Bill. I have had the privilege of looking at some prisons outside of Western Australia that are privately-run. Worldwide research has shown that private prisons add a different dimension to the prison system in a State or country. The reason that we need to amend the Prisons Act is that

privately-run prisons have a completely different ethos from State-run prisons. I do not know why that is the case, or whether that is traditional. Privately-run prisons have made major innovations in the way that programs are presented and that prisoners are handled. They are properly funded, and that is what the Government intends to do with this prison -

Mr Riebeling: That is what the Government has not done!

Mrs van de KLASHORST: We intend to properly fund this prison.

Mr Riebeling: You intend to properly fund the private prison and not the government ones. Is that what you are saying? Why can you not properly fund the government prison system?

Mrs van de KLASHORST: More money will be available for the other prisons, because money will not be tied up in the new prison but will be disseminated among the other prisons. If we were to put the money into a non-private prison, less money would be available for the existing prisons.

Mr Riebeling: How much will it cost to run that prison?

Mrs van de KLASHORST: I do not know the figures.

Mr Riebeling: Then how do you know that what you are saying is true?

Mrs van de KLASHORST: Because I have been told by the Ministry of Justice that this prison will be run effectively; and the contract requires that. The privately-run prisons in other places that I have visited have been very well run. One reason that we need to amend the Prisons Act is that in one prison that I saw in England, people talked to each other in the normal way, and they did not treat the prisoners like dirt. I am not saying we do that in our prisons here, because I have been only to the women's prison in this State, but we need to look at different ways of handling prisoners in this State. By bringing in a private institution that manages more prisons worldwide than number all of the prisons in Australia, we can bring some innovative ideas into the prison system here. The Ministry of Justice personnel have been talking to the proponent of the new prison - the preferred tenderer - asking for some of its innovative and effective ideas.

Another important reason that we need to amend the Prisons Act is that we will bring a different dimension into the community of Wooroloo where the new prison will be built. We will allow the local people to be involved in local solutions and jobs. This will be an important prison for the community of Wooroloo, because it means that people will not need to go out statewide to look for jobs but can approach the people who will build this prison and ask for a job. I have set up - this has nothing to do with the Government - a register of local people who are interested in working in either -

Mr Brown: This is about looking after your electorate, is it?

Mrs van de KLASHORST: Of course. What am I here for if it is not to look after my electorate?

Mr Brown: This is a \$300m project to get the member for Swan Hills re-elected!

Mrs van de KLASHORST: That is not true.

Mr Brown: As the Parliamentary Secretary, you will make sure that all the jobs on this prison go to people in your electorate. That is what you are saying to us. That is a disgrace! What pump-priming do we have here! It is unbelievable! The people in my electorate would be interested in that!

The CHAIRMAN: The member for Bassendean will come to order!

Mrs van de KLASHORST: The member for Bassendean can do the same thing in his electorate. He can get people to work at the women's prison.

Mr Brown: We do not want it!

Mrs van de KLASHORST: The member for Bassendean may not want it, but I have turned it into a positive for the people of my electorate.

The CHAIRMAN: I ask the member for Swan Hills to address her argument to the Chair; and I call the member for Bassendean to order for the first time.

Mrs van de KLASHORST: We are talking about the title of the Bill. It would be a good move for Western Australia if we could bring some new and innovative ideas into the prisons in this State, and we need to amend the Act to do that.

Mr BROWN: A few weeks ago, a report was tabled in this Parliament, about an inquiry into the incident that occurred at Casuarina Prison on 25 December 1998. That is not the first report about the way in which the Government has been handling the prison system. The report of the Royal Commission into the City of Wanneroo outlined what that commission had to say about the way the Government was managing the Ministry of Justice. Those reports show exactly what the member for Burrup referred to. When I was the Opposition spokesperson for Justice in this Chamber in 1994 and 1995, we were asking, "What are the projections? How will you meet those projections?" We received all sorts of waffly answers from the then Attorney General; and I was even attacked publicly for asking the questions. People said I was asking too many questions; the Ministry of Justice was working well and nothing was wrong with it. The Wanneroo Inc Royal Commission found differently. When the current Attorney General took over the job, he would not even meet with the Director General of the Ministry of Justice, let alone speak to him. That is how well the department was going! That was the great initiative by the Coalition to tackle crime!

Point of Order

Mrs van de KLASHORST: Mr Chairman, I do not believe that what the member is saying has anything to do with the title of this Bill.

The CHAIRMAN: When discussing the title of this Bill, members can speak on a wide range of subjects with regard to prisons, so I will allow the member to continue.

Debate Resumed

Mr BROWN: Thank you, Mr Chairman. I have made the point a number of times in this Parliament, and it is now sufficiently on the record for anyone who would like to look at the record - and only those who are politically blind would not be able to understand what has gone on in this experiment -

The CHAIRMAN: I remind the member for Bassendean that he does need to keep referring to the title. He can speak widely around that, but he must base his argument on the title of the Bill.

Mr BROWN: I will endeavour to follow your guidance, Mr Chairman. The history of the Ministry of Justice has been an abysmal failure. It promised much in 1993, but it has delivered little. It would not be bad if it stayed as it was in 1993. That would be an improvement on what we have now, because it has gone backwards. We only need to ask people who are incarcerated. We only need to ask prison officers and administrators, even senior administrators. People from all of those groups talk to me.

Mrs van de Klashorst: You are getting a different message from mine. I speak to them as well.

Mr BROWN: I dare say that if the Parliamentary Secretary had been to Bandyup Women's Prison, she would find a different story. I have been to most of the institutions around the State. I have known people from all around the State over many years.

Mrs van de Klashorst interjected.

The CHAIRMAN: The member for Swan Hills will come to order.

Mr BROWN: Is the Parliamentary Secretary saying that the report is wrong?

Mrs van de Klashorst: I have not read it yet so I cannot say.

Mr BROWN: Let it be on the record that three weeks after a major inquiry costing thousands and thousands of taxpayers' dollars and which was held into a significant incident at Casuarina Prison, the Parliamentary Secretary -

Mrs van de Klashorst: I was given the report only a few days ago and I have not yet read it.

Mr BROWN: The report was tabled three weeks ago in the other place.

Mr Prince: I think it was two.

Mr BROWN: Even if it were two weeks ago, I suppose that if the Parliamentary Secretary reads it within the next two months -

The CHAIRMAN: I remind members that we are dealing with the short title.

Mr BROWN: I will conclude on that note. What has been said does not need to be reiterated. The nature of the debate indicates the way in which the Government deals with this whole issue.

Mr BRIDGE: It is poetic justice that I am here at this time with the opportunity to take a few minutes to make a contribution to this Bill. In only 24 hours from now, I will have the privilege of being part of an announcement in Perth of the launching of a juvenile justice program, in which a major commercial company, a group of Aboriginal communities and organisations, and an organisation which I set up a year or so ago called the Unity of the First People of Australia, will establish a joint-venture partnership to deal with the issue of juvenile justice, law and order and the like. I am very excited about the plan.

The CHAIRMAN: I remind the member for Kimberley that we are addressing the short title of the Bill.

Mr BRIDGE: I merely wanted to tell members that because, whether short or long, the short title of the Bill refers to the most disgraceful process that any Government could contemplate in that it relates to the introduction of more prisons in our society. People the world over have said from time to time that the way to deal with these sorts of issues is not to increase the number of jails and increase imprisonment. However, this legislation is all about putting in place another prison system to deal with the problems of our society. Nothing could be further from the reality of trying to deal with the issue. However, it is close to one fundamental issue; that is, it will further escalate the problems because it will create a greater dimension in the vicious cycle that is going on today. We need to talk about a barrier between the first contact with the criminal system and not deal with the problems that occur after that first contact has been made. If one thinks about it, what does a jail do? It creates a mechanism to deal with the situation after the first contact has been established. It is absolutely in reverse, stupid, ridiculous, irrelevant and brainless to think that with the vicious cycle that is going on in our society, the best that we can talk about is the creation of a prison, irrespective of whether private or otherwise. It is an absolute folly. I am surprised that ministers should have been caught up and driven by the ideology of somebody who has told them that this is the way forward, when they know that the cycle gets worse by putting people into the system. Because of that, prisoners come out and vent their anger and frustrations on innocent victims in the community. The way to deal with the problem is not to talk

about more jails; in fact, the answer is to close the jails down, so that we can then deal directly with a citizen's first contact with the criminal system, which we are not doing today.

Mr Chairman, I wanted to tell you about the program that is being launched tomorrow because it is about dealing with that first contact. By dealing with that first contact, there will be no need for prisons or harsh penalties because we will have dealt with the root problem where it should be dealt with so that we give citizens who are likely to come into the system an opportunity not to become part of it. It is too late once they become part of the system. A prison, irrespective of its category and whoever runs it, is the wrong way forward. I wanted to put that on record before I have the pleasure of announcing tomorrow a way forward, which is substantially correct and a total departure from this idea that the Government is putting forward.

Mr PRINCE: I will respond in large part to what has been said by the member for Kimberley.

The CHAIRMAN: I ask the minister to remember that we are dealing with the short title of the Bill and not the launch tomorrow.

Mr PRINCE: The member for Kimberley already has his free publicity for the launch tomorrow, as I note from the press gallery. I do not intend to assist him; that is up to him. However, I want to make it clear to the member for Kimberley that he is fundamentally misinterpreting what this legislation is about and what we are talking about when we are talking about prisoners.

Mr Bridge: How can I have misinterpreted it?

Mr PRINCE: I listened to the member for Kimberley; he will listen to me. We have had for decades in this State the proposition which says that prison is a sentence of last resort. Very rarely does one ever put anyone in jail for his first offence. It is then only usually for wilful murder, murder or a few of the very serious crimes.

Mr Bridge: What a joke! There are people being put in jail for minor offences.

Mr PRINCE: The overwhelming majority of people who come before the courts are charged with much more minor matters. I cannot imagine any case in which a first offender, particularly a juvenile, will be put into some form of incarceration for a minor offence. There are diversionary exercises before juveniles get to the Children's Court. If they get to the Children's Court, almost invariably all sorts of supervisory orders are put in place.

Mr Riebeling interjected.

Mr PRINCE: Even in country courts to which the member is referring and of which he and I have experience, almost invariably a first offender, particularly a juvenile, does not go to jail first up. The member for Burrup and I agree on that because we know what we are talking about. The member for Kimberley is misinformed, to put it bluntly, in what he has just said. If some innovative program comes along which will divert, dissuade and distract people from committing further criminal offences before they get to jail, that is first-class and terrific. Such an initiative from the community is to be applauded because more likely than not it will be successful. However, to say that a diversionary program of any nature at all, whether it be private, community, public or whatever, is the answer to jails and therefore that we should close them is absurd. Science, history, reading and all the research available, particularly in the "Pathways to Prevention" report on national crime prevention from the commonwealth Attorney General's department, which produced the report earlier this year and which I now have available as it arrived in my office last week, have all identified the risk and protective factors associated with antisocial and criminal behaviour.

We need to operate at this point. We need to intervene basically at birth and immediately thereafter where many of the environmental causes of crime are found. Others causes are involved. Environmental causes are aspects such as a teenage mother; a single parent; a family which engages in substance abuse or criminality; marital discord; disorganised places; absent fathers; long-term unemployment; poor parenting style; harsh and inconsistent discipline; abuse and neglect of children; school failure; deviant peer groups; bullying; and so on. These are all identified as part of the causative factors which may lead to people becoming anti-social and criminal. That is not to say that people who come from those backgrounds are not excellent citizens - many are. I refer to a generality, true only in the general and non-specific. The protective factors include supportive and caring parents; family harmony; more than two years between siblings; small family size; a positive school climate and good peer group; a sense of belonging; and school norms being anti-violent. If the project of the member for Kimberley will lead people away from criminality, I applaud it. However, it is absurd to say it will lead to the closure of jails.

The DEPUTY CHAIRMAN (Mr Baker): The Committee is dealing with the short title. Will members ensure that comments address the short title?

Mr RIEBELING: I presume that the minister was referring to the short title. I hear the minister's comments about the wonderful information he has about trends in Western Australia. The simple fact is that the major causes of crime in Western Australia are drug addiction and job insecurity, neither of which is being seriously tackled by this Government. In fact, with the destruction of the award system, job insecurity is going through the roof as a result of direct action by this Government. The Western Australian public has an appetite to lock up people for longer periods for committing violent crime. The Government is responding to that view. No new programs have been put in place to divert non-violent criminal prisoners from the prison system.

Mr Prince: Everything we have done in the young offender area, with the sentencing amendment Bill and so on is to that end.

Mr RIEBELING: We have not had a reduction in the number of non-violent criminals in our prison system since this Government came to office.

Mr Prince: Where have you been for the past six years?

Mr RIEBELING: I have been watching the mob opposite make a hash -

The DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I am sorry to interrupt. We are dealing with the short title of the Bill.

Mr RIEBELING: We are talking about amendments to the Prisons Act, are we not?

The DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: We are dealing with a single amendment Bill to the Prisons Act. We are dealing with the short title.

Mr RIEBELING: I thank the Deputy Chairman for that comment. The short title deals with the entire Prisons Act and how it will impact on the entire prison system.

The DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Does the member propose an amendment to the short title?

Mr RIEBELING: I am speaking to the short title which encompasses the amendments in the Bill.

The DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Debate on the short title should not be used as an opportunity for a carte blanche discussion on all the issues. This issue has cropped up before. The member can address his comments to the short title.

Point of Order

Mr BROWN: The minister did not have his notes when he replied to the second reading debate. Therefore, he did not reply to a whole range of matters raised in the second reading debate. It was said by your predecessor in the Chair, Mr Deputy Chairman, that we would have an opportunity to raise these general matters in the committee stage. We are now being rather short changed in this ruling, which does not allow debate to continue through a narrow interpretation.

The DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: A third reading debate will be held in due course. Comments can be made at that stage. Also, comments can be made when the relevant clauses are dealt with on a clause-by-clause basis. We are dealing with clause 1. I am sure that when the minister addresses other clauses, he will address the points raised by opposition members in the second reading debate.

Committee Resumed

Mr RIEBELING: I am pleased with the assurance, which was also given a few minutes ago: As the minister did not have his notes, answers to questions raised would be provided in this debate. I do not know of any provision in the Bill dealing with the issue I now raise. I expected it to be answered in the second reading debate. A 750-bed prison is to be built. My understanding is that the prison population has increased by 500 people. When the announcement was made, it was said that this would service the Western Australian prison population into 2005. We will fill this prison in 18 months on current prison population figures. I expected the minister to answer that concern but, to my knowledge, he has not touched upon that matter.

Mr Prince: I did not.

Mr RIEBELING: I want to know the projections for the next five years. Will there not be a prison population increase? Despite what the minister said in the second reading debate about worldwide trends, is the minister doing all he can to properly manage the changes? The minister said that an increase in prison population would be determined. Projected increases in crime indicate that this prison will be filled before it is built. If the minister has figures to show that that is not the case, I want to see them. If what I say is correct, how will the minister manage after the prison is built? How will we manage Roebourne in the next six months when in excess of 60 people are currently sleeping on the floor? It is not double-bunking. They have no bunks and are sleeping on concrete floors. How is that good management? Do not worry about two years' time when this Bill might apply to the completed prison. What is the minister doing right now to alleviate the crisis the Government has allowed to occur?

Mrs van de KLASHORST: I return to the short title of the Prisons Amendment Bill. We need to amend the Prisons Act in this State. I commend the member for Kimberley for the juvenile justice Unity of the First People of Australia program. I have read a little about that major initiative. However, I disagree with the member's statement that when people go to prison, it is too late. It is never too late. This Bill and the principal Act allow for new and innovative ideas to be applied in prisons. Different ideas are applied in prison to handle and help people. As the minister said, and as I and most members know, prison is the sentence of last resort. People are helped many times throughout their brushes with justice. We can organise programs when people are in prison. Some programs to be applied in our new prison will be innovative and have been used overseas. The amendment Bill will allow courses to be held in conjunction with local TAFEs and universities. Special areas of Aboriginal help will be provided in the prison. Special types of freedom within the prison will be made available to improve a prisoner's lot. People will be able to forward themselves in prison by adhering to certain programs. The emphasis in the new prison will be on innovative programs to ensure prisoners do not become recidivists. The Government supports this view, and the Opposition should support it.

Members opposite tell us our prisons are not working very well. Amending the Prisons Act will provide an opportunity to ensure that the programs are appropriate for the people in the prison system. In the prison to which I have referred prisoners start off in a secure section and then move into the next section where they are given a little more freedom. They move into self-care units in the last stage of their time in prison. Prisoners work their way through the system. There will be major manufacturing and educational institutions within that prison which every prisoner will have a right to attend.

Looking at this issue from a completely different angle will benefit not only the prisoners but the community. Let us face it, we do not lock up prisoners because we want to; we do it to assist them and to protect the community. Despite what the member for Kimberley said, most people's first contact with the justice system is not for a serious offence such as murder. By the time they get to prison they have had many contacts with the justice system. Amending the Act to reorganise part of our prison system will bring in innovative ideas. That is the way to go.

Worldwide studies have shown that there is less recidivism among people who have been incarcerated in a private prison system such as those in America and the United Kingdom compared with some of the state-run prisons. We need to ensure that whatever else occurs in the private prison, excellent programs are put into place.

The other point the member for Kimberley mentioned was the vicious cycle of young people getting into the justice system and staying in prison. This is an opportunity to amend the Act to allow us to handle these people in a different way. This is not a juvenile prison; it is a prison for adults. Once people must be imprisoned, which I believe is unfortunate, we must have the right programs in place for them.

Mr PRINCE: I am in a position to reply to some of the matters raised during debate. The member for Burrup has on a number of occasions stated that the Government deliberately ran down the prison system to get beds quickly through the introduction of a private prison. That is not true. In the seven years to June 1998 the prison population increased 20 per cent. In the nine months from June 1998 it increased by 20 per cent. We have had a significant escalation in the prison population in that time. While the demand for accommodation exceeds the prison system's design capacity by 8 per cent, the demand for secure metropolitan beds exceeds the design capacity by about 30 per cent. The Government has responded by commissioning additional accommodation in a number of regional and metropolitan locations. In addition, Canning Vale Prison and remand centre will be consolidated into a single receiving, assessment and remand centre. In addition to the other things that have been done, the total recurrent budget for prisons within the Ministry of Justice has risen from \$85 299 896 in 1994-95 to \$113 465 631 in 1998-1999. The existing system has no more capacity for infill to accommodate the expected prison population. We need a new, large, metropolitan medium security prison. Therefore, the 750-bed prison at Wooroloo must be built.

The member for Nollamara expressed the view that an important principle was that it is not right to make profits out of punishing others. That sort of moral judgment gets mixed up in debates about the inherent efficiency or inefficiency in the private and public sectors. If we look at the public sector as providing that which society is not providing for itself. When society can provide those things for itself, it is wrong to take taxpayers' money and compete with taxpayers to provide the same service. That is where I am coming from. It is not a matter of moral judgment; it is whether we can achieve an efficient prison system, and how we do it. If it can be done better by the private sector, that should be considered.

The Bill makes it clear that all prisoners in the custody of the State remain the responsibility of the State, and specifically accountable is the chief executive officer for the Ministry of Justice, who is accountable for all aspects of management. It is derogation of neither responsibility nor authority; it is simply obtaining the provision of the beds and security services by someone other than a person employed on an award in the public system, which is what the member for Burrup is defending.

The operation of clause 15J(2) specifically precludes contract workers from decisions relating to the release of prisoners, hearing or adjudication of disciplinary matters, the imposition of penalties, discipline of prison officers and the use and discharge of firearms. Those functions should be managed by public service officials. The Bill provides for the provision under contract of only some prison services - not the full gamut of services.

The provision of various prison services by contract has been in effect for some time both in this State and in other jurisdictions. Some of the contracted services are drug treatment through Holyoake; the provision of behaviour management programs, with CentreCare and Edith Cowan University, in particular, running some excellent programs; and the provision of educational and psychological services by private practitioners and contractors. In my electorate only yesterday I was talking to a gentleman who had been engaged in the prison there to provide assistance to prisoners in computer literacy, writing business plans and things of that nature.

Mr Riebeling: Is the minister happy with the current programs?

Mr PRINCE: They can always be improved, and I have no doubt we need to update all the time as the world changes. It is obvious that the making of profit in that sense from the punishment of others - if one interprets punishment in the broadest sense - has been going on for a long time. That is a nonsense argument.

The member for Bassendean made the point that contestability is achieved through the introduction of a further provider. That depends on the way in which the contract is structured. Is that a fair summary of one of the points the member made?

Mr Brown: No.

Mr PRINCE: I refer the member for Bassendean to Professor Harding's work. He refers to the difficulty of changing an operational contractor if the contractor owns the prison building. In that sense, the member's point is well made. However, it is the Government's intention to offer a five-year contract under which it will be possible to change the operator if the service is substandard. In real terms the new operator may argue that the design of the prison is such as to require modification in order that the contractor not incur unnecessary cost. However, that is a matter that the Government will have to face at the time. It does not preclude a new operator being appointed if necessary. The point is that, unlike the public sector, a private contractor can have a contract terminated early or not extended, as the case may be. However, there is a clear expectation that with clearly articulated service requirements, minimum standards and strong accountability the contract

will be long lasting even though provision has been made for decisive action in the event of substandard performance. In the longer term, I am sure that the benefits of introducing competition outweigh the difficulties. That is the experience in other jurisdictions.

I take this opportunity to lay on the Table of the House for the information of members a copy of the United Kingdom House of Commons Home Affairs Committee second report on "The Management of the Prison Service (Public and Private)" which was ordered to be printed on 19 March 1997.

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

Mr RIEBELING: I thank the minister for at least endeavouring to answer one of the questions I asked.

Mr Prince: I have another 11 pages.

Mr RIEBELING: If the minister will turn to the right page, it will not be necessary for me to speak again. I am asking whether projections have been made about the prison population when this prison has been constructed. Now that the Government knows the error of its previous projections that created this huge overcrowding in the prison population, I want to know when the extra 700-bed capacity will be taken up by the prison that was expected to deal with the excess prison population until 2005. Projections may not have been made. I think this prison will be overcrowded as soon as it is built. The member for Swan Hills said that private prisons are bright, shiny and new establishments that run more efficiently than the existing prisons. The same argument would apply if the Government built a new prison. New establishments are built taking into account the errors made in the past. Presumably, any new prison will be more effective than the old generation prisons because one hopes that the mistakes of the past would not be repeated.

It is amazing that the member for Swan Hills mentioned the wonderful new programs in these prisons. Why not put those wonderful new programs into a government-run institution? The reason is that the Government is incapable of proper management and it will not fund those programs adequately.

Mr Prince: Where will the money come from?

Mr RIEBELING: Where will the money come from anyway? The Government is giving the management of this prison to the private sector because it assumes that it will be better just because it is private. That is not necessarily the case.

Mr Prince: All the empirical evidence from elsewhere says that it is.

Mr RIEBELING: The minister assumes that and he has said it. He keeps asking why the Government should run this prison if the private sector can do it better.

Mr Prince: All the empirical evidence from elsewhere says that they work better.

Mr RIEBELING: Not the empirical evidence I have looked at. That is definitely not the case in the United States system. This Government puts its head in the sand and thinks that the solution is to lock up more people for longer periods and to build more prisons. I do not agree with much of what the member for Kimberley says, but he emphasised that insufficient resources are allocated to keeping people out of prison. This Government has taken the view that it is politically advantageous to lock up as many Western Australians as possible. The Government has proceeded to do that with legislative changes. The minister has said in this place that that is what the Government will do. He trumpeted around the State that more people are in prison than ever before, and that is true.

Mr Prince: I did not trumpet it; I stated it as a fact because it is true.

Mr RIEBELING: It is absolutely true, and the minister cannot run away from his Government's record.

Mr Prince: I am not.

Mr RIEBELING: This Government has locked up more Western Australians than any other Government has, and the minister is proud of that.

Mr Prince: I have never said that either.

Mr RIEBELING: However, the Government is not proud enough to pay for the management of prisons. It does not want to allocate the resources necessary to properly manage the system. The recidivist rate in this State is appalling because the Government has not allocated sufficient funds to that area. The member for Swan Hills' statement was true. Comparable private prisons run reform programs which are well funded. The programs run by this Government are poorly funded, look bad and produce poor results. That is not because the programs are no good; it is because they are not adequately funded by this Government. I hope that when the budget papers are produced it will be possible to identify how much will be spent on rehabilitation programs. It was not possible to do that with last year's budget papers. We know that this year it will not include an estimate of the number of people the Government will let out of prison. What a joke that was. The projection last year was between 40 and 50, and the Government managed to surpass that in the first six months of the financial year. It then changed the category from "escaping" to "walking out". That is somewhat different.

Mr Prince: We have dealt with that in the second reading debate.

Mr RIEBELING: The minister has told us how he wants the Opposition to view it, but we do not agree with that. If the Government had not reached its projected figure, it would have had a "special" and let a few people out.

Mr PRINCE: This is getting farcical. I have made available to members the UK House of Commons Home Affairs Committee's second report on "The Management of the Prison Service (Public and Private)".

The DEPUTY CHAIRMAN (Mr Baker): I understand that the minister wishes to respond to some of the remarks made by the member for Burrup, but I remind members that the Committee is dealing with the short title and the question is that it should stand as printed. The question implicit in that is whether the title should be changed. If members want to address that issue, that is well and good. However, if they want to use the debate on the short title to enter into a carte blanche elongated discussion about all matters relating to the criminal justice system and administration of justice and prisons in this State, I must call them up. I ask members to bear that in mind.

Mr Riebeling: Point of order, Mr Deputy Chairman -

Mr PRINCE: I hear what you are saying, Mr Deputy Chairman, and I respect the position of the Chair. However, it has been a convention of the Legislative Assembly in the six and half years that I have been a member that there be relatively wide debate on the short title in committee. Whether we trespass beyond that which is normally allowed on other Bills, is a judgment for those watching rather than those participating. I am endeavouring to deal with issues relating to prisons, and matters related to prisons have been raised in the debate. I feel I should be permitted to do this. It would overturn the conventions of this place which, undoubtedly, have been in existence for decades, to simply say that this debate should be only on the question of whether the title of the Bill should be the Prisons Amendment Bill.

The DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I have been advised that, despite what may happen from time to time in the reality of this place, the standing orders are clear; that is, debate on the short title of the Bill should merely deal with whether that title should be changed in any way. Once again, I ask members to ensure that their comments on clause 1 relate to the short title.

Mr PRINCE: I appreciate that that might be the view of the clerks on how this place should function, but it has not functioned in that way in the past six and a half years and I doubt that it has for a long time prior to that. I see no reason that the members of this place, who after all are elected to represent their constituents in this Chamber, should not be able to engage in debate about prisons when the Committee is dealing with the short title of the Bill.

The DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I accept the minister's position, and if I were seated in a different place in this Chamber I would perhaps endorse his comments. My concern is that the debate is becoming elongated. There will be other opportunities for members to raise issues under other clauses, which perhaps more correctly relate to the areas they want to deal with. Also, the third reading debate can be used. I have given my ruling on this issue, and it has been upheld on many occasions by the current and former Speakers in this Chamber over the years. I ask members to respect and comply with that ruling.

As to Suspension of Standing Orders

Mr BROWN: I move -

That so much of standing orders be suspended as to enable the minister to respond fully to the matters raised in this debate so far.

I move that motion because I do not want to canvass your ruling, Mr Deputy Chairman (Mr Baker), but I want the minister's response on the record before the remainder of the Bill is debated and not piecemeal during the course of it.

The DEPUTY CHAIRMAN (Mr Baker): I cannot recognise that motion because it is not in writing and it has not been handed to the Chair. Also, there is a requirement that there be an absolute majority to support the motion. I am further advised that a motion of that kind cannot be moved when we are in committee.

Mr RIEBELING: I tried earlier to raise a point of order in relation to your ruling, Mr Deputy Chairman. The minister gave an answer to a query raised and I then proceeded to raise a further point in response to an answer which was allowed by you, Mr Deputy Chairman. Twenty minutes ago the debate about the number of people was allowed to occur. I presume that you have now ruled that the same query cannot be raised. If that is not the case, I will resume my seat; however, if you are saying that it was all right to debate this issue 20 minutes ago and we are not allowed to raise it now because you think there has been enough debate on that issue, I wish to hear why your ruling has changed.

The DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: It is usual to give some latitude to members when there may be an arguable breach of standing orders, particularly in relation to the relevance of debate, when dealing with the short title of a Bill in committee. I have given more than enough latitude to enable members to canvass wide-ranging issues regarding the prison system. The law and order issue has been hotly contested in this Chamber from time to time. I have given a ruling, and I ask members to respect it, to comply with it and not canvass it, and to raise issues in relation to clause 1.

Debate Resumed

Mr RIEBELING: Mr Deputy Chairman, I will proceed with the query I had intended to raise, and hope it is not in contravention of your ruling. My question relates to overcrowding and the answer the minister gave about the projected population increase. As a result of this legislation which enacts a new privatised prison, we were told from the start that the 750 beds would take us through to the year 2005.

Mr Prince: That's right.

Mr RIEBELING: I am trying to find out whether that is still the case. My information is that when it is completed, the prison system will be full. Once again, by the year 2002 we will be faced with a crisis situation; that is when the prison will be open if building it commences now. The prison population has increased by over 500 in 12 months. Why does the

minister think in seven years 750 beds will be sufficient, given that during the past 12 months the prison population has increased by over 500?

The DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I rule that question out of order. It does not relate to the short title. As such, it should not be recognised as a question in committee.

Mr PRINCE: The general nature of debate concerning amendments to the Prisons Act revolves around what we need by way of prisons, what we have and what we need in the future. A review carried out a while ago has led to the submission that we need another 750 beds. That is proposed to be provided at the Wooroloo facility. These amendments will facilitate that being done by the private sector. It is not a one-off situation. Another review is under way now. The Attorney General has said publicly that the planning for the next prison after Wooroloo has already commenced. The provision of 750 beds will take us up to the year 2005, and planning for the next one is already under way.

Mr Riebeling: Will it be adequate up to the year 2005?

Mr PRINCE: Yes, it should be, with the other beds in the rest of the system.

Mr Riebeling: We will have an increase of another 200 beds to cater for the next three years, yet there has been an increase of 500 in the prison population in the past year.

Mr PRINCE: As I said, at the moment we are planning for the next prison. I am not able to answer the detailed question; I am doing what I can. Insofar as private prisons are concerned, the recidivism rate has been established for Wooroloo Prison South, which is on page 487 of the Request for Proposal which I have tabled, and is set at about 30 per cent and is significantly less than the current recidivism rate of 37 per cent. We hope we will wind up with a lower rate, with fewer people in jail consequently. More beds are being added to public sector prisons; for example, some will be provided at Greenough Regional Prison, which are converted sea containers. The method of conversion has been well publicised. Other additions are having effect in the public system. It is intended that the new beds will be located not just at the Wooroloo facility; they will be placed in other prisons. I have just told my advisor about the Roebourne matter the member has raised a number of times, and that matter will be followed up straightaway.

Mr BROWN: I seek the minister's response to a couple of questions relating to matters raised by the member for Swan Hills. I refer to the new prison proposed to be facilitated by this Bill. The member referred to the new prison having major manufacturing facilities. Can the minister outline those manufacturing facilities to be provided within the new prison? In the second reading speech and in comments in this Committee since that time, he has referred to the research he has available indicating that private prisons have lower recidivism rates than do public prisons. Can the minister provide the nature of the studies? Here I am seeking the names of the studies, and their authors, on which the Government relies. For comparative purposes, are those studies relevant for Western Australia? If so, what action will the Government take to introduce into our public prisons those programs or features in other systems that allegedly produce lower recidivism rates?

Mr PRINCE: In response, I have already laid on the table one report from the House of Commons. By the by, that committee comprised members from both the Conservative and Labour Parties. There was no dissenting report. In part, paragraph 162 on page lx states -

Our conclusion is that, while we accept that contracting out is not universally welcomed, we consider that the fears hitherto expressed over the principle of contracting out - that it would mean the abdication of state responsibility for public safety and the deprivation of freedom - have not proved justified, and that the idea of privately managed prisons is undoubtedly now more generally accepted, and should be allowed to develop further.

In part, paragraph 174 states -

We consider that, after some early teething troubles, privately managed prisons are now operating well in terms of the quality of performance and the regimes they run; and that their performance overall has been at least as good as that of publicly run prisons and in some areas better.

I have another report with me which I would like to make available, as the member has asked what we base our statements on. It is the reply of the Government to the second report from the Home Affairs Committee, dated December 1977, and again is from the United Kingdom. On page 13 it states that the British Government accepts the committee's conclusions with regard to the matters I have just mentioned. The British Government has been very cautious, which caution was expressed in 1977. It has now changed, as evidenced by the renewal of some existing prison contracts and the commissioning of new private prisons since the change of Government in the United Kingdom. In fact, no new publicly-run prisons have been built in the United Kingdom since 1991. The present British Labour Government has said that under the current prison building program, there will be no new publicly managed prisons in the foreseeable future; in other words, privately-built prisons are being used.

On the issue of the differences between contract and publicly-operated prisons, in the United Kingdom the best authority is Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Prisons who in December 1998 in the preface to the report, which is available here, and which related to Her Majesty's Prison Blankenhurst stated -

Staff in contract prisons, new to the role of conducting imprisonment, accept the reality that staff/prisoner relationships are the key to a successful prison, and that at the heart of these must lie a spirit of co-operation between them. In too many public sector prisons there is a residue from the past of a spirit of confrontation, which impacts on their approach to the relationship. Confrontation breeds confrontation, and co-operation breeds co-operation, a lesson that must be learned. We find, and have reported, that many staff in public sector prisons

deplore the confrontational attitude adopted by some of their colleagues. I recommend therefore that the success of contract prisons, such as HMP Blakenhurst, should be used as a catalyst for cleansing the confrontational approach from those who espouse it in the public sector, not least in the interests of the safety of staff, which must be an over-riding consideration of good management.

That was a comment made not long ago by the inspector of prisoners about privately-run prisons in the United Kingdom. The 1996-97 annual report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Prisons for England and Wales reported a similar conclusion to the House of Commons and the chief inspector said that despite significant differences in manpower costs - 55 per cent of total costs in private prisons compared to 80 per cent in public sector prisons - there seemed to be no diminution in the standards of treatment or conditions. I will table a copy of that.

The DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: If the Minister wants to table those documents he can do so once we are out of committee.

Mr PRINCE: Yes, I now realise that, based on my experience with the Court Security and Custodial Services Bill. The member for Burrup said that it is not in the private prisons' best financial interests to have effective rehabilitation programs because prisoners are their feedstock and they want them to return. I make available the *Cognitive Programming Model* handout dated 14 January 1999 for Wooroloo Prison South. It sets out what the Ministry of Justice intends to implement to improve rehabilitation and illustrates the superficial logic of the deduction made by the member for Burrup, because a private prison operator would need to maintain a higher level of achievement in rehabilitation than is currently achieved in the public sector. The Attorney General said all details of the contract were made public at that time, but that model handout indicates that is simply not the case. In the RFP we have set out a recidivism rate of 30 per cent. Generally in the public system it is 37 per cent. We are attempting to reduce the recidivism rate for people coming out of Wooroloo Prison.

Mr BROWN: The minister's comments were interesting, but I asked him to point to the recidivism studies that have been carried out in private prisons which show that recidivism rates have decreased.

Mr Prince: I am informed by my adviser that they are in the *Cognitive Programming Model* handout.

Mr BROWN: Is the reference to the studies in that document?

Mr Prince: Yes.

Mr BROWN: Are copies of the studies in it?

Mr Prince: These are published studies of the programs which are available which are the sorts of things that will be run at Wooroloo Prison.

Mr BROWN: We will look at the document and take up the issue further. Another question arose out of comments by the member for Swan Hills that a major manufacturing facility would be established in a new prison. What will that facility be?

Mr PRINCE: The question of a manufacturing facility is under development. Corrections Corporation of Australia has commenced consultation with a number of private sector industry partners. It is certainly its intention to establish such a facility, but I have no better detail than that.

Mr Brown: You do not know?

Mr PRINCE: As I understand the position, it intends to have a major manufacturing facility but I cannot tell the member what it will be, how many people will be involved and in what areas; I do not have the information. The RFP requirement is that one be established.

Mr Riebeling: Are they heading down the track of a major clothing industry?

Mr PRINCE: I think that is unlikely. It is hoped the manufacturing facility will involve activities which are constructive for people to engage in and which will provide them with skills they can use upon their release. A major clothing manufacturing industry could be operated at Wooroloo Prison South and people could be trained in and leave prison with skills relevant to the manufacturing of clothing; however, there is little of that type of industry in Western Australia. The point that I make is while the skills may be useful, they will not be marketable when these people get out. I would expect that the manufacturing facility it establishes and the skills it seeks to give the prisoners will be such as to assist the prisoner in his rehabilitation, because the recidivism rate of 30 per cent that is required to be complied with is less than that in the public system. It is in the interests of those involved in the private prison that these people do not return. Therefore, prisoners should receive better training so they have skills which will enable them to obtain jobs when they are released. It is unlikely that a manufacturing facility will be chosen in an area in which there is currently little opportunity for employment in this State. As changes in the economy and the like occur, so too would we expect the programs to change.

Mr RIEBELING: The minister said a recidivism rate of 30 per cent will be the target for Wooroloo Prison South. Will a structure exist within the prison system to ensure an even spread of repeat offenders and that new offenders go into the Wooroloo private prison and the public prison sector? Some cynical people might suggest that those less likely to be recidivists would be the feedstock for the private sector rather than the government sector. At the end of the day the disparity between the two programs will increase and it is possible that a Government such as that of which the minister is a member might say, "The situation is even worse than it was previously. Therefore, we must privatise more of the prison system to obtain the wonderful rate of recidivism that we had previously."

Mr PRINCE: The selection of prisoners for each prison is controlled by the Ministry of Justice now and that will continue. We are talking about a medium-security prison, hence maximum-security prisoners will not go there. That takes out one

cohort of people who will never go to Wooroloo Prison South. It is not a remand prison so that takes out another group. It is a male-only prison so that takes out all of the females. That leaves the cohort that can be dealt with, which I suppose will probably be the majority at any one time. It is not in the interests of the Government, through the ministry, for the prison to be allocated people who are more or less likely to be recidivists. It is in the interests of the ministry to have a mix as occurs in any other medium-security institution, otherwise like comparisons will not be able to be made without the sort of comment made by the member with accuracy, weight and evidence. That would then render the whole exercise fruitless from the point of view of contestability and comparability across systems.

Of necessity, the same mix will go to Wooroloo Prison South as goes anywhere else. In saying that, I am conscious of the regional variation which occurs across the State. Albany Regional Prison contains a high percentage of long-term prisoners and people who are not normally resident in this State simply because they do not receive regular visitors. That prison has a special character because it is 400 kilometres from Perth and it is both a maximum and medium-security institution. Apart from Casuarina Prison, it is the only prison of that nature. A snapshot of the average prisoner will not be obtained at Albany Regional Prison, because of its regionality and the fact that it is the best place to send, for example, people of Asian extraction who are imprisoned here for 20 years on drug offences. They have no visitors, so they go down there. Those with family and friends in the Perth area would be more likely to spend their time at Casuarina Prison because they are able to be visited more frequently. From the ongoing management of the whole prison system, from the point of view of the Minister for Justice, that should be the case for a whole raft of reasons.

Mr RIEBELING: I thank the minister for that explanation. I am somewhat confused about one portion of the minister's reply. My understanding of a maximum-security prisoner who enters our prison system is that that person may go from maximum to medium security.

Mr Prince: Yes.

Mr RIEBELING: Therefore, I do not know why the minister was referring to maximum security. The people the medium-security prisons will not get are those who never leave the maximum-security system.

Mr Prince: I should have expressed myself better. I was thinking about the strict security people of the ilk of the Birnies and others who are never likely to have their security rating downgraded or anything of that nature.

Mr RIEBELING: The minister mentioned the Roebourne Regional Prison, which his adviser will check for him. One problem that I presume the minister is endeavouring to handle - I will not speak on his behalf - is that currently at the Roebourne prison numerous people are being released into the local community who are not from that area. In recent times we have had examples of people offending within hours of being released and then going back into the prison system. However, that is another issue. The people that I, the Prison Officers Union and the like are interested in are those who have a recidivist history. I do not care what category they are in. We want to know whether there is an even spread when assessing whether the 30 per cent is being achieved - presumably there is some monetary penalty if that is not achieved, because it is contractual. We want to make sure that the Government does not fudge the figures. The Government is bringing in this system. It is in its interests to publish glowing figures to show how successful it is. We are in opposition, and we do not believe half of what the government people tell us. The half that we do not believe will probably be those figures. Therefore, we want to make sure that the figures that are provided are as evenly based as possible.

Mr PRINCE: The best statement I can make on this is that Wooroloo Prison South will probably hold people who have mostly come from the metropolitan area. In rough terms, 80 per cent of the population of this State lives between Two Rocks and Mandurah. I hope nobody will criticise me for saying that Mandurah is part of the metropolitan area. That large conurbation holds about 80 per cent of the population. Consequently, and not surprisingly, that is where 80 per cent of the people who are in jail come from. One would expect, therefore, comparability between Wooroloo and the medium-security prisons that are also in the metropolitan area - for example, at Canning Vale or at Casuarina. One would expect comparability between the two, and there should be, as far as possible, the same mix of people with a history of chronic recidivism as against those whom it is reasonably expected will never be seen again because they will be there only once.

One would not necessarily get the same across the total system because of the nature of the changes in population, nor would one necessarily get a fair comparison when comparing Wooroloo with Albany, Eastern Goldfields or Greenough, simply because of the regional variations and the matters I mentioned earlier. However, from the point of view of the concerns of the Prison Officers Union and others, it is absolutely imperative that, as near as one can manage it, one ends up with the same mix. In any period of 12 months there will obviously be ups and downs, because there may be a few more of the chronic offenders in one place than another. That will be a matter for the ministry to handle. If it is not handled in a way that is seen to be satisfactory and acceptable by those involved in the system - the prison officers and others - I have no doubt that significant questions will be asked in this place. There should be checks and balances and so on to ensure that one is comparing like with like. Otherwise, we will end up in the situation that the member referred to - there will be an unfair and unreasonable way of doing things.

My adviser informs me that a new risk management model for prisoners is under development. That will be implemented at the new Wooroloo Prison South and will cater for individual risks. That model will go across the whole system. Therefore, as far as we are able to, we will be comparing like with like.

Mr RIEBELING: I thank the minister for that answer. In addition to the prisoners going into prison being of an even quality or lack of quality or whatever term one wishes to use, another thing that concerns me, and always has, is that if the Government is saying the private sector can achieve a 30 per cent recidivist rate, which means that the rehabilitation programs are more effective, why is it not the case that the government-run system cannot achieve the same rate? The

Government is saying in this Bill that 35 to 37 per cent will be the achievable rate in the government system. However, in the private sector the target will be 30 per cent. If, on a management basis, a 30 per cent recidivist rate is achievable in the private sector, I am interested to know whether the Government will put similar resources into its rehabilitation programs in order to achieve the 30 per cent rate. It is not a question of whether the two systems have the same programs; it is a question of whether the same emphasis will be put on rehabilitation in the private and public sectors. If it is, why should there be any difference between the two if the Government is capable of managing the prison system that it currently runs?

Mr PRINCE: That is a fair and interesting question. It is appropriate to mention again some of the remarks that I have already quoted from Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Prisons in the United Kingdom. The culture of an institution that has been around for a long time is something that does not exist when one starts afresh with a private sector provider.

Mr Riebeling: It is a management problem.

Mr PRINCE: It is, but it also concerns entrenched attitudes that are passed on from one generation to another. That observation has been made elsewhere, both in the UK and the United States. We will not have that situation here. That is part of the answer to the reason that private prisons have a better preparation of prisoners for release. They certainly do. It has been empirically proven and so on.

Mr Riebeling: Are they spending the same amount?

Mr PRINCE: Because their management is in that sense more flexible, I cannot tell the member how much they spend, in a proportional sense, as opposed to the public system. I will try to obtain that information. However, it depends on how one manages the totality of the thing as to whether one's programs for preparation for release - in other words, the training programs, the manufacturing programs and so on, all of which, under the Request for Proposal, must be job-skill related to when a person is released - can be handled in a much more flexible way in a private prison than in the public sector. That has been the experience to date because the public sector is hidebound by other rules and regulations. In order to change and bring more innovation into the public sector, if a private prison is doing this, there will inevitably be change in the public sector so that it competes, and competes well. Ultimately, that is to the benefit of the prisoners, prison officers and society in general.

With regard to resourcing, one is able to compare resourcing only if one is able to compare like with like - therefore, medium security with medium security, and basically money per head or some other established measure. How the money is then moved around within the organisation is for the management. In that sense, I suppose what we in the public sector have done is to try to impose management from without all the time whereas the private sector is able to manage from within.

Mr Riebeling interjected.

Mr PRINCE: One would then be able to say, "This one works here. Let us do it there." That should happen.

Mr Riebeling: Therefore, they should be the same.

Mr PRINCE: They should be, but one would expect there to be a lag because there are entrenched ways of doing things in the public system. I can refer to innumerable examples. They are not a criticism; they are an observation; that is, because things have always been done this way, they will only be done that way as against other ways.

Progress reported and leave granted to sit again.

[Continued on page 7894.]

STATE BUDGET - TELEVISION FOOTAGE

Statement by Deputy Speaker

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Bloffwitch): Tomorrow, the presentation of the State Budget will take place at 2.00 pm, as is usual. Consequently, members' 90 second statements will be taken at 12.20 pm, and questions without notice will be taken at 12.30 pm. Approval has been given for the television footage of the budget presentation by the Treasurer, and the response by the Leader of the Opposition, to be made available to the media. Approval has also been given for the print media to take still photographs from the north side of the Chamber on the presentation of the budget tomorrow.

[Questions without notice taken.]

COMMUNITY PROTECTION, CARNARVON, PETITION

Ruling by Deputy Speaker

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Bloffwitch): I advise members that the petition presented today by the member for Ningaloo relating to the introduction of certain legislative measures for the Carnarvon area comprised a number of pages which did not contain the petitioners' request for prayer as required. Therefore, those pages were out of order. I have directed that those pages be removed and returned to the member for Ningaloo and that the number of signatures be adjusted accordingly.

Points of Order

Mr SWEETMAN: Is it in order to ask you to clarify a point?

Mr THOMAS: He is canvassing your ruling, Mr Deputy Speaker.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: What is it that the member would like clarified?

Mr SWEETMAN: I will not labour the fact that it took me a week to get approval to present the petition the way I did. However, Standing Order 86 states that every signature shall be written upon the sheets bearing or attached to the petition itself and not pasted upon or otherwise transferred thereto.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: My ruling said that a number of pages did not carry the request for prayer required on each petition, and those pages have been removed. I am sure the member for Ningaloo can add the prayer and present another petition at a later date.

Mr GRAHAM: So that was not canvassing your ruling?

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I was clarifying the issue, and the member for Ningaloo is entitled to that.

REGIONAL FOREST AGREEMENT

Matter of Public Interest

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Bloffwitch): Today I received a letter from the member for Maylands seeking to debate as a matter of public interest the following motion -

That this House condemns the State Government for delivering a Regional Forest Agreement which -

- (1) only increases the amount of old growth forest in conservation reserves by 13 per cent;
- (2) purports to increase the conservation estate by 150 000 hectares when in fact 50 000 ha of forest previously promised as conservation reserves will be logged;
- (3) fails to adequately meet the needs of timber workers; and
- (4) fails to adequately address CALM's conflict of interest.

If sufficient members agree to this motion, I will allow it.

[At least five members rose in their places.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The matter shall proceed on the usual basis, with half an hour allocated to members on my left, half an hour to members on my right, and five minutes to the Independent members, should they seek the call.

DR EDWARDS (Maylands) [2.38 pm]: I move the motion.

Yesterday, the Regional Forest Agreement was signed with much fanfare and now with a media blitz. We have seen the advertisements in the newspaper and I understand there are radio advertisements. I am sure there will be a lot of other advertising and selling of this package in the weeks to come.

Mr Court: Do you think it is acceptable to advertise?

Dr EDWARDS: I have no objections to the content of the Government's advertisements. However, I have some personal objection to the way it has portrayed a timber working family. That is an insult to people working in that industry. If I were in that industry, I would be rather upset. It is okay for the Government to provide that small amount of information. However, the Government should not pay for a full page advertisement for 10 lines of information.

Mr Court: Would you accept television advertising?

Dr EDWARDS: No. I have only a short time to debate this issue. It is time, after 24 hours, to look at the detail of this agreement. It is time to ask what it means. It means that for the next 20 years, the agreement signed by the Premier and the Prime Minister will allow the logging of old-growth forest to continue. The Resource Assessment Commission has said that if old-growth forest can be found, it should be reserved because it is such a precious resource. However, this State will continue to log not only old-growth forest, but also old-growth forest with high conservation value. Nothing will change. Precious blocks will be logged in the south west; protests will continue; and the groundswell of people who are concerned about what is happening in this area will not have their concerns appeased. They will continue to be upset by the activity in the state forest. The Government has missed a huge opportunity. The Regional Forest Agreement in theory was intended to bring certainty and, on a scientific basis, to provide a system of reserves. It was intended to indicate where and how logging in the native forest would be done on a sustainable basis. I do not believe it has delivered on either of those issues.

Instead, the Government has said that 67 per cent of old-growth forest will now be reserved, but people have not been told that more than 100 000 hectares will continue to be logged. It is a trick with smoke and mirrors. The people are told one thing, and the truth in the detail is quite different.

Mr Trenorden: How many old trees are there in Maylands?

Dr EDWARDS: Not many, because too many have been cleared. However, in the latest development, all the trees have been saved, which is brilliant, and the blocks are more expensive as a result.

I turn to the whole question of jobs, which is another area in which the Government is using smoke and mirrors to hide the truth. A letter sent to me from the Minister for the Environment on 12 April this year stated that the total employment impact of option A in the public consultation paper was a loss of between 539 and 627 jobs. It went on to break up the categories

into which those jobs fell. In the media release issued yesterday, the minister stated that the Western Australian RFA is greener than any option put forward in the public consultation paper. I congratulate her on that, at least, because it needed to be greener and she has achieved that. However, if it is greener, one would anticipate, using simple logic and all the scenarios in the public consultation paper, that there would be more job losses.

Mr House: Did you make a submission during the process?

Dr EDWARDS: No, but if I had been Premier, I would have invited the other parties on board.

Mr House: So you did not have a position?

Dr EDWARDS: What an unintelligent comment. I would like to see the National Party's submission.

Several members interjected.

Dr EDWARDS: Has the National Party returned money to the people who made a donation towards that submission under false pretences?

Mr House: You did not have a position and you did not make a submission.

Dr EDWARDS: Nonsense. Under the Labor Party's policy, it would not have logged Rocky, Gairdner or Wattleup blocks. It is nonsense to say that; the minister does not know what he is talking about. He knows as much about the Labor Party's policy as he knows about the National Party's policy.

Several members interjected.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! It would be better for the member to address her remarks to the Chair.

Dr EDWARDS: In response to a question about job losses, the Premier said yesterday that at the most 400 jobs would be lost. The Government has also said that there will be a seamless transition to the new stage and that, in reality, so many new jobs will be created that no job losses will occur. If the Government has invented such a system, it should advise the Parliament. Certainly the detail is not in any of these documents. It is again a trick using smoke and mirrors. I refer to an article which appeared on the front page of *The West Australian* on 18 March, under the heading "Timber deal will cost 620 jobs". The Minister for the Environment was alleged to have told coalition members of Parliament that reducing the amount of jarrah and karri logged by 10 per cent would cost between 540 and 620 jobs. Yesterday, the Government said that the annual allowable jarrah yield will fall by 33 per cent and the karri yield will fall by 9 per cent by the end of 2003. Together, that represents a little more than a 25 per cent reduction by the end of 2003. Again, using simple logic - the PCP used simple logic - that 25 per cent cut would result in perhaps 1 000 job losses. However, again, we are told that this agreement is jobs neutral and that more jobs will be created. I ask the Government for more detail on this. None of the RFA background papers bear out these assertions. Wilson Tuckey has been very brave and I commend him for that. If the Government can do all this without directly affecting the workers, that is fantastic and I applaud it. All parliamentarians want change in the forest, but with the least disruption to the workers and to the community.

It needs to be pointed out that in the RFA documents reference is made to job creation, but those jobs are not in the small communities; the jobs in value-adding industries tend to be in the Manjimup area or regional centres. Any manufacturing jobs created will be in coastal towns. The Opposition is concerned that people are not being told the full truth. I hope that overall there will be a net increase in the number of jobs, and that should be possible with a move towards manufacturing. However, those jobs will not be available for people in the communities in which they now live. Individualised tailor-made plans should be developed for the people in the industry. The Opposition wants these communities to retain their services. These documents are very thin on that type of detail.

Several members interjected.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! I ask members to allow the member to make her speech.

Dr EDWARDS: I now comment on the Government's proposal to restructure the Department of Conservation and Land Management. Its media release yesterday promised the formation of a new state conservation authority. It said that all conservation lands, including state forest, will come under the control of this authority. The authority will also take responsibility for the National Parks and Nature Conservation Authority. That is a good idea and generally, as a principle, the Opposition will be pleased if the new conservation authority looks after the multi-use forest. It will be interesting to see the detail of the plan. For example, will this body in the future create temporary control areas? That could be controversial. I note that recommendations are made about royalties but, at the same time, the proposed forest production commission will receive the royalties and advise on them. There is no detail about that proposal. No change will occur if fundamental cultural change is not put in place. At least the National Parks and Nature Conservation Authority has regular meetings and tries to do its job, but at the moment four CALM officers are ex-officio members and it is totally serviced by CALM. The authority has no independence. Nothing that has been put forward by the minister indicates that anything will change, except that the NPNCA will become a state conservation authority.

Similarly, we are told that the proposed forest production commission will carry out the commercial negotiations and receive the royalties. I hope it does better than the Forest Production Council that it will replace. That council has met only twice in the past two years and its annual reports make extremely interesting reading. Fortunately, in the last financial year it had one meeting on 27 June, at which it discussed a number of issues. The main issue was the RFA. It is good to know that it is up to date! In the previous year it met once, on 21 May. The Forest Production Council is an absolute disgrace. The Government has known about this for ages. In 1995 when Minister Foss was first appointed to the Environment portfolio,

he promised to restructure these agencies. We should not hold our breath. The promise of yesterday is just another in a long line about revamping the conservation and management of forests in this State. In September 1995 the head of the Department of Conservation and Land Management was alleged to have said that it would cost \$40m to split CALM. In answer to a parliamentary question, arguments were put at that stage that it was too expensive to split CALM. I ask the minister whether it is true that in recent costings, \$20m was the figure put on splitting CALM and whether that was why she had not gone any further.

It is a great shame that we have had no consultation about how CALM will operate in the future, and no community input. We are getting the same promises Hon Peter Foss gave four years ago when he became the Minister for the Environment. Four years ago he promised to do exactly what is happening now. In September 1996 he reckoned he had already tackled the Lands and Forest Commission and the Forest Production Council. I do not know what he did because it certainly is not obvious from the annual reports. The Forest Production Council has not met more often nor done any more work.

It is relevant to ask this question: When is a forest not a forest? Yesterday the minister put out a media release saying that 1.4702 million hectares of land in south-west forests were being protected for future generations. I will go to the detail of the signed Regional Forest Agreement and look at the breakdown of that one million hectares, because it makes for very interesting reading. It refers to 44 000 ha of jarrah woodland; 57 000 ha of peppermint and coastal heath; 6 000 ha of swamps; 36 000 ha of western Wandoo woodland; and - this is the killer - 236 000 ha of shrub herb and sedge lands. None of this is what the community visualises when the Government says it is protecting south-west forests for future generations. The advertisement today correctly depicted south-west forests as regrowth karri. South-west forests are tall, magnificent trees. That is not the criteria I have been going through.

We have been subjected to a further trick, which the member for Fremantle will detail; that is, nearly 50 000 ha of land previously promised as conservation reserves has been changed to state forest. The latest figure I have is that of that 50 000 ha, about 9 000 ha was old-growth forest. What do we have with this RFA? On one hand, we are being told that we have 12 new national parks. On the other hand, the detail shows that land is being stolen from 17 approved conservation reserves, including nature reserves which have the highest level of conservation protection in this State. We are being told that an extra 45 000 ha of old-growth forest are being reserved, and that is good. We are not being told that 100 000 ha are still available for logging. This RFA falls far short of community expectations. The community should not be fooled by the Government's glitzy media campaign.

MR MCGINTY (Fremantle) [2.56 pm]: I second the motion moved by the member for Maylands and support the sentiments she has expressed. Today members of the public are angry and feel let down by the Government in Western Australia. They will not accept the Regional Forest Agreement that this State Government and the Federal Government have cobbled together. During this debate I will address three areas. The first is the recent history of the jarrah sawlog cut reductions. Members may not be aware that the 1982 forest management plan for this State recognised that the jarrah forest was being overcut to such a dramatic degree that within a few decades we would have to get out of the forests altogether and cease jarrah timber production completely for between 30 and 40 years to enable that forest to come back to an acceptable level of growth. Further reductions were forecast - until this Government was elected - and I will detail that in a minute.

The second relevant issue is the assertion that the 50 000 hectares of designated reserves that are now being made available for logging under the RFA were of low or negligible conservation value. That is a demonstrable lie, and I will show why that is the case shortly. Thirdly, I will deal with those areas of high conservation value or old-growth areas that should have been protected and placed into conservation reserves by this RFA, but were not afforded that protection, and accordingly, unless there is a change of government or policy, will be destroyed for future generations. In this area the RFA has failed to protect the interests of the public in Western Australia. I will deal with a little of the history concerning the jarrah sawlog cut. In the 1987 and 1992 timber strategies the then Labor Government recognised the need to reduce dramatically the jarrah sawlog cut and provided for that reduction.

Mr Trenorden: Tell us about that.

Mr MCGINTY: I will; the member should just listen because he will be a little better educated. In 1992 the Department of Conservation and Land Management argued that the sustainable level of jarrah harvest in this State was 1.36 million cubic metres per year, every year in perpetuity. As the then Minister for the Environment, I had to adjudicate on that. In 1992 the department sought a jarrah sawlog cut of 675 000 cubic metres.

Mr Masters: What did it have at the time?

Mr MCGINTY: It was less than that. I rejected that proposition from the Department of Conservation and Land Management. I was not prepared to accept such a dramatic increase in the cut when the two previous forest plans saw a dramatic reduction in the cut in the jarrah forest. I directed that the level of cut in the jarrah forest continue to decline, as was determined by my predecessor in the Environment portfolio, Hon Barry Hodge, in the 1987 forest management plan. I directed that should continue during 1993 pending further consideration of the sustainable level of cut by scientific experts. As we all know, in 1993 the conservatives won the State election and the member for Greenough, the then Minister for the Environment, set the level of cut for the next 10 years. Western Australia is still operating at 490 000 cubic metres per year, every year for 10 years from 1993 onwards. This is a reversal of the trend set by the conservatives in 1982. It set a declining jarrah yield. In 1982 the strategy had sawlog production ceasing for about 30 or 40 years; whereas the 1987 timber strategy estimated a supply of 140 000 cubic metres over this period. That was done by the previous Liberal Government in 1982, by the Labor Government in 1987 and was continued by me and the Labor Party in 1992.

The first reversal of that long-term reduction occurred when the conservatives came to power and the member for

Greenough, as the minister, in 1993 provided for a cut over 10 years of 490 000 cubic metres. It is interesting to note that the reduced jarrah logging provided for in this RFA, by agreement with the timber industry, for the next three or four years approximates the level of logging that would have occurred under Labor's forest management plans from 1987 and 1992. There is no great reduction occurring here. My conclusion is that in their forest management plan in 1993, the Liberals made a big unsustainable mistake. Those opposite are now catching up with Labor's thinking of 12 years ago, of 1987. We have moved on considerably since then.

I seek to have incorporated in *Hansard* documents which illustrate that point: Firstly, the 1987 timber strategy table and chart setting out levels of allowable cut for jarrah logs in the southern, northern and central regions, and also graphs showing the demonstrable reduction which I have already illustrated.

Secondly, I present a graph from the native forest management, "The future of the native hardware timber industry" and the response by Minister Minson in 1993. It is again a graph setting out the reduction proposed by the two previous forest plans in the jarrah cut, and a quantification of those matters. I seek leave to have them incorporated in *Hansard*.

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

[See page 7919.]

Mr McGINTY: I now move on, having demonstrated that everyone was looking at a dramatic cut in the level of take from the jarrah forest. It was implemented by everyone except this Government. It is now trumpeting about reductions in cut which would have been achieved by the continued implementation of Labor's two forest management plans if the Labor Party had stayed in power.

Yesterday we heard the Premier and today the Minister for the Environment dismissing those 50 000 hectares of areas designated to be placed into conservation reserves by previous forest management plans as having low or negligible conservation value and which have been substituted for more important and higher conservation value lands. I will advise of three forest blocks that will now be available for logging which I said in 1992 should be put into the conservation estate and the reasons that that was the case.

Let me start with Kenninup which is near Manjimup and which is 6 740 hectares in area. It is open jarrah forest and wandoo woodland and was an area designated by Labor for reserves and which will now be available for logging under the RFA.

Mrs Edwardes: Is it woodland forest?

Mr McGINTY: Yes. CALM described it as 5 200 hectares of virgin wandoo and jarrah forest, a habitat for six declared threatened mammal species which adjoins the Perup nature reserve. We are talking about a habitat for threatened species that will now be available for logging that Labor wanted to save.

The Talling block between Donnybrook and Collie is jarrah open forest and wandoo woodland. It is described by CALM as 2 800 ha of virgin jarrah and wandoo forest habitat for declared threatened mammal species and rare flora adjoining the Perup and Lake Muir nature reserves. Some of Charley block will be preserved, but the overwhelming bulk will not. Some has been kept, but the land has been reduced by 2 200 ha in this area. The Charley block south of Pemberton near the Hawke block is karri tall open forest. I wonder why the Government wants that taken out of the reserve system and made available to the loggers. Jarrah open forest, dunal land form, lakes and wetlands adjoin the Warren and D'Entrecasteaux National Parks. They represent 15 000 hectares of the 50 000 hectares that the Premier and the Minister for the Environment dismiss as having no or negligible conservation value. They will be turned over for the loggers and they can move in there. The Government is completely wrong. It is no wonder that people are up in arms against the Government on this issue if those blocks are taken out of the conservation estate and made available for logging.

I now turn to the area in which I believe the Government has made the greatest mistake - that is, its failure to protect high conservation value and old growth forests which are of enormous significance to the people of Western Australia. I want to be specific about this and I will do it by area.

Firstly, in the Walpole area there are some of the treasures of the State's remnant forests. The south coast environment group made a Walpole wilderness proposal and each of these blocks was identified by the Australian Heritage Commission and by the Department of Conservation and Land Management on the interim register of heritage places. They have been registered because of their conservation value and their importance to the heritage of Western Australia. They will be logged. They are not being protected or preserved. The Peak block is virgin jarrah. Its wilderness values are extraordinary. We will send the loggers in there under the RFA. No wonder people are screaming out against it. Two-thirds of Rocky block has already been logged. It is heritage listed; it is virgin jarrah. The Government will allow the rest of it to be logged. No effort has been made whatsoever to preserve that block. Long block is exactly the same. It is Australian Heritage Commission listed. It should have been protected. It would be protected by the Labor Party under its current policy and it will be protected to a greater degree by the policy that we will adopt on Sunday which will see a protection of all old growth forests in this State unlike this Government which is happy to see 100 000 ha of precious old growth forest logged and destroyed for future generations. Make no mistake about it members; this is an issue about which a great divide exists between our political parties. I am happy for the Government to go the next election with its brown credentials. We will go there with green credentials and we will see who wins.

Let me continue with the Walpole area. The Sharpe block - these are all tall forest blocks that we are talking about - is of high conservation value. These are karri tingle blocks interspersed in some cases with wetlands. Again, it is heritage listed and properly assessed to be protected for future generations. The Sharpe, Dawson, Ordinance and Burnett blocks will all be logged under this RFA.

I move to the areas in Northcliffe. Again, it is Australian Heritage Commission listed. The old growth karri and jarrah in Jane block will be logged by this Government. The Gairdner block is heritage listed. It is along the boundary of the D'Entrecasteaux National Park. It is pure karri old growth. The Government will send in the loggers to clean that out and destroy it for future generations. The proposed greater Beedelup National Park north west of Pemberton is heritage listed. The Government is saving only 10 per cent of the Giblett block; that is a disgrace. This is land which is old growth karri and a certain amount of jarrah.

I refer to the Layman, Darradup and Butler blocks in the Blackwood area to the south west of Nannup. It is the largest area of intact old growth jarrah in the south west. We will send the loggers through. We will not protect those blocks which contain very high species diversity and species not found anywhere else in the world. The loggers will go through those three blocks. The Government stands to be condemned for its failure to protect the Kerr block in Balingup. It is only 132 hectares of jarrah that is borderline old growth, but it is of enormous value to the local community and although it has been selectively logged in the past, it should have been preserved for the future.

Finally, to complete the sweep through this area in the south west I refer to the Greater Kingston area to the north east of Manjimup. The Kingston, Walcott, Dudijup and Corball blocks, and others, uniquely have the full complement of mammals that were originally found in the jarrah forest prior to European settlement in this country. They will all be logged. Each of those blocks would have been preserved by a Labor Government and will be preserved by the next Labor Government.

MRS EDWARDES (Kingsley - Minister for the Environment) [3.08 pm]: It is interesting that the Opposition lists all the blocks it would not log, but where would it log? The Opposition says it has a design. What is its design? If it has one and wants to give it to us, we will put it through the scheduling process, use our scientific ability and take it to CALM. We will be able to assess exactly what the impact of its reserve design would be. The Labor Party talks about where it would not log, but it does not have any idea of where it would log and what would it be telling the workers? I return to the issue which was referred to earlier. We have put our reserve design through what is called a scheduling process. In that scheduling process we are able to identify the levels of yield which are expected to be achieved as a result of that scheduling process and we have been able to structure the levels of yield for the 20-year RFA process from 2004. Having the industry commit to a step down between now and 2003 provides the difference between approach A and the impact on workers under the PCP document and our reserve design. It is a significant impact. That level for the 20 years from 2004 would have been much lower if the industry had not agreed voluntarily and accepted the step down process between now and 2003.

The Regional Forest Agreement is a balanced approach and will achieve a significant number of things. We have been able to identify and reserve a number of areas which have community attachment and which have been requested by many people, including the Forest Alliance, local communities and environment groups, as well as some of the local councils. In addition, 67 per cent of old-growth forests is being reserved, which is more than two-thirds of the old-growth forest. Taking into account all of the informal reserves, the figure is 71 per cent. That is a significant area.

Another area that has not been identified is the Walpole area. A further 215 000 hectares will be reserved in the Walpole, Mt Roe, Mt Frankland and Mt Lindesay areas, taking into account all the existing reserves, the proposed reserves and those that will come out post-RFA. It will be a significant area. Western Australia does not have a wilderness area by the International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources standards, which is important. A number of wilderness values are clearly identified in that area. That is a commitment from this State Government as a result of the RFA. We will go into the next forest management plan with a commitment to manage part of that area as a wilderness area according to IUCN standards. That is a tremendous commitment. It would be nice if members opposite acknowledged some of the good things that have been identified as a result of the RFA process.

Turning to the motion, I am not sure how members opposite arrive at the figure of 13 per cent. I do not think they have done their sums very well. The motion states -

- (1) only increases the amount of old growth forest in conservation reserves by 13 per cent;

Under the comprehensive, adequate and repetitive reserve system, the area of old growth has been increased by 45 700 ha to a total of 232 800 ha. On my calculations, that is an increase of 24 per cent. The result is that two-thirds of old-growth forest is now in reserves. If one includes all the informal reserves which are not accessible to the timber industry, the figure is 71 per cent; that is, 71 per cent of old-growth forest is protected from timber production. If members opposite think that 100 per cent is the acceptable figure, they should go down to the workers in the south west region and tell them how they propose to look after the 2 888 people who would be put out of work and the 7 000-odd people associated with the timber industry who would be left out in the cold. If they are proposing to stop logging in all old-growth forests, they should go down to the workers in those south west towns and tell them exactly what they plan to do.

Turning to the old-growth blocks, many incorrect figures have been circulated. About 80 per cent of karri forests will remain, and 31 per cent of those are old growth. If one considers the reserves for karri forests, about 65 per cent has been protected, and if the informal reserves are included, the figure is 71 per cent. About 65 per cent of jarrah has been protected with the rest being cleared for farms, towns and the like. That provides about 10 per cent of old growth. However, the reserves post-RFA will provide between 67 per cent to 70 per cent. Seventy-eight per cent of red tingle, yellow tingle and west coast old growth have been protected, and 100 per cent of rates tingle, red tingle and west coast old growth have been protected. That is a significant outcome under the RFA. However, we have not received any recognition by members opposite for those percentages that we have reserved through a good reserve design. More important, this will give confidence to the workers in the south west region. The Opposition's demands for all old-growth forests to be placed in reserves will ensure uncertainty for families and workers in the timber communities in the south west region.

I am not sure how the member arrives at the figures referred to in the second paragraph of the motion. The area of new formal reserves totals 205 009 ha. The area of new informal reserves on commonwealth land totals 12 898 ha. The area to remain as state forest under the 1994 proposals totals 54 126 ha, and the total area of CAR reserves is 147 201 ha. The net increase in the area of formal reserves is 150 885 ha. Therefore, it is not 150 000 ha less 50 000 ha.

Dr Edwards: We are not saying that.

Mrs EDWARDES: As long as the member understands that.

Dr Edwards: You are misleading the people.

Mrs EDWARDES: Not at all. It is identified in the material that is available on the Internet as well as in the RFA. When considering some of those areas, I note that the member opposite talked about Kenninup which had been identified previously as a habitat for fauna. The member also noted that it is annexed to the Perup wilderness area. That is an important area and it has proved to be significant in the past six and a half years in terms of our western shield program, which has been hailed nationally and internationally. As a result of that work, we no longer need Kenninup.

The member referred in particular to Charley block. That block was never hailed by the conservation movement as being of value. I refer to the transcript from the Standing Committee on Ecologically Sustainable Development in June 1998. Dr Schultz stated in her evidence -

To take a case in point, people have been calling for the protection of Hawke forest for decades.

That is important. We have now put that aside and incorporated it into the Hawke National Park. It continues -

In 1992 when we again submitted and asked for Hawke to be protected, we got a bit of it. Instead of giving us the rest of Hawke, CALM gave us Charley. Nobody ever spoke about protecting Charley. Charley is nice and it has a bit of jarrah forest. It is a disease risk area, so CALM added it to the reserve system. The public did not want it. CALM cooked it up and gave it to us as a substitute for Hawke. CALM consistently ignores public opinion.

Charley block has been put back as state forest, and Hawke block has now replaced it as a major addition to Hawke National Park. When one goes through the whole RFA process, which has been scientifically based, it is interesting that it has also involved the application of new criteria - the JANIS criteria, as it has been colloquially known - for designing a forest reserve system. That information was not available in the early 1990s nor in the late 1980s; nor was it available when the Australian Heritage Commission and the CALM joint study in 1990 took place nor when the 1994 forest management plan was being prepared. In addition, during the development of the RFA, there has been a clear focus on old-growth forests as an issue within the community. That has also been reflected in some of the comments that members opposite have made today and in previous debates.

The reserves in the RFA have picked up some important areas of old growth - areas which best meet the nationally agreed reserves criteria. Some areas which were previously proposed as reserves were found to not contain significant areas of old growth or were not needed to meet nationally agreed criteria. These are the areas that have been recommended to remain as state forests. That is true in the Blackwood area between Nannup and Margaret River. I have already referred to the area of Kenninup, which is no longer important as a reserve for a habitat for fauna.

We have a lot more scientific information which has allowed us to have a proper reserve design, which clearly better meets the needs of the new criteria which have been developed in a scientific way.

Mr Marlborough: Are you saying that the blocks that are already on the heritage list have been taken off the heritage list based on the scientific evidence that has come before this process?

Mrs EDWARDES: Some of them have been interim listed; and, as everyone would know, the mere fact that they are listed does not mean that they cannot be available for logging. As part of this process, the reserve design must go to the Australian Heritage Commission for its advice, which must be received by the Prime Minister prior to the signing of the document.

The member for Maylands talked about the total CAR reserve as including areas such as rocks and heaths. That again shows a lack of understanding of the criteria, because we have biodiversity, old growth and wilderness; and, as I explained earlier, we do not have any wilderness.

Dr Edwards: It is forest.

Mrs EDWARDES: Forests are naturally fragmented by rocky outcrops, rivers, streams, lakes and swamps, and patches of non-forest scrubland. That is what the criteria are about. If we stood at a high point overlooking the Frankland River, we would see, beyond the old growth forest and the trees, areas of swamps, lakes, rocky outcrops and the like. Is the member for Maylands telling me that that is no longer valuable? Forests are naturally fragmented by rocky outcrops, swamps, heaths and woodlands. For the member for Maylands to continually say in this place that that is misleading demonstrates her ignorance about what is a forest. I suggest that the member for Maylands go to one of the high points overlooking the Frankland River, and she will see beyond the trees some non-forested areas which are very important to the whole of that biodiversity and the area that has been put aside for reservation.

I turn now to the timber workers. I am mystified that members opposite tend to focus on the fact that the money will flow to businesses rather than directly to the timber workers. The Government has long recognised that the only way to gain long-term employment for the timber workers and ensure a viable timber industry for the future, particularly given the fact that less timber will be made available for it, is through investment for restructuring and for value adding. The Australian

Bureau of Agricultural and Resource Economics has indicated that if value adding for jarrah and karri were increased to 75 per cent - at the moment it is 60 per cent for jarrah and 30 per cent for karri - \$100m could be added to the timber industry by 2000. An extra \$15m per annum over the next five years for the outdoor and other furniture industries would result in an additional 500 direct jobs during the life of the RFA. That is what we are providing. We are not providing six jobs here and 15 or 20 jobs there - itsy-bitsy jobs that may or may not be there. We are not offering retraining to workers unless they need it. Retraining is not the focus of our package. The focus of our package is to provide and maintain jobs within the timber industry and in the towns, to support the fabric of the community.

The reason for my visit to Nannup yesterday was to tell the workers that they would still have a mill in Nannup. This Government will allocate 20 000 cubic metres of timber resource to the mill in Nannup, unlike the level of wood resource that will be allocated to individual companies. We will do that because the operation of that mill will be put out for expressions of interest, and the new proprietor will provide a value-added mill, which will not only maintain the jobs of the workers in that industry and town, but will also have the opportunity of growing, because value adding provides real potential for local manufacturing. Jensen Jarrah uses 4 000 cubic metres of kiln dried jarrah and employs 70 people in the Busselton area. Some of the timber workers in Nannup will not be employed in the mill but will need some retraining to go into value adding and local manufacturing. That is what we are providing for the workers. We are providing something of value that will give the industry the confidence to invest today rather than in 2004, because we want the industry to make the change now as we go into the twenty-first century. Members opposite, by focusing on itsy-bitsy jobs here, there and everywhere, which they are never sure will eventuate, are selling the workers in the south west down the drain. That is extremely disappointing.

Yesterday, as well as signing the RFA agreement, Wilson Tuckey, the Federal Minister for the Environment, and I signed a memorandum of understanding to work through the industry development and restructuring program. I table that document.

[See paper No 923.]

Mrs EDWARDES: We will also provide some community assistance to individuals, businesses and families that will be affected by the outcome of the Regional Forest Agreement, because we believe that the RFA is about people as much as it is about trees, and that it must strike a balance between jobs and conservation. We acknowledge that it will mean an adjustment for some people. We will provide some support services, in the form of shopfront information centres in the key centres of Nannup, Manjimup, Pemberton and Greenbushes, for people who are facing adjustment or want to know the outcome for them and their families. We will be coordinating an exchange of information on the outcomes of the Regional Forest Agreement. If a bank manager who had loaned some money to a timber worker in Nannup wanted to know what would happen to that timber worker, he would have a focal point to which he could go. If the proprietor of the newsagency wanted to know what was going on, he would have a focal point for that information. We will also provide assistance to small businesses that need to put in place strategies to help them manage some of the changes, and we will provide advice to people who are contemplating the establishment of a business, because we must not forget that we are also putting some money into creating other jobs in the area, particularly in tourism. Some of the new opportunities that will be promoted will be in the private sector; therefore, assistance will be provided to communities that want to go down that path.

That brings me to the restructuring and new administrative arrangements for CALM. I do not think the member for Maylands has got the gist of what is being promoted here. The State Conservation Authority will be an important body, because it will prepare the management plans, including the forest management plans. It will have vested in it all of the land - the state forest as well as all of the conservation estate. It will be an independent agency, with its own executive director and staff, and will be funded from Treasury. It will audit and provide the monitoring services of the operations of both CALM and the Forest Production Commission. It will be setting the yields and advising the minister on ecologically sustainable forest management practices. It will be a very important body. As with the reserve designs for the Regional Forest Agreement, members opposite are quick to knock it and be negative and to say where they would not log, but they do not say where they would log. They are quick to say that we have not gone far enough in the restructuring of the Department of Conservation and Land Management. They do not put forward a proposal. We do not support this motion.

MR OMODEI (Warren-Blackwood - Minister for Local Government) [3.31 pm]: The Minister for the Environment has covered this area very well, including the restructure of the Department of Conservation and Land Management. However, I want to take up a couple of comments that have been made by the members of the Opposition, particularly the member for Fremantle, who has been very selective in his comments. I have in my hand a press statement that was made by him on 24 December 1992. I also have in my hand the 1987 timber strategy, which says very clearly that in 1987 the permissible jarrah cut was 594 000 cubic metres going down to 520 000 in 1992. The then Minister for the Environment's media statement reads -

"To allow further consideration of issues such as these, I have determined that the timber cut for 1993 will be in line with that established in the 1987 strategy.

"However, in the last two years the amount of timber harvested due to the recession has been lower than the allowed cut, for this reason there will be ministerial discretion to allow some of this uncut quota to be used if required in 1993 as a result of increased demand.

That is a little different from what the member for Fremantle is saying.

Mr Trenorden: Slightly different.

Mr OMODEI: Yes. This has been a very difficult issue for me. The areas that are being discussed are in the heart of my

electorate and include Manjimup, Pemberton, Nannup and Bridgetown. This morning I took the opportunity to speak to all of the shire presidents in the lower south west. They are very pleased with the result. If members look at the criteria that were set, they will see that they are the Joint ANZECC-MCFFA National Forest Policy Statements Implementation Subcommittee criteria. The international biodiversity criteria is 10 per cent. The JANIS report is by the Joint Australian and New Zealand Environment and Conservation Council, the Ministerial Council on Forestry, Fisheries and Aquaculture and the National Forests Policy Statement Implementation Sub-committee. The JANIS criteria set for the Regional Forest Agreement were 50 per cent higher than the international biodiversity level of 10 per cent. The RFA criteria were set at 15 per cent. In all of those areas our Minister for the Environment, the Hon Cheryl Edwardes, exceeded all of the JANIS criteria in the Regional Forest Agreement.

Mr McGowan: You misled everyone on jobs.

Mr OMODEI: I will get to jobs in a minute. I have lived in the area all of my life. In my judgment the RFA has achieved a very finely balanced outcome. It came perilously close to almost collapsing the timber industry in Western Australia. For a few thousand cubic metres less of jarrah and karri, we would have collapsed the timber industry in this State. It would have meant the loss of jobs at Pemberton mill and the reduction of the shift which would have meant great dislocation in that area. Likewise in Nannup, there would not have been any of the 20 000 cubic metres that the minister has guaranteed. Members opposite need to understand this and to get down on the ground and stop listening to the people who are sitting upstairs, shaking their heads. They have a political agenda. They never took part in the RFA assessment process in the first place because they thought that in the end we would get an agreement that would take away their political platform. That is why they were not involved. The Labor Party should not fall into the trap.

Mr McGowan: You stood on the steps of Parliament House and misled everybody.

Mr OMODEI: I stood on the steps of Parliament House and said that I would do everything that I could to protect those workers' jobs. They are people who have traditionally been Labor Party supporters.

Several members interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Order!

Mr OMODEI: I will very quickly refer to the Australian Workers Union press statement which came out yesterday. It says that the agreement has been a significant victory for the greenies. Mr Tim Daly, the union branch secretary said -

The Government decision is as a result of constant pressure from extremist green groups who will never be satisfied.

He said -

If greenies had their way, job losses would have been far greater as well as the social dislocation to the South West communities.

He also said -

The conservation movement is responsible for the uncertainty that has occurred and must now allow the timber industry to restructure and get on with the job.

I put it to members that the Labor Party has also had a lot to do with the uncertainty. He also went on to say -

There has been no concessions whatsoever from the conservation movement.

This is from Tim Daly, whose organisation is affiliated to the Labor Party. Members opposite will need to deal with those people at their conference. The Leader of the Opposition should be looking over his left shoulder because there is a bloke up in the corner where the member for Fremantle is now sitting who is just about to take over his job. I must agree with the branch secretary of the Australian Workers Union when he said -

It is now time for all parties including the ALP to accept the RFA and work to ensure that our native hardwoods generated from sustainable forest yields are value added. There must be an end to uncertainty and an environment created which will lead to investment and new job opportunities.

I could not agree more.

MR HOUSE (Stirling - Minister for Primary Industry) [3.37 pm]: For the first time we now have a structural plan for the timber industry and conservation in this State, so that we can move on with some certainty. This is the first time that we have ever had a plan to which we can work. Under this plan less timber will be cut in this State than ever before. Under this plan there is also a larger area of reserve than ever before. There is also more certainty in the conservation of this State and in the timber industry than there has been before. It is absolutely amazing to me that the Opposition should come in here and move a motion when it has no policy at all.

Several members interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Order!

Mr HOUSE: If ever one has seen a hypocritical situation, it is this Opposition coming in here with no policy at all. We have a structural plan to which we can work. In this Parliament a few weeks ago -

Several members interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Order!

Mr McGinty: The minister is a bit two-faced.

Mr HOUSE: The member for Fremantle knows full well that he oversaw the greatest destruction of this State that has ever been seen, not only of the forests but also of the economy which his Government clear felled. The Opposition has never got over it. Under his ministry double the amount of timber was cut than will be cut in the future. It is an absolute disgrace that those opposite should come in here and purport to have a policy and pretend to be friends of the green movement; they are not, never will be and never have been. Nobody will believe them.

DR CONSTABLE (Churchlands) [3.39 pm]: I support the motion but I will restrict my remarks to the document that we were given yesterday entitled "Analysis of Public Submissions". I remind the House that much was made of the fact that there was a so-called public consultation period in which a huge number of submissions from the public would be taken into account. Unfortunately we did not see the substance of it until after it was all over and the Regional Forest Agreement was signed. We learnt yesterday that 30 410 submissions were received. This document is meant to be the analysis of those submissions. The second sentence of the introduction says that the document describes and analyses the submissions and shows how the issues raised were addressed in developing the Regional Forest Agreement. The document certainly describes some of those submissions but it does not analyse them. That is a major fault in the whole process that we have been presented with.

The so-called analysis is very selective and very subjective in the way it describes some of the submissions that were received. The people of Western Australia deserve a full and objective analysis, and one in which the information is useful. I do not think that this information is at all useful. It was presented to justify the RFA and not as an analysis of submissions which might have been used to help develop the RFA. It is incomplete, selective and biased, and therefore not a very truthful analysis of the submissions that were received.

In essence, this analysis gives a false picture of the submissions; it does not tell us about them. Page 4 of the analysis contains a section of interest in respect of the process involved. People made comment on the process. I understand that a major cause of public distress was that the process was secretive and that people were concerned they would not know about the Regional Forest Agreement and its aspects until after it had been signed. That turned out to be the case. Another concern was that Parliament had no opportunity to scrutinise the RFA. Neither of those points is mentioned in the analysis as comments raised in the submissions. I find it hard to believe that in over 30 000 submissions, not one individual, a group or a number of individuals mentioned those two points. That one omission makes me suspicious of the analysis received.

The efforts of the Government in presenting this analysis are very unconvincing. Indeed, it makes a mockery of the public consultation process. For many months when we commented on the process of the RFA, the minister has thrown back at us: "Well, people have had a chance to comment, and you will know all about those comments when it is signed." We do not know. This is a very disappointing document.

Mr Omodei: You have not read it - that is why!

Dr CONSTABLE: I have read what I was given yesterday. This is an appalling analysis of the 30 000 submissions made.

MR CARPENTER (Willagee) [3.42 pm]: I have two minutes to speak. The Government has made a very serious mistake. It is obvious from the public reaction to its decision that the mistake will cost the Government dearly politically. Members sitting on the backbench, including the member for Bunbury currently on the phone, know it. As well as a terrible political mistake, a mistake has been made affecting the amount of old-growth forest to be available to future generations of Western Australians.

Of the 347 000 hectares of old-growth forest remaining in WA, the Government has reserve-protected 230 000 ha. However, hardly any of the original old-growth forest remains -

Mr Omodei: Have you been down there?

Mr CARPENTER: Yes, and I can provide the photograph if the minister wants a look! Hardly any old-growth forest has been left in the south west. Of the 230 000 hectares, how much is actual forest? Areas of it are grassland, woodland and swamp, so how much is forest? People are not stupid. Hundreds of thousands of Western Australian have been down to look at the forest. They know what the Government has done. That is why they are angry and people who are not political usually gather on the steps of Parliament House to protest about what the Government has done. That should say something to members opposite, but they are too stupid to understand what they have done. They do not see forests; they see cubic metres of wood and dollar signs. Members opposite talk about forests as though they are a crop, but forests are something very different. They are beyond science. Government members have fundamentally misunderstood the argument people put to them. Supporters of the members opposite know that the National Party has taken money under false pretences, and they also know that half of the members opposite disagree fundamentally with what the Government has done for a range of reasons - including that it will cost them their seats.

MR MASTERS (Vasse) [3.44 pm]: I have one minute. There are 347 000 hectares of old-growth forest remaining. Before the Regional Forest Agreement came in, 187 100 hectares were protected and the RFA has resulted in an increase of 45 700 hectares of protected old-growth forest, or 24.4 per cent. I am sorry - the 13 per cent cited in the motion is a deliberate and mischievous misrepresentation of the truth designed to give the totally false impression that the Government has done very little in this regard. We have seen a 24 per cent increase in the area of old-growth forest protected. Of the area of old-

growth forest which was unprotected two days ago, 28.6 per cent is now protected. The 13 per cent figure is an outright untruth.

Question put and a division taken with the following result -

Ayes (20)

Ms Anwyl	Dr Gallop	Mr Marlborough	Mr Ripper
Mr Brown	Mr Graham	Mr McGinty	Mrs Roberts
Mr Carpenter	Mr Grill	Mr McGowan	Mr Thomas
Dr Constable	Mr Kobelke	Mr Pental	Ms Warnock
Dr Edwards	Ms MacTiernan	Mr Riebeling	Mr Cunningham (<i>Teller</i>)

Noes (28)

Mr Ainsworth	Mr Court	Mr Masters	Mr Sweetman
Mr Baker	Mrs Edwards	Mr Minson	Mr Trenorden
Mr Barnett	Dr Hames	Mr Nicholls	Mr Tubby
Mr Barron-Sullivan	Mrs Hodson-Thomas	Mr Omodei	Dr Turnbull
Mr Bloffwitch	Mr House	Mrs Parker	Mrs van de Klashorst
Mr Board	Mr Johnson	Mr Prince	Mr Wiese
Mr Bradshaw	Mr Kierath	Mr Shave	Mr Osborne (<i>Teller</i>)

Pair

Ms McHale

Mr Cowan

Question thus negatived.

PRISONS AMENDMENT BILL

Committee

Resumed from an earlier stage of the sitting. The Deputy Chairman of Committees (Ms McHale) in the Chair; Mr Prince (Minister for Police) in charge of the Bill.

Clause 1: Short title -

Progress was reported after the clause had been partly considered.

Mr RIEBELING: Earlier the minister tabled a document which purported to contain statistical evidence of the success of the programs that will be put in place to stop recidivist behaviour. The document does not give statistical information; it sets out the programs.

Mr Prince: I have not read that document. My adviser brought it with him and I put it on the Table.

Mr RIEBELING: The document refers to what the program is designed to do, but I thought the minister said it contained statistical proof.

Mr Prince: The member for Bassendean asked for statistical data. I said that the best I could provide was what was in that document, which are the models for programs to deal with recidivism. The member for Bassendean asked whether it included data and I thought I related to the Chamber that it did not. I am sorry if there has been a misunderstanding.

Mr RIEBELING: That was not my understanding. I want to pin down the minister on his projections for the prison population. The minister said that other prisons are now being planned. When this prison was announced the minister said its construction would solve overcrowding problems to the year 2005. The minister is now saying, quite rightly, that it will not solve overcrowding to the year 2005 and the Government is planning another new prison because by the time this prison is constructed the prison population will exceed its capacity. Even if no more prisoners went into the prison system we would still have excess capacity - notwithstanding that the minister wants to accommodate prisoners in crates. If the Wooroloo prison opened today there would be only 200 beds surplus to capacity. That does not give me great confidence in the Government's management of the prison population. During September last year we talked about double bunking and were told that double bunking does not create problems. It does, and we saw that in December with the explosive situation in the prisons.

Mr Prince: No. Overcrowding was one of the problems, but double bunking is not necessarily bad. Inquiries were made about the situation in Roebourne.

Mr RIEBELING: That is not double bunking; there are no bunks.

Mr PRINCE: The superintendent of the Roebourne Regional Prison has been contacted. He is fully aware of the high musters in that prison. Some cell sharing is a result of personal choice. Roebourne has a high percentage of Aboriginal prisoners. Double bunking is a good management technique with Aboriginal prisoners, and that is fine if they request it. Experience shows that the incidence of self-harm among Aboriginal people who share a cell is usually significantly less. The muster at Roebourne is far higher than normal. The superintendent is doing what he can to get more permanent beds and accommodation strategies. That includes manufacturing and installing double bunks. That is not mattresses on the floor, but mattresses on double bunks. We need more staff at Roebourne to handle the numbers. That is being handled now.

We need the extra 750 beds at Wooroloo as soon as the new prison can be constructed. The Government is getting on with it. The provision of further new prisons will depend upon the rate of criminal activity. The figures I saw towards the end of last year, other than for assault, show a decrease in the curve, particularly in volume crime like burglary and motor vehicle theft. Serious offences are relatively low in terms of the number of offenders. One would think that an increased clearance rate - that is, we are catching more of the people who are committing offences through the Delta program - will have an effect through the courts and through punishment rates, by whatever form of punishment. It shows that the crime rate is beginning to turn.

Mr Riebeling: The overall number of offences had increased.

Mr PRINCE: In all but one category of offence - assault - the figures are beginning to turn the corner. It is too early to make an assessment. We must look at the next set of figures. We must look at each of the categories of crime to see what is occurring, particularly in the volume areas, which are burglary, motor vehicle theft and then assault. The clearance rate is beginning to go up in virtually all areas, and that is good.

Mr Riebeling: It is 14 or 16 per cent.

Mr PRINCE: It is 29 per cent in Joondalup and 14 per cent on average overall. That means we are doing things better. The clearance rate is better than in many other places. The member for Burrup must give credit where it is due. If we catch more people who are committing offences, theoretically we should start to see a diminishing rate of crime, and the figures indicate this is the case. That should lead ultimately to fewer people in jail. The Wooroloo facility is needed now, so the Government is getting on with the job. In 2005 we shall need another prison, so planning is under way for the next one.

Mr Riebeling: That is not what the Government said when the announcement was made in April last year. The Government said the Wooroloo prison would be adequate until 2005.

Mr PRINCE: I have given the member the figures for the prison muster increase over the past four years. There has been a 20 per cent increase over nine months. Obviously we are fast-tracking planning approval for new jails, because we will need them. If the figures change during the planning process, so will our plans.

Mr Riebeling: Everyone else in the industry knew that was going to happen except you and the minister.

Mr PRINCE: I am not denying it. The priority was the debt members opposite left related to education, health, law and order, transport and so on.

Mr Riebeling: When will you take responsibility?

Mr PRINCE: I do.

Clause put and passed.

Point of Order

Mr RIEBELING: A document was produced during the committee stage. My understanding is that once the committee stage has concluded the document can be tabled.

Mr PRINCE: I also understand that I cannot table documents during the committee stage. However, I have left the documents with the Clerk and he will make them available. I will table them when we get to the third reading.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr Osborne): The minister can table a document at any time the House is not in Committee.

Debate Resumed

Mr PRINCE: In that case, I table these documents.

[See papers Nos 924-930.]

Progress reported and leave granted to sit again.

WORKPLACE AGREEMENTS (PROVISION OF CHOICE) AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

MR KOBELKE (Nollamara) [4.02 pm]: I move -

That the Bill be now read a second time.

This Bill will give an element of real choice to Western Australian workers so they can individually decide whether they accept employment under the terms and conditions of a Western Australian workplace agreement or, alternatively, elect to have award coverage. The Legislative Council has passed this Bill and it is now up to the Legislative Assembly to provide that element of choice to Western Australian workers.

The passage of this Bill through the other place came about because it received support from all non-government members. Such cross-party support by the Labor Party, the Greens (WA) and the Australian Democrats can be attributed to two main reasons: Firstly, the lack of fairness under the Workplace Agreements Act that is currently in place in this State. Many members receive complaint after complaint from people whose working conditions are being lowered, who are being abused by unscrupulous employers and who have no recourse to rectifying those problems. Secondly, the Court Government gave

a clear promise that this legislation would provide choice, a choice that clearly does not exist. The passage of this Bill will amend the Workplace Agreements Act and provide for the first time an element of choice for employees.

The Court Government established workplace agreements under the 1993 Workplace Agreements Act. This was done with much rhetoric about providing greater choice in the forms under which people would be contracted for employment. This rhetoric has now been shown to be false. The offer of choice was always a false promise to camouflage the undermining and removal of the standards of protection afforded workers under the award system. The Labor Opposition remains committed to the repeal of the Workplace Agreements Act along with other Court Government industrial relations changes that have attacked the conditions and protections that have previously been available to Western Australian workers.

The changes proposed by this Bill seek to give effect to the promise of choice clearly given by the Court Government and not currently provided for in the Act. Our attempts to improve the functioning of the Workplace Agreements Act cannot in any way be interpreted as support for the Act itself.

Some workers were initially enticed into workplace agreements and opted out of award conditions because they were offered higher salaries. The trading off of conditions under workplace agreements was attractive for some employees as it was the only way of gaining wage increases. However, once locked into workplace agreements, many employees find that they are not able to force employers to uphold the terms of the agreements. They also find that they are significantly disadvantaged when the agreement expires and they seek to renegotiate their terms of employment.

According to answers given to questions on notice, in 1997, after four years of operation, only 10 per cent of the public sector work force in Western Australia had signed workplace agreements. This is despite concerted efforts by the Court Government to entice, cajole and pressure workers into accepting workplace agreements. For example, the Court Government advertises public sector job vacancies that state two different salary levels for the same position. A higher salary is advertised and payable if the prospective employee accepts a workplace agreement.

The Court Government also offered employees financial advantages by way of salary packaging only on the basis that they accepted workplace agreements. Employees seeking to avail themselves of salary packaging were denied the choice of whether to continue under award conditions of employment. It was only because the Community and Public Sector Union and the Civil Service Association took the matter to the Western Australian Industrial Relations Commission that the Court Government was forced to allow salary packaging to award employees.

The Court Government has in the Department of Productivity and Labour Relations established a section to promote workplace agreements to the private sector. The department now gives emphasis to establishing a form of employment contract that disadvantages employees and is not committed to upholding and protecting the rights and employment conditions of working people. Many more examples can be found of various forms of coercion that have been used by the Court Government in its effort to force people into workplace agreements. Yet in four years, it had been able to get only 10 per cent of the public sector work force employed on workplace agreements.

It is now the policy of the Court Government to offer public sector employment only to those willing to accept the terms and conditions of a workplace agreement. Where is the choice promised by the Court Government? There is no choice if the alternatives are to accept the workplace agreement or to be denied a job. The Court Government misled the Parliament and the people of this State when it told us that people would have a real choice about whether they accepted a workplace agreement.

Part of the 1996 coalition parties' election policy headed "Labour Relations" contained a section entitled "More choices for agreements at work". The first dot point is headed "Retention of choice of workplace agreements" and the first sentence states -

We will continue to give employees and employers the ability to enter into work arrangements of their choice through workplace agreements.

A clear platform policy of this Government prior to the last election was that there would be a provision of choice. Let us look at what the Minister for Labour Relations said in this place when explaining the Government's workplace agreements. On page 1451 of *Hansard* of Thursday, 8 July 1993, the minister states -

The effect of the legislation will be to provide, for the first time, a real choice for employers and employees as to the industrial relations system governing their relationship by establishing a new stream, based on workplace agreements . . .

The focus of the new system will be on the workplace and the development of a workplace culture in which employees can take an active and responsible role in directly setting their own work conditions.

On page 1760 of *Hansard* of Tuesday, 3 August 1993, the minister says -

. . . workers will have the power of veto over any workplace agreement and they will not be able to be forced into a workplace agreement against their will.

He also stated -

For the first time, workers will have some genuine choice . . .

For the first time we are legislating to give everyone in this State a set of minimum conditions, and freedom of choice.

Page 3062 of *Hansard* of Thursday, 19 August 1993 records the minister as stating -

... if he and the people he represents do not want workplace agreements they do not have to have them. They are merely offered as a choice and if people do not want them they should ignore them.

On page 3517 of *Hansard* of Thursday, 9 September 1993, the minister says -

In order to maximise the choice available, the WA Government supports the retention of the award system. Employees who wish to remain under awards should be allowed to do so.

On page 9596 of *Hansard* of Thursday 9 December 1993 the minister is reported as saying -

If employers find ways of getting around the three Acts and workers are being forced into workplace agreements against their will I will shut down any of those provisions.

This Government now seeks to force workers into workplace agreements against their will, contrary to the clear statements made repeatedly by the minister who is responsible for labour relations. The propaganda of this Government also espouses that workers should have a choice, despite its refusing to give them that choice. A pamphlet distributed by the Department of Productivity and Labour Relations entitled "You Make the Choice!" states -

The choice is yours. Stay with the existing arrangements or enter a workplace agreement.

You cannot use threats or intimidation to force someone to enter an agreement. Genuine consent is needed or an agreement will not be registered.

Many Western Australians are not offered a genuine choice when forced into a Western Australian workplace agreement. When people are told they must accept a workplace agreement if they want a job, a new position or a promotion or, alternatively, go without the job, they have no choice about their contract of employment. Choice of not only employment but also conditions of employment should be a basic right of the citizens of a State with the wealth and level of economic development of Western Australia. Yet a Premier who trumpets how Western Australia is leading the nation is denying Western Australian workers the right to choose the form of contract under which they wish to be employed.

Why is this Government breaking its very clear promise to allow workers to exercise that choice? The answer is quite simple: No-one would sign a workplace agreement that provides a lower level of wages and conditions if given a choice. Although for a few workplace agreements can provide a higher level of remuneration, this is not how they are most commonly used. Workplace agreements are used predominantly in low-paid jobs to reduce the wages and conditions of workers even further. Force or trickery is, therefore, a necessary part of getting the lowest paid employees into a Western Australian workplace agreement.

It is worth comparing the minimum conditions that apply under a Western Australian workplace agreement with those that apply under a federal award. Many in the retail area in Western Australia are employed under a federal award; therefore, the minimum underpins the remuneration and conditions they receive. Many people in the retail sector are employed under workplace agreements on the minimum conditions. There are examples that make this comparison quite useful. Under the federal award the minimum weekly wage is \$385.40 for a 38-hour week. The minimum weekly wage under a Western Australian workplace agreement is \$347.60 for a 40-hour week. Of course, people do not necessarily work a 40-hour week. For the purpose of comparison, we will use a 38-hour week in both cases. In that case the minimum award wage under a workplace agreement will be \$329.36 per week, a difference of \$56.04 per week - an incredible difference for a low-paid worker. To emphasise the disparity between the minimum conditions under a workplace agreement and a federal award, let us look at the annualised salary for that 38-hour week. Under a federal award, the minimum wage would be \$20 040 per annum; whereas under a workplace agreement, it would be \$17 126 per annum. For a poorly paid worker earning \$20 000 or less a year, there is a differential of nearly \$3 000 between the minimum under a federal award and that under a workplace agreement.

What worker in his right mind in that situation would chose a workplace agreement? Clearly none would. That is why the Government wants to enable employers to trick and force employees into signing workplace agreements. If they were offered choice, as this Bill provides, they would not chose to sign a workplace agreement. The minimum salary under a federal award for a 38-hour week is 17 per cent higher than that under a workplace agreement. In addition to that rather huge differential in salary, a reduction in general conditions applies to those employed under a workplace agreement. Often people employed under a Western Australia workplace agreement are not guaranteed a minimum number of hours. They can turn up for work, be sent home after two hours and will be paid for only two hours. They get no pay for the rest of the day. How could a person with a family to support and expecting a regular income work under a workplace agreement which had conditions of that type? Many are finding they are on a workplace agreement that does not guarantee minimum hours. There is no overtime loading. They may be required to work very unsociable hours yet receive no additional payment, just the basic minimum as if they were working during the day.

More importantly, if employees on a workplace agreement find they are not being paid the minimum conditions, the means by which they can enforce those conditions make it very difficult for them. They cannot get a union to take the matter into the Industrial Relations Commission and get enforcement at low cost and fairly quickly. They are left to engage a lawyer, to go into the civil jurisdiction to try to uphold their rights. That is not an option for low-paid workers. There is no method of enforcing those minimum conditions through the system set up under workplace agreements. Therefore, a worker basically has no rights. That has led to many workers not even being given the conditions that are the legal minimum under a workplace agreement. I could cite many examples of workers who have come to me to complain. When I examine their cases, I find that they are not even receiving the minimum conditions under a workplace agreement, as poor as they are.

Those workers who are employed under a workplace agreement have difficulty in enforcing their rights. However, many people are told that they are working under a workplace agreement, but the agreement has not been registered. Strange as it may seem, they are in a better position because many of them can revert to award coverage and, through the Industrial Relations Commission, have their rights upheld. In the last couple of weeks I have seen two cases of employees being paid a pittance. One person received \$25 for a seven-hour day - I repeat, \$25 for a seven-hour day - and the employer said that was what the workplace agreement stipulated. In that case, it turned out that the workplace agreement was not even registered. That person can now go to the Industrial Relations Commission to claim his dues. However, many workers do not realise that. Therefore, there is a range of precarious employment situations in which workers are simply not able to uphold their rights and very often do not even know about them.

I turn now to the specific provisions contained in the Bill. The two main provisions of the Bill are to provide new employees with choice and to allow an employee under a workplace agreement to opt out of that agreement. First, I address proposed new section 25A, which is headed "Employees to sign election notice". It will be a requirement if this Bill becomes part of the Act that a workplace agreement cannot be registered unless it has with it a form indicating that the new employee has been offered a choice. This additional form will be in plain English and will be determined by regulations to be set by the minister. A new employee who is offered a workplace agreement will need to sign a form indicating that he has also been offered the same job under an alternative form of employment, such as an award. He will sign indicating that he has been offered a choice, and he will also sign indicating that he has freely made the choice to take up a workplace agreement as the form of contract of employment.

The Bill that the Labor Party initially proposed would have allowed the employee to opt out at any time. This proposal was not acceptable to the Australian Democrats. They argued - I understand their logic - that there was a need to uphold the basic principles of contract law, and that to allow one party to opt out of a contract would not be in keeping with the principles of contract law. We do not accept that as relevant to this case, because we are dealing here with contracts of employment. Australia has had a long history of nearly 100 years of regarding contracts of employment as fundamentally different from other forms of contract. When we refer to employment, we are dealing with the livelihood of members of our community. Work is also important for the purpose that it gives to the lives of most of our citizens. The contract that is formed between an employee and an employer is special. It is a contract under which the parties usually have unequal power. In some cases, one person may employ another and they will both have equal terms, with reasonably equal levels of power under that contractual arrangement. However, for most employees, that is not the case. They do not have the power to combat the moves that can be taken by their employer. Therefore, the need exists for special laws in this area. For that reason, the Opposition moved to allow an opt out at any time.

Nonetheless, even with the changes that have been made as a result of the Australian Democrats' amendment, this Bill offers for the first time a real element of choice with respect to workplace agreements, and for that reason it receives our full support. If the Bill were left as it is, there would be no choice at all. Therefore, although the Australian Democrats' amendment imposes restrictions, it allows for some choice.

I deal now with proposed new section 24A. This requires that employees may give notice to cancel an agreement, and it will apply in conjunction with the restriction that is contained in proposed new section 24A(7); that is, in order to opt out of an existing workplace agreement, three conditions must be met: Firstly, that the employee's employment is governed by a workplace agreement when this amendment comes into operation; secondly, that the employee was not offered that employment other than by way of a workplace agreement when he entered into the contract of employment; and, thirdly, that the employee must give notice to opt out of the workplace agreement within 60 days of this amendment coming into operation. Therefore, there is an opportunity for people who were employed under a workplace agreement against their wishes to say that they would not have signed it if they had been given a choice. It is a limited window of opportunity to allow a person on a workplace agreement to opt out and revert to an award or an alternative contract of employment. That has a good effect when it is considered in conjunction with the other changes in the amending Bill.

As already mentioned, the proposed new section 25A, which is headed "Employees to sign election notice" requires, in registering a workplace agreement, that there be a form in simple English which sets out that the person has been offered both options and has made a choice. There will be a provision that when people are being employed under a new workplace agreement they will be offered a choice and those who are trapped under a workplace agreement have the option, within 60 days, of moving out of it. That leaves one problem; that is, that workplace agreements can be for a period of five years. During the period in which the workplace agreement is in place, it is possible that the general level of wages will have risen quite substantially, yet the person working under the workplace agreement is locked in on the minimum rate. If that minimum rate is increased, along with the minimum conditions set by the minister, at least that person has some compensation for the movement in prices and wages. It may be inadequate, but he would have some compensation with an increase in the minimum conditions of employment.

The current mechanisms do not in any way force employers to increase that minimum remuneration when the minister makes determinations which lift the minimum wage under a workplace agreement. An advertisement may be placed in the newspaper, but the enforcement mechanisms require actions in the civil jurisdiction of the courts. The lack of inspections by the Department of Productivity and Labour Relations means that many employers and employees are simply not aware of this. Therefore, employers do not increase that minimum wage under a workplace agreement when it is required, so people can be locked into a workplace agreement and not receive even the minimum increases that are available to them.

Another aspect of great concern is that although the maximum period for a workplace agreement is supposedly five years, a workplace agreement can remain in place for an indefinite period. I refer to section 19(3) of the Workplace Agreements Act, which states -

A workplace agreement must provide for the day on which it expires which cannot be more than 5 years after it was entered into.

That means that workplace agreements must state what will happen on their expiry. It is common for workplace agreements to contain a clause which states that the workplace agreement will continue after the term of the agreement. A workplace agreement would simply roll over and continue on. The length of time for which an employee could be on a workplace agreement could go well beyond five years. There is no simple mechanism by which a workplace agreement can be terminated other than by leaving the employment. I wish to read into the record subsection (4). Clause 6 of the Bill amends section 19 of the Act by deleting subsection (4)(b) and subsection (5). Section 19(4) reads -

On the expiry of a workplace agreement this Act no longer applies to any contract of employment that it governed and that contract then becomes subject to relevant award provisions (if any) unless it becomes subject to -

- (a) another workplace agreement; or
- (b) some other arrangement between the parties provided for in the expired workplace agreement.

One can see that a workplace agreement can roll on if it contains a condition that allows it to do so. Alternatively, it is necessary to establish another workplace agreement. This Bill will delete paragraph (b), which means that once a workplace agreement expires it will become necessary to register another one. In registering that other workplace agreement, it will be necessary to go through the whole registration process, which will also again provide for the employee to sign an election notice indicating that he has chosen of his own volition to go back into the same or a similar workplace agreement rather than opt for some other form of contract of employment.

In summary, the amendments in this Bill will firstly give an opt-out provision in the first 60 days for those people who feel that they have been locked into workplace agreements which are disadvantageous to them. They will have that small window of opportunity to opt out in the first 60 days. Secondly, those people who are entering new workplace agreements must indicate by signing a form that they were given an element of choice. That still means that many employers can set up things so that employees have Hobson's choice - it is not a real choice - but at least there must be a choice. At the moment the State Government does not offer that choice. Clearly the signing of an election notice would provide for that choice. The third element which supports the second is to limit the ability to roll over a workplace agreement and not come back for registration. That again gives an element of choice to the worker before renewing a workplace agreement.

I could give numerous examples of individual workers who have complained of how they feel they have been abused, let down and had their rights taken away through the application of workplace agreements. It is a huge, festering sore in our community. That is not to say that there is not a small number of workers who are satisfied with workplace agreements. People with high levels of skills that are sought after may have an opportunity to bargain and get advantageous conditions in workplace agreements. The huge majority of people on workplace agreements have been tricked or coerced into them because they offered the only form of employment available to them. For the Government to suggest there is any choice is simply doublespeak because it is not true. No choice exists despite the promises made long and hard by members of this Government. This Bill is a test of the hypocrisy of this Government. The passage of this Bill and its enactment as part of the Workplace Agreements Act will ensure that there is at least an element of choice.

There is a need for balance between the interests of employees and employers, between wage costs for business and improving the real take-home pay of workers, between the profit share of the owners of capital and the labour that sustains the business enterprise, and between creating jobs and improving the working conditions of employees. The Australian Labor Party is about obtaining that balance while protecting the working interests of the men and women of this State.

In recent years the Court Government has made major changes to the labour laws of Western Australia. These changes have radically shifted the balance of power to the detriment of employees. Many commentators now regard Western Australia as having the worst industrial relations laws in Australia - laws which provide the least protection for workers from exploitation by a minority of bad employers. The Court Government is seen as kicking for one side against the interests of ordinary Western Australians. This Bill provides for real choice and as such will provide an element of protection for Western Australian workers. I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mrs Edwardes (Minister for Labour Relations).

CRIME LEVELS IN WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Motion

Resumed from 21 April on the following motion -

That this House expresses its most serious concern at the rising levels of crime across the State. We note that the level of crime has risen markedly during the period of the Court Government and call on the Premier and the Minister for Police to -

- (a) explain the reasons for the marked increase in crime;
- (b) commit the resources that are necessary to reduce the levels of crime to the lowest of any State in the nation; and
- (c) commit the resources that are necessary to bring the clearance rates for crime to the highest of any State in the nation.

MR BAKER (Joondalup) [4.36 pm]: I will use this opportunity to continue my remarks on what is a patently misleading motion. In doing so, I will concentrate on the opening assertion in the motion. Of course, members would be aware of the phraseology that was no doubt used deliberately by the member for Midland when framing this motion. The opening assertion is -

That this House expresses its most serious concern at the rising levels of crime across the State.

My understanding is that is not the case and that the level of crime is not rising across the State. I do not propose to go into that very deeply because the Minister for Police has already indicated that the assertion is not correct and that in reality crime levels are not rising at all. He has acknowledged that the community's perception may well be that crime levels are rising, but in reality - that is in fact and not in fiction - crime levels are simply not rising. I was particularly interested in the phraseology used in the opening sentence of the motion and the use of "across the State". The member for Midland may not be aware that the Joondalup region and the Joondalup police district are part of Western Australia. I would have thought that prior to drafting the motion she would have checked what has been happening in Joondalup over the past couple of years.

Mr McGowan: You are a beach boy.

Mr BAKER: Absolute rot. The member has raised a point which is a fair comment. Although I did not live in the electorate, I certainly had a business in the electorate and so was paying rates.

Mr McGowan: Do you live in the electorate now?

Mr BAKER: Yes. I do not live in Peppermint Grove, as does the member for Rockingham, or in Dalkeith, as does the member for Willagee! As I mentioned when this motion was last before the House, I agree with the member for Midland's assertion that what we should do is take an evidence-based approach when reviewing levels of crime in this State to determine whether levels of crime are rising, falling or have become static for whatever reason. That general approach should be adopted whenever we review statistics, but particularly with those related to crime, so that we can see whether the various measures introduced by the State Government are working. It stands to reason that when analysing levels of crime one must deal primarily with numbers as statistics. It also stands to reason that when reviewing those statistics, the only approach we can possibly take is an evidence-based approach.

I will try now to take an evidence-based approach in determining whether levels of crime are rising in my electorate of Joondalup, which is situated in the heart of the Joondalup police district. I ask members to take note of some of the figures that I will shortly be quoting to assist them in determining whether they should support this motion. The Joondalup region is a very large and rapidly expanding area in the northern suburbs of Perth. It is commonly known as the economic hot spot in Australia and is the fastest growing region in Australia - not Rockingham.

Mr McGowan: That is false.

Mr BAKER: No. It has a rapidly expanding population base. For that reason alone, one would expect that, if levels of crime were to rise anywhere in Western Australia, surely they would be rising in the Joondalup police district.

Mr Carpenter: Not necessarily so.

Mr BAKER: That is a good point. The member has hit the nail on the head; it is not necessarily so. I will go beyond that and say it is not so at all; in fact, the opposite is the truth. Other explanations have been cited for the perception that there is an increase in crime throughout Western Australia generally. One such explanation was the increasing level of migrants residing in Western Australia. I think the member for Midland quoted that as a partial explanation. I cannot see how that could have any possible relevance. In fact, it would reduce the level of crime in the northern suburbs. The majority of migrants residing in the northern suburbs hail from the United Kingdom. That migrant group, particularly in the northern suburbs, is a law-abiding community and has made a substantial and overwhelming contribution to the community. They have made tremendous contributions by way of their involvement in Neighbour Watch, community policing committees, and local drug action groups. That explanation of the member for Midland is absolute nonsense.

Let us adopt an evidence-based approach to crime levels in Joondalup to see whether what the member for Midland asserted in the opening paragraph of her motion is correct. Rather than look at figures that may have been current one or two years ago I have up-to-date figures on the crime levels in the Joondalup area. I will compare those figures with previous years to see whether the trend is to an increase, a decrease or a plateau in crime levels. Figures released by the WA Police Service indicate that crime levels in Joondalup have been falling for several years. For example, when one compares the first quarter of the current year with the same quarter in 1998 one sees that burglaries fell by a whopping 22 per cent. Joondalup is a rapidly expanding district; its population base is expanding at an exponential rate. A 22 per cent reduction in burglaries equates to a reduction from 1 770 burglaries in the first quarter of 1998 to 1 373 burglaries in the same quarter in this year. Adopting an evidence-based approach shows that burglaries in the Joondalup police district have fallen - not by a little bit but a whopping 22 per cent.

Mr Carpenter: Will you table the document?

Mr BAKER: I am prepared to table my notes.

Mr Carpenter: Where did you get this information?

Mr BAKER: From the WA Police Service. It is also interesting to look at the category of offences generally known as car theft, which includes actual car theft, and deemed car theft through unlawful use of a motor vehicle. These figures have also

dropped during the same period by 13 per cent. Once again a comparison of the figures for the first quarters of 1998 and 1999 show that the number of car thefts in the Joondalup police district dropped from 729 to 669. That is a 13 per cent reduction in car thefts in the Joondalup police district. Does that figure indicate a rising level of car theft-related crime? Absolutely not; the opposite is the case.

Assault takes many shapes and forms, and the number of cases has fallen from 321 in the same period last year to 300 in the same period this year. That is a fall of 7 per cent. That figure indicates that levels of crime across the State are not rising.

Stealing offences have fallen by 13 per cent when we compare the first quarter of last year with this year. The raw figures are 3 448 stealing offences in the first quarter of 1998 down to 2 983 for the first quarter of this year. Beyond that there has been a 37 per cent reduction in robberies in the area. That clearly indicates that that category of offences, which is essentially stealing with violence or threats, has experienced a substantial reduction. There has also been a 45 per cent drop in aggravated assault figures, which represents almost a 50 per cent decrease.

Graffiti can fan the perception that crime levels are rising, because graffiti can be seen by many members of the community as a daily reminder as they drive past a wall or a fence that someone has broken the law. Graffiti offences have fallen by 49 per cent during the first quarter of this year. Offences are down from 1 297 in the first quarter of 1998 to 660 in the first quarter of this year. It is not as though this downward spiral in the crime level is new. This has been continuing for many years. Had this been a recent trend I might be tempted to consider voting with the Opposition.

Ms Anwyl: So you do not think there is a problem with crime in this State?

Mr BAKER: I am quoting figures in the Joondalup police district. There is a huge problem with the perception of the level of crime in Western Australia. That perception is fanned by the Opposition. It stands to reason that members opposite seek to make cheap political points through fanning the fear that crime levels are rising. That is what they are doing. The Minister for Police has already referred to the statistics indicating across the State as a whole that that is not the case. I have referred to figures in the Joondalup police district to indicate that the motion is clearly not applicable to that police district.

This downward trend has been continuing for many years. I will refer to some articles which summarise crime levels in the past two to three years. I can refer to an article in the *Wanneroo Times*.

Mrs Roberts: They are still above the 1993 levels.

Mr BAKER: I foresaw that the member for Midland would argue that, while crime levels in Joondalup have fallen considerably, the base point was very high anyway. That was not the case; the base point was very low and crime levels in the area have been reducing for nearly five years.

I will go back in time to look at instances of other offences throughout 1998. One simple example relates to the second quarter of 1998.

Mr Carpenter: What happened in the first quarter?

Mr BAKER: They are all good statistics. All right, I will not raise the issue of levels of crime, I will look at clearance rates. That is another issue that members opposite will say is directly related to police resourcing. The clearance rate in respect of offences relating to property burglary, stealing, etc in the second quarter of 1998 was 24.29 per cent. At that point the national average was between 11.75 and 13 per cent. There are many reasons for this. The major reason is that the Joondalup police district has embarked upon new crime prevention and detection strategies. I have made detailed statements in this House on why these trends are continuing and why the police men and women of the Joondalup police district are getting these results and are envied by other police districts.

An article which appeared in *The West Australian* on 17 July last year sought to compare trends in relation to burglary in various police districts in Western Australia. During the 1997-98 financial year burglaries decreased by 24.2 per cent. The main reason for that was the introduction of a scheme that targeted specific areas and specific offenders. The scheme that targeted specific areas was a de facto or quasi - it does not matter which terminology we prefer to use, but I refer to it as quasi - zero-tolerance policy. In other words, the police would identify areas in which crime was likely to occur or where groups who were likely to become involved in crime were likely to meet, such as at train stations, service stations, take-away food outlets and so on. Such areas were policed fairly strictly. The persons concerned were encouraged to split up and move on, and it was found that because they were dispersed - to a certain extent I suppose one could say that they were harassed - they -

Mr McGowan: You are wasting our time. This is our time. Sit down.

Mr BAKER: I am entitled to respond. I tried to respond the previous time the motion was debated, but I was cut short.

Mrs van de Klashorst interjected.

Mr BAKER: The member for Swan Hills has raised an interesting point. Not only is the mover of the motion absent from the Chamber, but the member who was listed to speak in its favour, the member for Pilbara, is not present. He is also wagging it again and I can understand why. Opposition members have been listening to what I have said and they have realised that the evidence-based approach has blown them out of the water. It has resulted in the motion having no credibility at all.

Police in the area have conducted many surveys to determine whether people in the Joondalup police district have the

perception that crime levels are rising or out of control. That is certainly not the case at all. A recent customer service survey which was released by the Western Australia Police Service through Superintendent Darryl Lockhart of the Joondalup police district indicated that most respondents surveyed in Joondalup believed that the police in the Joondalup police district are far more efficient and far more proactive in responding to calls regarding crime, investigating crime, detecting crime and so on and that they are far more diligent when it comes to preparing prosecution briefs after charges are levied. It is interesting to note that a whopping 78 per cent said that they were very happy indeed with the way in which the police monitored, detected, prevented and deterred crime. That compares with a state average of 68.3 per cent. The state average alone is above 50 per cent. Therefore, more people than not are satisfied with what the police are doing than are not. They are satisfied that the police are using their best endeavours to reduce crime throughout Western Australia. Also 78 per cent - a high figure and higher than the state average - indicated that they were very happy indeed with the measures that the police were introducing in the Joondalup police district.

Mr Carpenter: What were they asked?

Mr BAKER: Whether they were satisfied with the work being done by the local policemen and policewomen, of course.

Mr Carpenter: Is that what they were asked?

Mr BAKER: Words to that effect. If the member for Willagee likes, I will obtain a copy of the survey for him to complete.

Mr McGowan: You don't even believe what you say; it is just so obvious. You are saying it to waste our time.

Mr BAKER: Not at all. That is a terrible thing to say. Once again, I am trying to adopt an evidence-based approach to determine whether members should support the motion. What could be more reasonable than that?

I will say something briefly about the formation of perceptions in the community regarding current trends in levels of crime. Even members opposite would agree that perceptions on various issues are influenced by the print and electronic media. Marshall McLuhan once said, "You don't know what you know; you only know what you think you know." It stands to reason that the medium that controls the flow of ideas and information has tremendous power in determining and influencing how perceptions are formed and what they will be. It stands to reason also that graphic photographs in the print media, for example, and on television showing people bleeding, people with bruises, people with stitches in their heads and cuts on their arms and faces tend to have the effect of heightening or enhancing the perception that crime levels are out of control or rising in this State.

Another interesting point is that although the media can have a key role in influencing the formation of perceptions on an issue, so can the Opposition. The Australian Labor Party has a well-proven, well-documented track record on a state and federal basis of using fear as a powerful political tool. Opposition members are well aware that crime levels in Western Australia are not rising, but they cannot say that. They must continue to mislead the people of Western Australia in the hope that they will score pathetic, cheap political points and influence the way in which members of the Western Australian community, particularly those in marginal seats, will vote at the next election. The Labor Party is using the old trick of fear and misinformation, and to a certain extent it could be argued that the media is assisting it by reporting what opposition members say in this place and outside this place via press releases.

The fear technique has been characteristically used by the Labor Party for many years. I cannot forget, for example, the federal election result in 1993. Of course the coalition lost the 1993 federal election. One reason for that, as the former Prime Minister, Paul Keating, acknowledged, was that he was able to harness the politics of fear and mislead the electorate into voting against the goods and services tax and the FightBack package. On behalf of the Labor Party he acknowledged, as though it were a joke, that he had totally conned the Australian electorate. Opposition members might say, "Good on him; he pulled off the election result; who cares?" but we will never be able to find a coalition Government which sought to rely upon the politics of fear to gain office - never. We will not be able to cite any instance in which any coalition Government, be it in government or in opposition at the time of the election, has relied upon the politics of fear, the lowest common denominator, in trying to influence the views of electors in the broader community.

The Labor Party claims to be interested in what it perceives to be rising levels of crimes in Western Australia. The obvious question is: What are opposition members doing about it? The answer is simple: They are doing nothing about it. They are trying to perpetuate the myth that levels of crime are rising. From time to time when the Government announces an initiative to assist in the further reduction of levels of crime in this State, all that we hear from the Opposition is continual carping and criticism, particularly from the member for Midland. I have discussed with many policemen and policewomen in the Joondalup police district the tactic that the Labor Party has been using in recent years. Quite frankly they have said to me, "We are sick of getting our guts kicked by the Labor Party on crime. Why don't you tell people the reality of what we are doing in the Joondalup police district? We are sick of Labor's negative, non-proactive and carping approach."

There are two ways of dealing with any issue in the community: One can take the initiative and propose to do something, or one can sit on one's backside and carp, criticise and bag. Unfortunately, in relation to crime in this State, Labor members have decided to sit on their backsides and criticise. They are totally devoid of any ideas. They have criticised every proactive, constructive initiative that we have introduced. They refuse to admit that levels of crime are falling. They refuse to acknowledge that. They say that at all times they rely upon the evidence-based approach or the scientific approach, but in reality they do not. It is interesting that opposition members have been complaining on and off for about six months about the efficacy, if any, of increased penalties as a way of reducing levels of crime.

Mr Riebeling: That has worked well in the United States! Outstanding!

Mr BAKER: That is interesting. Since I was elected to Parliament every piece of legislation that has been introduced which

has had the effect of increasing penalties or terms of imprisonment has been supported by members opposite. The Opposition says tougher penalties are not the way to go but it supports tougher penalties across the board.

Mr Carpenter: A minute ago you said we did nothing.

Mr BAKER: The Opposition is trying to create a perception of being tough on crime; hence when legislation comes through which has the effect of increasing penalties, the Opposition supports it or risks being accused of being soft on crime. When the issue of the efficacy of tougher penalties crops up in this House from time to time, to a man and woman the Opposition says tougher penalties are not the way to go as they will not achieve anything; yet every time legislation is introduced with the effect of implementing tougher penalties, the Opposition supports it. The Opposition should sort out its position on the efficacy of tougher penalties and decide whether tougher penalties have any effect in deterring crime.

Mr Riebeling: Do they work?

Mr BAKER: They can in certain circumstances, they are one factor which can be used to try to deter people from committing crimes. One thing the Government will not do to try to further reduce levels of crime is change the definitions of crimes. It will not take a sly, backdoor approach to the crime statistics in this State by changing definitions. What I am referring to? A simple example is the decriminalisation of cannabis. It stands to reason that if the simple possession of cannabis is decriminalised in this State - and I think that is still the policy of the Labor Party -

Mr McGowan: You have done it in two police districts.

Mr BAKER: Not at all! The member for Rockingham does not understand what is meant by decriminalisation. If those numbers are removed from the crime statistics one will end up with a substantial reduction in cannabis possession offences straightaway. Members should look at the Labor Party's policy on heroin users. Its policy is that the Government, the State, the taxpayer should either pay heroin users to purchase heroin or provide them with heroin; and not only that, they should be allowed to shoot up in rooms under medical supervision. It is still an offence to possess, consume or use heroin. If the Labor Party gains office, it will change the offence, it will wipe those offences from the Misuse of Drugs Act and say it has reduced the level of heroin consumption in the community because the convictions for its possession, use and related offences have been substantially reduced. The Opposition will seek to change definitions of criminal offences to contrive reductions in the levels of crime. The coalition Government has no intention of doing that. It has faced the crime issue head-on and implemented many proactive initiatives to reduce crime. It has involved the community; it has taken a whole-of-community and a whole-of-government approach and that is why levels of crime in Western Australia are falling and will continue to fall while the coalition remains in office.

In conclusion, I have adopted an evidence-based approach in analysing this motion and the evidence is quite clear: The levels of crime have reduced, particularly in the Joondalup district, and they are certainly not rising. A perception to the contrary is evident in the community and is largely fanned by members opposite who want to use crime as a tool of fear with a view to gaining political points. It will not work, members opposite have been exposed. People are not as silly as they were in 1993.

Mr Carpenter: Has anybody got a while flag?

Mr BAKER: I acknowledge that the member for Willagee has surrendered and raised his hands in the air. Good on him! I will not support this motion because it is false and misleading.

MR CARPENTER (Willagee) [5.03 pm]: Surprisingly enough and despite what we have just heard, I support the motion. What we have just heard would test even the most elastic of receptors in anybody's capacity to understand an argument. It was eternally inconsistent and, in short, an absolute load of rubbish and every member on the other side of the House knows it. I would be interested to see the result of the circulation of the member for Joondalup's speech in his electorate. He was basically saying that crime is plummeting, it is under control and everybody is happy. The member for Joondalup has a great ability to indulge in role-play and we have just seen a good example of that. I congratulate him on that ability, but it was probably not the time and it was certainly not the topic. This is a serious issue for many people. The next time an old lady is bashed and dragged across a car park while getting her weekly groceries at the local shop perhaps we should send the member for Joondalup to explain to her that there is no problem, it is all under control, there is nothing to worry about and she feels bad about what has happened only because members of the Labor Party are standing up in Parliament saying crime is a problem. The member for Murdoch will support me in saying that crime is a big problem in my area, which is close to his area. It has been exacerbated by the operative closure of the only police station in my electorate in Hilton.

Mr Baker interjected.

Mr CARPENTER: Crime is an escalating problem and it has worsened considerably since the operative closure of the police station in Hilton. Any policeman in the Fremantle district will confirm that that is the case. He will also confirm that the Government has made a big mistake in the operation of that police station and he would like to see it reactivated.

There is a major problem in the community and all the nonsense the member for Joondalup raises in this Parliament will not change that fact. I could stand up here and say crime is tumbling and is under control as the member for Joondalup has done; but that will not alter the reality. It does not matter if the member for Joondalup is on television telling people something which they know is false; they will not believe him. Influence in the media has its limits. I interjected on the member and said that in the Soviet Union the media was in total control but people did not believe a word of what they were told because they were experiencing reality. That is the difference.

Mr Baker: It took several decades.

Mr CARPENTER: No, it did not. They experienced the reality of their everyday lives. People in the suburbs do not need Channel 7 to show the results of people being bashed in car parks. They know it is happening in their suburb because their neighbour, their son, their daughter or their grandmother has been the victim of crime. They know that 10 years ago it was not as bad as it is today and that 20 years ago things were not anywhere near as bad as they are today. The member for Ningaloo was in the Chair while the member for Joondalup was on his feet and members know his version of the member for Joondalup's speech; he produced a petition on this issue today. The member for Joondalup has no capacity to understand the reality of everyday life for the majority of Western Australians. I know that was not the member for Joondalup's real view of events. He is very good at role-playing, but let us deal with reality. I congratulate the member for Joondalup for his work and for getting himself into the media but he should not be doing that this way - he will make a fool of himself. Do any members opposite believe that crime is under control in their seats? There has been a dramatic increase in the rate of crime in this State since the beginning of the 1990s. It can be tracked on all the figures: The figures may go up and down from one quarter to another but there is an undeniable trend. How far it will go is a matter of debate. The real question is not saying it is not happening but what do we do about it. That is what we should be addressing ourselves to. What do we do about it? There has been a dramatic increase in some areas of crime over the past four or five years.

People understand that there is a strong correlation between what is happening with crime and the proliferation of the use of illicit drugs. They can see it happening around them, and more and more of them are becoming the victims of it. Today, for example, *The West Australian* carried the tragic story of Muriel Gallagher who is still grieving for her 83-year-old aunt who died the day after her handbag was snatched. That case has received a great deal of publicity throughout the media, as it should, because it is symptomatic of a series of circumstances applying to a growing number of people. It is interesting to people because they believe it could happen to them. People differentiate between the events that happen once in a blue moon and those that are happening all the time. This is happening all the time, and that is why people are interested in these stories; it is not because members talk about them in this place. This case is a typical example of the issues to which I refer. Let us accept that Western Australia has a problem of escalating crime rates, handbag snatching and assaults, especially on the old and vulnerable members of the community, and that there is a correlation between the escalating crime rates and the use of illicit drugs. It is not a coincidence; the two are related.

The family's response to punishment for the perpetrator of this crime is that he should be flogged. One can understand that. The article indicates that the accused person said he wanted money for drugs. Why do people bash old ladies and grab their handbags? It is because they want cash for a purpose and on many occasions it is to purchase drugs. What happens when there is an escalation of crime to a particular level? The incidence of opportunistic crime also increases because people think they can get away with it among the huge volume of crime. A low level of crime mitigates against the commissioning of crime because there is more chance of being caught. With high levels of crime, there is less chance of being caught. Crime breeds more crime. It may be that the offender was not using the money for drugs, although I do not know why he would say that if it were not the case. However, offenders can be encouraged into this circumstance because they think they can get away with it.

Mr Baker: They will cite in mitigation either drugs or poor family background.

Mr CARPENTER: The member for Joondalup was the chairman of the committee that produced this report and I will refer to some of the information in that report. He is aware of that information, and that is why his performance today was a complete sham. When the incidence of crime reaches high levels, it encourages other people to commit crime. The member boasted of an 11 per cent clear-up rate. However, the member for South Perth said that in his electorate the clear-up rate is only 4 per cent. That means people have only a 4 per cent chance of being caught, so they know they can commit crime with impunity. That is a fact.

I am glad the Minister for Police is in the Chamber and that he has taken an interest in the Hilton Police Station. Since that police station has been closed and there is less likelihood of offenders in that area being caught, the situation is out of control. Potential criminals can do what they like in that little area, because there are no police around. Undeniably, there is a link between the proliferation of illicit drug use and crime against the person and against property. It is causing trauma in the community.

I agree with the member that the worst thing that could happen would be to make people prisoners in their own homes. I have worked in the media and I know that it must deal with the perception and the reality. The reality is leading to this perception because the reality is not good. There is no point saying that it is not a problem, because we all know that it is. There is no point saying that crime is on the decline, because that is not true. One need only ask the police. What should be done about it? The member for Joondalup chaired a select committee that inquired into the Misuse of Drugs Act. It produced a report entitled "Finding the Right Balance", which was a very good report. I quote from page 454 of that report under the heading "Use of drugs in NSW prisons". Unlike Western Australia, New South Wales has carried out a great deal of research into the causes of crime and the relationships between various factors. The report states -

It has been noted that in NSW about 8 out of 10 prisoners have been imprisoned as a result of a conviction for a drug related offence or are drug dependent.

Mr Baker: Is the term "drug-related offence" defined?

Mr CARPENTER: No. I am not suggesting that these people have stolen heroin; I am referring to circumstances in which people have stolen money because they need to feed a drug habit. That is a drug-related offence. Alternatively, people's capacity for judgment can be impaired by their use of drugs. The member knows that is also a drug-related offence. The member's report makes a link between the use of drugs and crime in New South Wales. In Western Australia there is a significant correlation. I have not seen any figures, and I have been told that no survey has been carried out in Western

Australia. However, there is no reason to think that for this purpose there will be a huge difference between the situation in New South Wales and that in Western Australia. Why does the Government not look at ways of dealing with the drug problem?

Yesterday the Minister for Family and Children's Services, who has control of the Government's drug strategy, basically adopted a hardline approach to free heroin trials. It is obvious to everyone that the supply of heroin to users is not the answer to everything, but it could be a significant tool. The problem is that we shall never know in Western Australia because the Government will not take a chance and implement such a trial.

Mr Baker interjected.

Mr CARPENTER: I advocate that a heroin trial be held in Western Australia because I do not believe that the circumstances and results that applied in Switzerland will necessarily apply in Western Australia. There should be a trial for the provision of heroin, under very strict circumstances, to heroin users in Western Australia. It might have a bad impact or a good impact, but we shall never know unless the Government conducts a trial.

I will refer again to the member for Joondalup's very good report. Basically, he was the author of this report because he was the chairman of that select committee. It is stated at page 156 of the report that -

The Swiss heroin trial, which commenced in January 1994, has generated a range of views amongst professional practitioners and stimulated intense debate in the wider community as to the pros and cons of providing heroin on prescription as a treatment. At the time of writing this report, a number of the evaluations of the Swiss heroin trial have become available, which have generally presented favourable outcomes of the trial.

Mr Baker interjected.

Mr CARPENTER: The World Health Organisation report which has been released since this report has also been very favourable.

Mr Baker interjected.

Mr CARPENTER: She referred to a trial in Switzerland in 1965, and most people in this place cannot remember that period. It was hopeless, and in any event it was not a trial of this nature. I continue with a quote in the report from Alex Wodak in the article "Public health and politics: the demise of the ACT heroin trial", who said in relation to the Swiss trial -

Health outcomes of this trial were extremely impressive. Among 1,146 subjects treated for 18 months, there were no overdose deaths, only three new HIV infections, four hepatitis B infections and five new hepatitis C infections. Reported income from illicit and semi legal activities decreased from 69% to 10%, the number of offences dropped by 60% . . .

Anybody with half a brain would take that figure seriously. The number of offences recorded by this control group reduced by 60 per cent. If we could replicate that result in Western Australia, we could have a profound impact on not only the heroin problem, but also the lives of ordinary people who are experiencing the ramifications of the heroin problem in Western Australia. Imagine how happy the police would be if they could achieve a 60 per cent reduction in crime rates among these drug users. The Government's own report states that eight out of 10 people are in jail for drug-related offences.

A trial has been conducted in a very conservative country at the instigation of the business community, not the bleeding hearts, because they were sick and tired of what was happening in their streets outside their businesses. The business community demanded that they do something about it. The Switzerland Government decided to try it. It put 1 146 heroin addicts into a program in which they were given heroin according to very strict terms. No-one died of an overdose during the trial period and the crime rate was reduced by 60 per cent.

Mr Baker interjected.

Mr CARPENTER: I am. I will promote the idea. It is worth a try. The Government is now running some very good education programs and some very good diversion programs. It does not publicise them very much because it does not want people to know as it is afraid. The Government should be proud of the things it is doing, but the Government blamed it all on Gough Whitlam. The member for Albany blames everything on Gough Whitlam. I know more about these programs now than when I took over the portfolio because I have met the people involved. I was surprised at what the Government was doing. However, all that does is provide people with the information and the capacity to decide to say no to drugs. A group of people will take drugs no matter what information they are given; this is human nature. The Government must accept the reality of that and ask itself if it can do something. It might seem a bit risky, but I bet that all the people in the member for Cottesloe's electorate who are afraid of becoming the victims of crime will support it. Give it a try; we will never know otherwise. The Government could be doing other proactive things.

The New South Wales Government has instituted a system of drug courts. It started on 8 February, so it is in its early stages. The concept is that if a person comes before the court for a drug-related offence, he is given the opportunity to undergo a treatment program in lieu of having to spend his time in prison. That idea is lifted from some of the States in the United States of America which have tried new programs to deal with the serious drug issues. Encouraging results have been achieved. The Government should give it a try in Western Australia; people will accept it. The reality that is facing people in Western Australia is such that it has got them to a point at which they are prepared to accept ideas which they would have rejected five years ago. The Minister for Family and Children's Services is locked in that period of five years ago or 30 years ago if the Swedish example was the right one. The Premier is also locked in. Our electorates have gone past us; they want

something done about it. When the Premier says giving heroin to junkies will not prove much, the community understands that he is not talking their language anymore. Members should have a look at Sweden where the laws are more prohibitive. More drug deaths occur in Sweden than in Holland. Whenever people talk about the laxity of drug laws and what a disaster it is, they talk about Holland. The population of Holland is not dissimilar to that of Australia and in the last calendar year, there were 50 heroin deaths. There were 79 heroin deaths in Western Australia which has a population 1.5 million. In the whole of Holland, which has a population of about 15 million, only 50 heroin deaths occurred. In Australia last year there were 1 000 heroin deaths. In Holland there were 50; therefore, 950 more young people died here than in Holland with its lax approach to drugs. It is more realistic. Its population is receptive to ideas because people do not want to be the victims of crime. They do not consider the possession of heroin and the possession of marijuana for personal use to be a crime. They consider it a crime when they get bashed in the streets for their money. That is a crime and that is what this Government can do something about. It should not bother arguing about -

Mrs Parker: Do you want to decriminalise the possession of heroin and cannabis?

Mr CARPENTER: I will get to that in a moment. Decriminalisation of the possession of marijuana and cannabis has been Labor Party policy for some time. The world has changed since we were young. We were brought up with the idea that somebody first smoked dope and then found himself shooting up. That does not happen any more. I have just come from a trip to a regional centre which has a major drug problem. The first experience with drugs for most of the young kids in that town is amphetamines or shooting up heroin. Cannabis does not lead to harder drugs. Let us try and catch up with the community because they are living in real life and we are floundering around in the background not trying anything new. A thousand young Australian people died of heroin overdose last year, yet only 50 died in Holland. We should be ashamed of that. More young people in Western Australia will die from heroin overdose in any year than will die in a car accident. We should be absolutely ashamed of that. Parents of heroin users are totally distraught by what has happened to their daughters and sons. They say all that needs to be done is to keep their child alive because they cannot do it. They cannot change the law and keep their child from dying of a heroin overdose, but if there was somewhere their child could go and they could be assured that they knew their son or daughter was in safe hands while they were feeding their habit, that person would not die. We are letting people die. We will never win the argument about law reform on heroin based on saving the lives of heroin users. The argument is already won, but we have not understood it yet as a Parliament. The argument is already won in the community because they know that if something can be done about the heroin problem, something can be done about the security of their lives. Why should my wife or anybody be afraid to go home where they will be alone after they have been out shopping and when they can pick up the member for Joondalup's report and read that eight out of the 10 crimes committed are drug related. Then they hear the member for Joondalup jump up in Parliament and say, "There is nothing to worry about; it is under control."

Mr Baker: You are quoting statistics from New South Wales, as you have acknowledged.

Mr CARPENTER: I understand that in Western Australia, the figure is more like 70 per cent. In Western Australia, 70 per cent of crime is drug-related, and we are not doing anything about it. We are living in the conservative box that we adopted in 1965. The drug laws have not changed for I do not know how long. It is time they were changed, because the world has changed and the lives of people have changed. The lives that people are leading now are being dramatically impacted upon by drugs, and they want the Government to do something about it. It is no good our getting up in the Parliament and saying we are not prepared to trial a program which has had a dramatic effect in Switzerland, with a 60 per cent decline in the number of offences. That means something.

Mr Baker: If that is the case, why trial it? Why not just do it, if that is what you believe?

Mr CARPENTER: Do it! Get the Government to do it!

The Minister for Family and Children's Services spoke about cannabis. I believe that thousands of young Western Australians are getting caught up in the justice system because they use cannabis. That could be avoided. The figures in the report from the member for Joondalup's committee say that between 60 and 70 per cent of Western Australians use cannabis at some stage. It is ridiculous to criminalise that 60 or 70 per cent of people. High school kids are using cannabis at a high rate. Do we criminalise them, as John Howard would have us do, and expel them from school and give them no opportunity to repair their lives? Why do we not decriminalise marijuana and cannabis for personal use, because what happens is that the same person who can supply our son or daughter in high school with a small amount of cannabis can also supply our son or daughter with amphetamines and heroin.

Mr Baker: There is a link, is there?

Mr CARPENTER: Not necessarily. We can break any nexus that may exist, with one person going to the same supplier for different drugs.

Mr Baker: You said there was no nexus between heroin and hard drugs.

Mr CARPENTER: No, I did not. I said that increasingly in Western Australia in the regional centre in which I live, for many people their first use of drugs is amphetamines or heroin. It is true. The member for Joondalup knows it. In Western Australia only a tiny percentage of people use heroin, but a huge percentage of people use cannabis. If we decriminalise the use of cannabis in small amounts and keep those people out of the justice system, it will have a radical impact on their lives. We should also decriminalise the possession and cultivation of marijuana in small amounts.

Mr Prince: Have you been communicating with your grassroots again?

Mr CARPENTER: The member for Albany has had experience in the court system as a lawyer.

Mr Prince: Yes. I have had a lot more experience than you.

Mr CARPENTER: It is surprising that the utterances of the member for Albany in the Parliament are so radically out of touch with the reality that he has experienced.

Mr Prince: You have been living in cloud-cuckoo-land for your whole life.

Mr CARPENTER: I live with people who want to have something done about the heroin problem.

Mr Baker: Do you live in your electorate?

Mr CARPENTER: Yes.

Mr Prince: Good for you!

Mr CARPENTER: Numerous people come into my electorate office for a range of matters that are related to drugs. People come in because they want me to help them financially with a funeral for their son or daughter who has died from an overdose. People come in because their son or daughter is on heroin. People come in because they have been the victims of crime. Something can be done about that, but we need to be bold enough to try it, and that is what I urge the Government to do.

MR JOHNSON (Hillarys) [5.34 pm]: I will be reasonably brief, because other members want to speak on this motion. It is important to set out at first-hand that the Opposition has a certain amount of hypocrisy in moving this motion. The Opposition is raving on about what it believes is a high level of crime in this State, but I do not believe the Opposition wants to do much about it, because when the Government puts forward a proposal, the Opposition will not back us.

Mr Riebeling: That is because they are all the same.

Mr JOHNSON: I have not been speaking for one minute and the member for Burrup is already interjecting.

Mrs Roberts: That is because you are talking rot!

Mr McGowan: You are out of touch with the real world. You have no idea!

Mr JOHNSON: Young boys like the member for Rockingham should be seen and not heard. I have been around a lot longer than has the member for Rockingham. I have children and grandchildren. I have seen a lot more in life than the member for Rockingham will ever see. It is fair to say, and statistics prove, that the person most likely to commit a crime is a male aged between 14 and 24. We need to ask ourselves why do those people commit crimes. We need to look back a bit further to their childhood to see the reasons. Members opposite may even agree with some of the reasons, but whether they are prepared to do anything is another matter. Unfortunately, the family unit of today is breaking down all over the place. There are now more single-parent families in the world than there have ever been.

Mr Graham: I take great offence at people who pick on single-parent families. I suspect that what you really want to say is dysfunctional families and not single parent families.

Mr JOHNSON: The member for Pilbara is wrong. I am saying single-parent families.

Mr Graham: In that sense, you are talking absolute nonsense. Your Government tabled a report that showed the exact opposite. Hon Barbara Scott chaired that committee. Sit down and read it, and then grow up, you bigot!

Mr Prince: I will give you a copy of a national report entitled "Pathways to Prevention", that says that single parent families are more at risk, and explains it in greater detail. I have 50 copies in my office, and it is that thick -

Mr Graham: So is he if he believes that, and so are you! It is about dysfunctional families, not single-parent families, and it is absolute garbage and nonsense to come out with anything else. I object to it violently, and I object to it politically and publicly.

Mr Prince: It is not true in all cases.

Mr JOHNSON: The member for Pilbara gets on his high horse and objects to a lot of things. What does he know about single-parent families?

Mr Graham: I have been one for six years, because my wife died, you peanut! I raised the family, and my kids have come through it, and so have yours. It has nothing to do with single-parenthood. It has to do with the dysfunction of the family.

Mr JOHNSON: Does the member for Pilbara not realise that often the dysfunction of the family leads on from its being a single-parent family? If the dad leaves home and leaves the mum with the kids, there are problems.

Mr Graham: That is a dysfunctional family.

Mr JOHNSON: It is a single-parent family. The member for Pilbara should not split hairs with me.

Mr Graham: You do not know what you are talking about.

Mr JOHNSON: I know exactly what I am talking about, and if anyone is a peanut in this place, the member for Pilbara may well be described as that.

Mr Graham: That is absolute garbage. You are a bigot. You are a good, old fashioned, Pommie Tory bigot!

Mr JOHNSON: For goodness sake! I assure the member for Pilbara that no-one on this side of the House takes any notice of what he says. Most of them treat him with the contempt that he deserves. Talk about being a bigot! The member for Pilbara called me a Pommie Tory! There is a bit of a racist attitude there. He will be telling me to go home soon!

Mr Graham: There is a court decision that says that to call a Pom a Pom is not racist.

Mr JOHNSON: Is that what it says? We are quite happy to accept that we are above all that nonsense.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mrs Hodson-Thomas): Perhaps the member will address his remarks through the Chair.

Mr JOHNSON: I would love to, Madam Acting Speaker, if the person on the other side of the Chamber would keep quiet. He has made his interjection, as irrelevant as it was, but that is fine.

I am told that eight out of every 10 children appearing before the Children's Court are from dysfunctional single-parent families. It is a fact that the breakdown of the family unit is part of the reason for crime being committed. I refer here to comments of a member opposite for whom I have a fair bit of respect; namely, the member for Kimberley. The core of many problems with young people, which are problems when these people grow older, is encapsulated in the word "respect". A lack of respect for human beings and for other people's property is evident. I quote the comments of the member for Kimberley in the "Sorry" debate of 1997 -

We feel committed to the rebirth of the word "respect" in our society. Respect is playing a diminishing role in our society. As a consequence, society is not coming to grips with reality and the need to encompass and embrace fundamentally important changes.

I agree with the member. He said, reinforced by later comments, that respect is lacking. One need not say sorry or apologise if there is respect in the first place. Unfortunately, respect is not there.

Mrs van de Klashorst: You must earn respect. It cannot be given unless people earn it. That must be remembered as well.

Mr JOHNSON: Yes. We should teach respect to children in our homes.

Mrs van de Klashorst: You cannot be taught respect.

Mr JOHNSON: People can be taught respect. I do not mind interjections opposing my views from the other side of the Chamber; however, the member for Swan Hills is supposed to be on my side!

Mrs Roberts: She is a free thinker.

Mr JOHNSON: She is, and a very good member.

A lack of respect relates to a lack of discipline. We see it in homes today. We see a lack of respect with children in homes and at schools. How do we gain that respect? How do we make young people learn to respect their school friends, older people, others in society and other people's property? A way to achieve this, which I know the Opposition opposes vehemently, is through compulsory school uniforms. Members may ask what this has to do with this debate, but it is tremendously significant.

Mrs Roberts: I thought you were going to say beating. You are talking nonsense!

Mr JOHNSON: The member for Midland opposes mandatory school uniforms.

Mrs Roberts: I do not.

Mr JOHNSON: The member is on record as saying so. Children in many schools are allowed to wear whatever clothes they like, and a lack of respect is evident. Schools which insist on school uniforms often have children who are better behaved than those in schools without mandatory school uniforms. That is borne out in the many schools I visit. The approach to school uniforms is a definite part of developing respect.

Unfortunately, many young people in the home do not receive the love and attention they should receive. Mum and dad are busy with their lives and want to enjoy themselves at night. They spend too much time on their pleasures and do not adopt the responsible attitude to children seen many years ago. Very often on summer evenings in my electorate, young children aged 12 years and upwards are seen at Hillarys marina. Often up to 300 young people congregate in the area. I cannot believe for the life of me why any parent of a child aged 12, 13 or 14 years would drop-off his or her child at Hillarys, where a tremendous number of young people congregate, with under-age drinking in the parkland areas, and then let them make their own way home. It is staggering. I have four children and five grandchildren. How could any responsible parent do that? One 13-year-old boy was taken back to his parents recently by a father of another child with whom this boy was causing trouble. He knocked on the door at 11 o'clock at night, and the boy's father said upon opening the door, "You're home early." Sorrento is a great place, but a 13-year-old should not be there on his own at 11 o'clock at night. The father must have normally expected him home at midnight or later to have made that comment. That is not responsible parenting. Members opposite would not think so either.

This type of problem causes young people to enter the wrong cycle in life. They start with graffiti, move to something else and end up committing more serious crime. We have spoken about the correlation between drugs and crime. Drugs are a major factor. Unless we come to grips with the drug situation, crime rates will not diminish.

Crime rates increase in some categories of crime, and reduce in others. I do not know the simple answer, other than trying to teach young people respect. However, we must show respect. The earlier comments by my colleague opposite, the

member for Pilbara, showed no respect for me whatsoever. We should be setting an example. Some members do not do so.

Many things have changed. When young people aged 16 to 18 years first go out to work these days, they earn quite good money. They have big spending power when compared with young people of 30 years ago. This is part of the problem. It is too easy and many young people spend their money on things which are not good for them.

Mr McGowan: We will outlaw that: We will say that they are not allowed to buy a stereo!

Mr JOHNSON: A great deal of advertising today is geared to young people, as that is where the spending power lies. Members would not disagree. Married people with children have a mortgage to pay and children to feed. They do not have the spending power of young people. Young kids often give their parents 20 bucks a week, and have a few hundred dollars a week to spend on themselves. It is not good for them, as they spend it in the wrong areas. Members opposite laugh at that suggestion, but I find that reaction amusing.

Mrs Roberts: It is a generational thing.

Mr JOHNSON: Really. I know the member opposite will take exception to my next comment, which I have said many times in this place: Some of the punishments in this State are not sufficiently severe to deter people from committing some crimes. The crimes which horrify me more than any other are those against elderly people and the infirm who cannot take care of themselves. Often it is for \$20 or \$30 to feed some drug habit. Such crime has no real punishment or deterrent. Most people in Western Australia would agree with me. A survey I conducted indicated that 80 per cent of people believe that some form of corporal punishment should apply for serious, violent crime. Members opposite do not agree with me; they have said so openly. That punishment will not be applied because of the view of members opposite. Even if the necessary legislation were to pass in this House, it would not pass the upper House. The Labor Party, the Greens (WA) and the Australian Democrats would vote against it.

Mrs Roberts: Many of your members do not support the challenge of violence with violence.

Mr Graham: Why not run a private members' Bill and test support. You cannot get the support of people on your side.

Mr JOHNSON: I know where it would go. It would be a waste of Parliament's time. It probably would pass through this House, but would not pass the upper House.

Mrs Roberts: You talked about this when you had the numbers upstairs. You talked about it three or four years ago.

Mr JOHNSON: I do not think so.

Mrs Roberts: You and the member for Geraldton said so during the last term of the Government.

Mr JOHNSON: If so, we are consistent then!

Mr Graham: Not one initiative has come from you in six years.

Mr JOHNSON: I have plenty of initiatives. Members opposite moan about the increasing crime levels and violent crime, but what have they done about it? They did nothing when they were in government. Some of our law and order legislation is languishing in the upper House because the opposition parties will not agree to it.

Mrs Roberts: That is outright rubbish.

Mr JOHNSON: I said I would be brief so I shall sit down so that the members for Rockingham and Pilbara can say a few words.

MR MCGOWAN (Rockingham) [5.50 pm]: The quality of debate exhibited by the previous two speakers, the member for Joondalup and the member for Hillarys, has been breathtaking in its poor content and mental gymnastics! Their speeches were so full of platitudes and ridiculous statements that it has made the Parliament into a laughing stock. The member for Hillarys commenced his address by making outrageously insensitive comments to the member for Pilbara. He then commenced abusing him before wandering around with a series of empty-headed platitudes which held no solutions to the problems we are trying to deal with here.

The speech by the member for Joondalup reminded me of something I read once in George Orwell's novel *1984*. A character in the book invented the concept of "duckspeak" which involved characters speaking as fast as they could while disengaging their brain from what their mouth was saying. The member for Joondalup has reinvented duckspeak in this Parliament by making inane comments which even he did not believe. He was laughing while he said them. No-one in his right mind would say those things. He put to this Parliament that crime is on the decrease.

Mrs Roberts: There must be something about members from the northern suburbs.

Mr MCGOWAN: I suppose there is something about living in City Beach and representing Joondalup. He tried to present the notion that crime was decreasing because it went down in Joondalup for one quarter. I will quote from the report that details crime and justice statistics for Western Australia so that the moronic backbench of the Liberal Party gets the message. The introduction indicates that rates of reported offences in WA have generally increased. Rates of reported incidences of armed and unarmed robbery have risen continually since the early 1990s. For unarmed robbery the rate has doubled since 1991 while for armed robbery the rate has almost quadrupled.

Can members opposite get that into their heads? The Premier has called for private security patrols in order to deal with the escalating crime rate. In 1998 he was quoted in the *Sunday Times* as saying that we must look seriously at private security which can guarantee people in the suburbs a 10 minute response time. By that he was saying that crime is on the rise and that he is powerless to deal with it so we should hand it over to local government. Then Mr Duckspeak puts it forward that crime is on the decrease.

Mr Baker: It is in Joondalup.

Mr McGOWAN: I would be surprised if Mr City Beach ever visits Joondalup.

Mr Baker: Mr Peppy Grove over there can't speak.

Mr McGOWAN: That is bizarre and misleads the Parliament! I have been to Peppermint Grove once in my life to visit the Royal Freshwater Bay Yacht Club. I do not know from where the member for Joondalup got that notion. He is once again taking his perverse mind off on some mental gymnastic exercise!

The member for Willagee obviously spoke from the heart and in doing so urged us to consider new solutions. In my former life I was involved in an occupation in which drugs were anathema. I abided by that because I believed that it was the appropriate policy for my occupation at the time. I was strongly opposed to the concept of heroin trials. Nevertheless, contrary to members opposite, I have the ability to think and realise that the policies we have in place now are not working. In Australia three people die every day of drug overdoses. In this State approximately 100 people die of drug overdose a year. That is two a week.

Mrs Parker: It is 79.

Mr McGOWAN: Is it only 79?

Mrs Parker: It is 79 too many.

Mr McGOWAN: There are very high levels of drug related deaths in this State.

Mrs Parker: I did not say "only 79". I said, "79 and 79 is far too many." I have been careful about that.

Mr McGOWAN: Yesterday, the Minister for Family and Children's Services quoted from a report compiled before I was born as evidence to support her position on this issue. The minister was probably 30 or so at the time! I apologise for that remark. No doubt she was a young girl. In any event, she is bereft of ideas on this matter. Government members must open their minds and widen their thinking. I am sure most of them realise that they must do that. We must be considering new solutions.

I have visited heroin clinics and have known people who were heroin addicts. They find it very difficult to kick the habit and some people will never kick the habit. The way they usually raise the money to support the habit is two-fold. For women it is primarily through prostitution. Some who are involved in crime have parents who are prepared to buy drugs for them so that they at least know they are taking "clean" heroin and as a result putting their lives at less risk than if they were forced onto the streets. However, most women are condemned to prostitution. I have met them and they freely admit it, but they say that they do not like it. I can understand that. They say that they do not like being forced into prostitution to make money to feed their habit. The ramification of men needing to feed a heroin habit is a four-fold increase in armed robberies.

Every member here knows that when we go to community meetings at all times of the day and night we are leaving our families at home, as do many other people. We know that our families are subject to home invasions, burglaries, and all sorts of other crimes. Innocent people are being put at risk by the fact that both Federal and State Governments refused to consider new solutions to this problem. Until we look at these new solutions and come up with something that enables people who are failing at every level of every course, project and program to kick their habit, the enormous crime, death, home invasion and burglary rates will continue.

Mr Baker: What if they do not want to kick the habit?

Mr McGOWAN: As the member said in his speech, the Government is doing a range of things.

Mr Trenorden: You just said the speech was no good.

Mr McGOWAN: The Government is actually barely funding the naltrexone program, but people are trying these techniques. It does not work for some people. I support the use of naltrexone and I have seen it work; it will not work for most but it will for some. The problem is many people do not have the family support or the intestinal fortitude to put up with it. Until we consider heroin trials, we will not solve the problem.

Let us have a look at the great democracy, the United States. George Bush launched the war on drugs. All one has to do is watch the TV shows every night which show people involved in drugs being chased, arrested and having their doors bashed down. It is achieving nothing. One million people are in jail in America and the war on drugs is not working. This Government's policies are not working. As a younger person, I know that it will not work for many people and it is time that we looked at these other projects. It is time that this Government opened its mind to that because unless it does we will not come anywhere near solving the escalating crime rates in this State.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr Graham.

SELECT COMMITTEE ON CYCLONE PREPAREDNESS*Motion*

MR GRAHAM (Pilbara) [6.02 pm]: I move -

- (1) That a select committee of the Legislative Assembly be established to -
 - (a) review, consider, report upon and comment on the effectiveness or otherwise of procedures that are in place for communities in the cyclone prone areas of the State that are aimed at enabling those communities to cope with severe tropical cyclones and associated weather phenomena;
 - (b) review, consider, report upon and comment on the level of cyclone preparedness or otherwise in those communities, having regard to the ability of those communities to withstand the effects of severe tropical cyclones;
 - (c) review, consider, report upon and comment on the effectiveness or otherwise of the emergency management organisations that are responsible for making decisions in the event of severe tropical cyclones;
 - (d) review, consider, report upon and comment on the effectiveness or otherwise of the emergency management plans that are in place for those communities, including evacuation plans;
 - (e) review, consider, report upon and comment on the effectiveness or otherwise of the public awareness campaigns that are in place in those communities;
 - (f) review, consider, report upon and comment on the effectiveness or otherwise of the manner in which information is released to the public during cyclone season; and
 - (g) review, consider, report upon and comment on the effectiveness or otherwise of the effect of uniform building code regulations.
- (2) That the committee have the power to send for persons and papers, to sit on days over which the House stands adjourned, to move from place to place and to report from time to time, if it deems necessary.
- (3) That the committee present its final report by 28 November 1999.

After 10 years in this Parliament; after nearly 30 years living in either the South East Asian typhoon or monsoon belt and the northern half of Australia on both sides of the continent; having survived cyclones both on land and at sea; having survived cyclone Joan which was, up until cyclone Orson, the biggest cyclone that had crossed the State in Western Australia, certainly in living memory; and having been a veteran of cyclone Althea in Townsville - I think in 1981, I come to the motion with some knowledge of cyclones, albeit I do not claim to be an expert by any stretch of the imagination.

The Government wants to discuss tropical cyclone Vance. I know that because of two events: First, the public comments that the Government made; and, second, the fact that now for about a week government departments have been squirrelling away information and feeding it up to the Minister for Emergency Services about all the good things that happened during tropical cyclone Vance.

Mr Prince: Have they?

Mr GRAHAM: Yes. I am sure the minister has briefing notes hanging out of his fundamentals.

Mr Prince: No. I have one and I asked for it today, not before today.

Mr GRAHAM: I just make the point as I have made it privately to the minister: This motion is not about cyclone Vance.

Mr Baker: It is about overseas travel vouchers.

Mr GRAHAM: No. The member for Joondalup is a very cynical man. It is not about tropical cyclone Vance. All that tropical cyclone Vance has done as far as this effort for a select committee is concerned is made cyclones topical in the southern half of Western Australia. They have been topical in the northern half of Western Australia for many years. The select committee that I propose is about disaster management procedures as they relate to cyclones. Cyclones only affect the southern half of this State occasionally. When they do they get great TV coverage, many people are seen and photos are taken and all those things. However, in the northern half of Australia they are the biggest single influence on people's lives and safety in any given year because they are always likely. I am extremely disappointed that the Government has already rejected the call for a select committee; and it has done that publicly. I am bitterly disappointed for two reasons: First, there was no justification for the Government to reject the proposal, not even having seen the terms of reference, not even knowing what it was that I and the Opposition were calling for and, second, there is no doubt that a review of the cyclone procedures in this State is overdue. I will go through and explain that in great detail.

It is interesting when one reads the press release from the Minister for Emergency Services published on 19 April. It reads -

Emergency Services Minister Kevin Prince has dismissed as "arrant nonsense" Labor Party calls for a Parliamentary inquiry into the State's emergency procedures and preparedness for cyclones.

The words "arrant nonsense" are in inverted commas; I therefore presume that is a personal quote from the minister. Two paragraphs down the minister goes on to outline how his department is reviewing the State's emergency procedures and preparedness for cyclones.

Mr Prince: That is right.

Mr GRAHAM: What arrant nonsense, with respect to the minister.

Mr Prince: No, it is not.

Mr GRAHAM: It is arrant nonsense to say that there is no need for an inquiry and in the same press release announce an inquiry.

Mr Prince: You only have an inquiry when things have been badly handled. If they are handled well you do not need one.

Mr GRAHAM: I will come to that. Believe me, between now and knock-off time we will come to it at length.

Mr Prince: Are you going to speak for 60 minutes?

Mr GRAHAM: The minister will get an opportunity to speak. I would like to think that the minister would open up his mind, as the member for Hillarys is advocating that older and younger people do - I am not sure which category the minister falls into - and be a little receptive to something.

Mr Prince: I am in the prime of life; you are over the hill.

Mr Pendal: We call them seniors.

Mr Prince: We call them over the hill. The member for Pilbara and I are in the prime of life.

Mr GRAHAM: I think we have bipartisan support on that interjection.

The minister then goes on to talk about the comprehensive public education campaign and how successful it has been in the north west of the State. He then announces in the same press release how people do not understand what is happening in those publicity campaigns and that there is a need for legislation to compel them to go along with the campaign. The press release made me angry when I first saw it. That is neither here nor there; one should not change Governments' views because I get angry. However, the press release demonstrates a complete lack of understanding between the emergency service operatives in the northern half of the State and the minister and operatives in the southern half of the State. I will come back to that but I make that point. The press release goes on -

Mr Prince said new Emergency Services legislation was being drafted to empower emergency managers to compel residents in cyclone-prone areas to clear potentially hazardous materials such as sheet metal and unfastened sheds from their yards.

"While such powers currently exist under local government by-laws, it can be a protracted administrative process and emergency managers should have the power to act quickly in the event of an approaching cyclone," the Minister said.

Mr GRAHAM: I thank the minister; I have been saying that in this place for six years.

Mr Prince: That is why I quoted it.

Mr GRAHAM: As recently as September last year, the minister was arguing the exact opposite.

Mr Prince: Who, me?

Mr GRAHAM: Yes. After five years in here I had convinced the Minister for Local Government to get off his butt and do it after the Premier and the Cabinet told me to get the Shire of Roebourne's by-laws and implement them to fix the problem but they did not. When I drew up a private member's Bill to include something in the Act that this Government said could not work, we had discussions behind the Chair and I was allowed to withdraw that Bill and resubmit it in the minister's name, including a clause dealing with an appeal division which I argued against and which did not work. There was not one political shot in that process. We had simple, commonsense and bipartisan support to get a recalcitrant Government to deal with cyclones. Finally, the Minister for Local Government admitted his blue and I had to redraft the legislation.

We went through hours of discussions and we put the appeal system to the minister as opposed to the court. At the time I pointed out that it would not work because local government does not have the ticker to deal with it when times get rough. Members opposite voted me down, particularly the Minister for Police, who said the exact opposite. He picked up on comments made by the member for Burrup and said he agreed with him. I wanted the powers shifted from local government and given to the State Emergency Service, and the minister responsible chose not to do that.

What he is now doing and highlighting is what he should have done six years ago. This Government has made a bungle of the legislation on cyclones from day one because it did not and still will not listen to the people in the north west. If members opposite do not want to listen to me, at least they should listen to the people who do know. They are giving the minister the message and I will reinforce it.

The worst effect is that because of the bungling of this Government and its inability to put in place the legislation, the Port Hedland council had to foot the legal bill for the test case. The minister gave an undertaking at the time that he would look at paying that bill, but the Premier has not even responded to the council's letter.

I will explain why we should have a select committee, and I will go through the terms of reference in detail. First, it is an open process. It is not the people who are in power or those protecting their departments and reviewing their own

operations. It is someone outside the Parliament overseeing the operations of the bureaucracy. In addition, all the departments can be reviewed by a select committee. I am not talking about a debriefing by the participants as the minister suggests. Secondly, and if for no other reason, it is the fundamental role of this Parliament to check on the proceedings, the procedures and the legislation. What the Government is proposing is clearly the Government's reviewing its own operations.

Select committees have the power to deliver bipartisan support on major issues. The minister knows that because he has sat with me on select committees that I have chaired from opposition and watched that process work without political, public point scoring, working thoroughly through issues and bringing down recommendations and responses with which Governments can deal. Finally, and probably most importantly, a select committee process allows the public to have input. The minister is proposing a closed departmental debriefing. No way can the people of the north west have any say in that process, nor have they expressed an interest in doing so.

The first term of reference relates to the procedures. The minister can say legitimately that it is my job as the person arguing the case to say there is something wrong with the procedures. There is something wrong and the minister has recently received letters about the problems. I could go through all the anecdotal evidence. I could tell him about shops being open on one side of the street and closed on the other side; about people being stopped by the police when driving home from work; about emergency service operators being stopped by police; and about the police being in command when the officer concerned had been in the town for two weeks - he had no training, no experience and no idea. I do not mean any disrespect to the officer concerned, but he should never have been put in that position. I could talk about bottle shops being allowed to trade, and about aircraft taking off and landing during red alerts.

That detail is wonderfully encapsulated in a letter to the minister written by a man from Port Hedland. He outlined the situation with Cyclone Gwenda and pointed out how preparations could be made when cyclone alerts are broadcast. He stated -

That was not to be, hence an afternoon of chaos was initiated. This started with the police telephoning some local businesses to tell them to close, some news media being advised of red alert time tables and totally against the reality of the day, a red alert appeared approximately 4.00pm with the police still travelling the streets with lights/sirens active. Two hours later, they were still at it as people struggled to adapt to the surprise declaration.

He then refers to small business losing trade, and continues -

Mr Prince: When did this happen?

Mr GRAHAM: It relates to Cyclone Gwenda.

Mr Baker: Table the letter.

Mr GRAHAM: I cannot table documents. The minister has it; it was addressed to him and is dated 14 April.

Mr Baker: Who wrote it?

Mr GRAHAM: A bloke by the name of R.M. Guildford.

Mr Prince: When was Cyclone Gwenda?

Mr GRAHAM: This cyclone season. The letter continues -

Whilst some media proclaimed red alerts, others proclaimed blue, some media broadcast wind speeds of 250km others 100km. Misinformation is worse than no information as the depth of our preparations cannot be judged.

The *North West Telegraph* published an article headed "Cyclone alerts under fire".

Mr Prince: It is printed in Albany.

Mr GRAHAM: I know it is. This article is dated 14 April and states -

THE State Emergency Service has been criticised over its handling of alert procedures during Cyclone Gwenda last week.

It would be a good Labor man who put that up.

Mr Baker: Who was it?

Mr GRAHAM: The member's Treasurer.

Mr Baker: Peter Costello?

Mr GRAHAM: No, the real Treasurer. The article continues -

Arnold Carter, a former local volunteer emergency services coordinator for about 15 years, said the red alert status was called too early and prompted people to panic unnecessarily.

This person is a former shire president and former emergency services coordinator.

Mr Baker interjected.

Mr GRAHAM: He is smarter than the member for Joondalup. The article continues -

Mr Carter said upgrading the yellow alert status to red after just two hours gave residents no chance to make final preparations.

It goes on to say -

Mr Carter was also concerned local businesses did not know whether they were required to close on a yellow alert or on a red alert and what procedure they should follow.

The State Emergency Service explained its actions, and the report continues -

Ms Leete said police had given motorists latitude on the roads during the red alert allowing them to go home, the only people pulled over and told to get home were those driving around hours after red alert was called.

The minister cannot expect me, in the time available, to go through the chapter and verse of every cyclone alert in the north west in the past 25 years. He should trust me. When people such as Arnold Carter - I am not his biggest fan - bag the Liberal Government's processes on cyclones and small business people write to the minister saying that the cyclone system does not work, there is a fair chance that something is not right. I could go through a range of other anecdotal evidence about the procedures. I have just returned from Queensland where I spent three days visiting the James Cook University, the centre for disaster studies, the cyclone testing station and the emergency services department. Queensland's system is slick and refined compared with the system in Western Australia. I am not referring to the people involved but to the system and the procedures.

I make the point that the minister said that the "State Tropical Cyclone Emergency Management Plan" is the bible in this area. The minister had claimed that the plan was up to date and as I had a tattered, dog-eared copy of the plan I asked the Parliamentary Library to obtain for me the most up to date, as amended, tropical cyclone emergency management plan. I have it in my hand, and it is dated August 1996. It is three years old. It has no amendments. Therefore, either the systems that the minister claims have been updated after every cyclone have not changed in three years, or his department has given me the wrong information. There is no difference between the copy from the Parliamentary Library and my old copy.

I now refer to cyclone preparedness. If I had enough time - that is one of the problems with this place - I would take the minister chapter and verse through the preparedness standards in that document. A select committee could play a role that the State Emergency Service and a debriefing session cannot play. A select committee could actively go through each of the steps of preparedness activities set out by the SES and mark them off to assess how well the SES did them. That would be interesting. A select committee could also assess how well local government fared, and that would be interesting. It could assess how well the Health Department, Family and Children's Services, and the police each carry out the obligatory steps they are required to follow in accordance with the plan. The SES cannot do that, but a select committee could. I suggest that, even under another guise, as the minister has rejected this motion, he should find a way of reviewing that process because a department should not review itself in these matters. It is not able to do that.

Nothing can lower the potential for loss of life or damage from a cyclone more than the preparedness of the community to withstand it. I have already said that the Government has been off the speed for six years, and it is still not on it. I was started on this campaign by the Insurance Council of Australia because I had said that insurance premiums were too high in that area and it pointed out the risks. I cannot have a go at the Insurance Council because it is right. The very houses and the very buildings in Port Hedland that started me on this track are still sitting in the positions they were in six years ago. The Government has had no effect on the preparedness of those towns. The minister believes that the situation is satisfactory. I do not want to base all my comments on Port Hedland, because that would be misleading. There are towns other than Port Hedland, but it happens to be in the middle of the cyclone belt. The press release and the southern based officials of the SES say that everything is all right and working. The *North West Telegraph* carried the headline "Town was not ready: SES". The article stated -

Port Hedland SES local manager Yvonne Leete has slammed sectors of the community for not being prepared for last week's threat from cyclone Gwenda.

I am happy to give a copy of these press cuttings to the minister. The official public position of the SES in the north west is that the town was not ready, but the minister said that it was all right. The minister is wrong. In case the minister thinks I am concentrating on Port Hedland, I refer to another bad headline from the same newspaper - "TC Vance highlights complacency - SES". The article underneath it stated -

Karratha State Emergency Service personnel are concerned that despite extensive community awareness campaigns, some people remain complacent about the dangers of a cyclone.

That is when we come to the weasel words. The minister will say that that applies to only some people. However, that is newspaper-speak; the SES official was reported as saying -

"The majority of people have absolutely no perception of what a cyclone is all about," the Karratha manager of the Karratha SES unit, Steve Cable, said on Sunday.

Are people prepared? The official answer and the public answer from the State Emergency Service in the cyclone area of this State is that they are not. I could make a couple of hundred political points along the way. However, I am happy to provide the information to the minister privately. I raised this matter with Premier Court six years ago, and I raised it with the member for Wagin six years ago when he was Minister for Emergency Services. He reviewed the procedures in the department and said they were better. I raised it with the predecessor of the Minister for Police because the process is garbage and it demonstrably does not work. He said the same things that the minister is now saying. The minister says that

the Government will review the matter internally and have a debriefing, and it will be all right. The Premier has received letters from authorities and people in the north west, on which he has taken no action whatsoever. It is not good enough, and I will come back to that later.

I move to the effectiveness, or otherwise, of the emergency management organisations. We can go on about those, and those opposite will say what they tried to say in the press release and what the Premier attempted to say in here: "Here is the horrible Labor Party having a go at these wonderful people who have done such a great job in relation to the cyclone". That is absolute nonsense. It is like saying that no-one can ever look at the police because that person might have to look at a car accident. There were no criticisms of the operatives in Cyclone Vance. None was intended, none was meant, and none can be read into anything I have done.

Mr Prince interjected.

Mr GRAHAM: If the minister finds one public statement from me or the Labor Party that is critical of any of those individuals, I will apologise. He will not find it. I wrote to the Premier because I am concerned. I did not do these things publicly until now, until those opposite chose to call what we did political grandstanding. On 30 March I wrote a long letter to the Premier referring to the organisations and the difficulties I have about how cyclones are handled. I said -

In my view it is imperative that a study be one conducted of the dangers posed by cyclones in the susceptible parts of the State. One of the principal aims of such an audit would be to provide clear guidance what constitutes a danger in the event of a cyclone. Public statements by the authorities make it clear that this information is not getting into the communities at the moment.

That was five or six weeks ago, and I have received no response from the Premier - none whatsoever. This is not a political statement. It was not put up seeking a press release, or to get a run; it was from a local member of Parliament, raising a genuine issue of concern on behalf of his constituents in the north west, and the Premier could not be bothered answering it. A select committee can look at how the national aid arrangements are arrived at and how they operate.

Mr Prince: That is being handled now.

Mr GRAHAM: By whom?

Mr PRINCE: I set up a committee and the member for Ningaloo chairs it.

Mr GRAHAM: Is that political grandstanding?

Mr Prince: No.

Mr GRAHAM: Why not?

Mr Prince: He is a member in the area, and he knows what he is talking about.

Mr GRAHAM: I am a bloody member in the area; I know what I am talking about. Why can I not be involved?

Mr Prince: Because I needed a chairman, and he is the one.

Mr GRAHAM: That is not political grandstanding?

Mr Prince: No; it is not.

Mr GRAHAM: When I request a select committee to look into matters that affect the electorates in the north west, it is political grandstanding; when the minister appoints a member in a marginal seat to look at national arrangements, it is not.

Mr Prince: No, it is not.

Mr GRAHAM: I will tell the minister this, and I want it to be recorded: Those opposite have chosen to politicise natural disasters. No Government in this country has ever done that. This State Government is the first. We have only to remember the Ash Wednesday fires when Hawke and Fraser called off campaigns to look at natural disasters. Beazley and Howard can fly around to look at them, as did Keating and Peacock. The Premier and the Leader of the Opposition cannot. It should not be, and it was not to be.

Effectively, the principal rules for the State Emergency Service are set by policy option No 7 which in six years those opposite have not done much about. When they came into office, they looked at the policy we had written. They have reviewed it and said that it will do. It has not been changed significantly from what it was when we were in government. The Fire and Emergency Services Authority does not constitute the SES, other than it is a part of it.

Mr Prince: I will come to why it is not in the FESA. We need separate emergency services legislation.

Mr GRAHAM: There should be legislation. The Queensland Government has good counterdisaster legislation. We should have similar legislation. Those opposite have promised it for six years and have delivered nothing. A select committee could very easily have done that in an apolitical way. The situation would be significantly difficult.

The next point in the terms of reference required the select committee to look at emergency management plans, including the evacuation plans in place for communities in the north west, of which at the moment there is a paucity - a deadset shortage - because there is no requirement to plan effectively and no incentive to budget, and no authority checks plans and acts on them.

The Queensland legislation requires every local government authority to have a local counterdisaster plan to deal with all the counterdisaster measures within its area. We have no such requirements - none. The Queensland Act requires that plan to be prepared in consultation with and given to the local department of emergency services coordinator for approval. That department's officer is a paid professional, not a volunteer. No such organisation exists in Western Australia. We do not even have a dedicated helicopter to be used for natural disasters. The map I am holding up is an example of the kind of thing that can be done when a State Government and the Federal Government work together on disaster planning. There is no equivalent of that in Western Australia. This executive summary document is on CD-ROM. The operative who wrote that document can go to the building level in Cairns and tell people what will happen to a building, a street and a hospital in the event of storm surge. We have no such arrangement, no equivalent, in Western Australia. We are lucky if local government authorities simply record where their energy facilities are.

Mr Prince: I take it that you have all that structural information on a computerised database in graphic form. It sounds like an excellent system.

Mr GRAHAM: Yes, I do. It is 10 years in front of anything we have.

Mr Prince: I am taking note of what you have said, and your speech will be read.

Mr GRAHAM: It may be read, but by whom and what will be the consequence of it? My criticism of this Government is that this should not be a confrontationist argument about whether there should or should not be a review of these procedures, or a nonsensical discussion about whether someone is having a go at the coordinator in respect of one cyclone or another. It should have been accepted as a proposition being put forward by a local member of Parliament with a long track record on the issue, with legitimate concerns, and it should have been addressed as such.

The minister started by doing that. He is a little smarter than I sometimes give him credit for.

Mr McGowan: Slow down there, Larry!

Mr GRAHAM: I said "sometimes". An article in the country edition of *The West Australian* states -

Emergency Services Minister Kevin Prince said yesterday that he would consider the ALP's proposal.

Somehow between the country edition and the state edition of *The West Australian*, what we put forward has turned into being described as arrant nonsense. That is silly.

Let us talk about the public awareness campaigns. Emergency management plans have effect before, during and after the event. The Government has no plans after the event whatsoever. The way that the Liberal Government has handled emergencies since it has been in government is at best disjointed and dysfunctional because it depends on a degree of political grandstanding about what happens and whether relief will be provided. I can give examples of a minor bushfire in the hills attracting the attention of the Minister for Emergency Services and the Premier and a bucket of money. A minor cyclone in the north west did not even get a phone call from anyone in Government, no-one from Cabinet, no-one from the executive service, no-one from the State Emergency Service - not one phone call. That is politics at its basest. I will tell members opposite about cyclone Vance and some of the things the Government has not done after cyclone Vance. Members have seen the public comments made by the president of the Shire of Onslow. The Minister for Emergency Services should go from this session to his Premier and say, "Premier, how about responding to the letters from the Shire of Ashburton seeking financial assistance?" The shire wrote to the Premier seven days after cyclone Vance seeking money to get its community and public infrastructure back into gear. It still has not received a response from the Premier - no phone call, no letter - yet the member for Ningaloo is chairing the committee considering natural disaster aid. The council in the member for Ningaloo's electorate has received no money from this Government. That must be fixed. It has been waiting eight weeks for a response. That more than anything else I have said indicates that those processes need overhauling because if the system was organised with planning before and afterwards, triggers would be in place and money would flow and people would be committing resources from day one because they would not have to ask the Premier for funds. The Government knows that disasters will happen and that money is needed and what it must do to receive the federal arrangements. It has had six years to get the arrangements in place. Even if it did not like talking to the federal Labor Government, a federal Liberal Government has been in power for three years. In that time the Queensland Labor Party has been able to put arrangements in place with the federal Liberal Government, yet this Government has not. It has a backbencher in a marginal seat chairing a committee.

Incidentally, out of all that discussion and deliberation about warnings, alerts, planning and all those things that we have, the system of warnings and the system of making the public aware is failing. The Government's operatives in the north west admit it is failing, yet the SES in Perth and this Government do not. The SES's annual report addresses the effectiveness of campaigns, yet it asked only two questions; that is absolute nonsense. Compare that with the work that is done by the centre for disaster studies in Queensland where at the start and end of every cyclone season it does surveys to determine what people thought it meant at the start and what they thought it meant at the end. We do no such thing. The SES did a simple survey in conjunction with Edith Cowan University and asked people if they knew whether there were cyclones here and if they had to do something; that was the intent of it. Most people answered yes and that response was put in its annual report as a performance indicator that things are working. However, at the same time that the annual report is being distributed, the departmental officers in the north west are saying that it does not work. Who is right? It is certainly not the Perth-based SES.

Mr Prince: A number of people in that part of the world will not take any notice no matter what they are told and they will not listen until it hits them.

Mr GRAHAM: I have been putting that argument to this Government for six years and it has chosen not to act on it. It has made conscious cabinet decisions not to do what has been put before it.

Mr Prince: Have you sat in the cabinet room and heard us?

Mr GRAHAM: The Government must have. It made cabinet decisions to do the exact opposite of what was put forward. The Government has done that for six years. It is not nonsense, it is a fact. Neither of the two major centres in the north west which were referred to in the headlines was ready for a cyclone in the middle of the cyclone season.

Let us talk about the public information because it needs reviewing for these reasons. Back in the good old days, only the ABC radio station operated into the north west of the State - I think it was VLW8. At a quarter past the hour the weather bureau issued cyclone warnings. Everybody listened to the cyclone warning system. That is now much more convoluted. We now have both commercial and ABC television, and some lucky areas in which the Liberal Government has actually honoured its commitments have SES television. WIN and GWN commercial television stations are both syndicated out of areas other than the north west. We have a plethora of radio stations, both commercial, ABC, AM and FM, local, regional and national syndicated and networked out of places all over Australia, but our system of cyclone warnings is not as sophisticated as that. That is a major difficulty for the emergency services and local authorities in the north west of this State. Only the State - and I argue only a select committee but the minister has a different view - could review all of those and make the recommendations necessary for those networks and stations to be accessed by the emergency services authorities. What is really needed is for the local emergency services organisation in, say, Derby to be able to break into programming that comes out of a radio station based in Sydney. It might want to interrupt, for example, the John Laws show, or one of the shows syndicated out of Sydney with cyclone warnings. Unless the emergency service authorities have that sort of clout and power behind them to be able to interfere in that program, large lumps of the community are simply not made aware of the cyclone warnings. It is not that they do not care; it is that people have lives. They must get on with their business and with their living. They get their information from public broadcast systems. If it is not put on all of them - this includes Aboriginal radio stations which operate in Aboriginal languages - people do not receive the message. The authorities are making it clear that people are not receiving the messages. The last terms of reference for the select committee would be to examine the effect or otherwise of the uniform building codes.

An integral part of that examination is the enforcement of those provisions. We have had the codes since shortly after cyclone Tracy hit Darwin. About 1975 or early 1976 the codes came into existence, and they have been updated and upgraded since then. One point that the Insurance Council of Australia Ltd made to me was that there is no point having these codes if people build in accordance with them but subsequent additions are not monitored. If subsequent additions to a building do not comply with the codes and the order to remove them is not enforced, the effect of the building codes is negated. The damage caused by that first building increases the damage to all other buildings.

The insurance industry in Australia is examining insurance in North Queensland by going through building by building insurance. The premium will be dependent upon the building and its location rather than simply the town or region in which a person lives. There are some implications as a result of that. There needs to be some discussion between the Parliament, the State, the insurance industry and the regulators.

The minister may dispute some of the detail of what I have put forward, but he cannot dispute the whole package. He will not stand up in this place and say that there is nothing wrong with the cyclone procedures in this State and that the legislative framework within which they operate is the optimum framework that the State could produce. He will not say that. The question that flows from that is what to do about it. With the relief arrangements, we already know what the Government does. It politicises them and grabs a marginal seat member and puts him in charge of them so that if some arrangement comes out of them he can make an announcement and be the hero who gets the Government re-elected. That is the trite, nonsensical, petty political view that this Government has introduced into disaster management. No other Government has sought to politicise cyclones, natural disasters and the surrounding events in the way that this Government has. It is a retrograde step for Western Australia.

However, has the Opposition put forward a justified case or is it, as the minister suggests, arrant nonsense? When the minister speaks, I would ask him to do a number of things. He will have some time. Firstly, will he acknowledge that the system is not as good as it could be?

Mr Prince: Acknowledged.

Mr GRAHAM: Secondly, will he acknowledge the need for an extensive review, not just a debriefing?

Mr Prince: I will debate that.

Mr GRAHAM: If the minister does not acknowledge that, there is no point proceeding with the third issue, which is that a review is best carried out by a select committee of this Parliament operating, as select committees in this Parliament do - and do very well - behind closed doors without petty politics, and reviewing procedures and practices in the interests of the lives and property of people of this State. It is a fundamental requirement of government that it does what it can to protect the lives of its citizens.

MR PRINCE (Albany - Minister for Emergency Services) [6.54 pm]: Having listened to the member for Pilbara at some length on this matter, I find there are a number of points about which he and I would agree and a number about which we would take issue. I ask the member to listen to this: When he was outlining the reasons to establish a select committee, the second point he made was that a select committee is an open process. In closing, he just said that a select committee is best because it is behind closed doors. His argument is muddled.

Mr Graham: You are playing with semantics.

Mr PRINCE: I am not playing with semantics. I sat on a select committee with the member. I saw him chair that committee, and he did a good job. Without any question at all, it was one of the best pieces of work in which I have been involved in this Parliament, in the parliamentary process sense. The issue concerned the closure or non-closure of Wittenoom. Action needed to be taken on this issue, and nothing had been done for a long time and arguably should have been. In other words, it was an issue where there was inaction or no action or wrong action - more likely, nothing was being done - and the member presented a convincing case that "something should be done", and therefore we should have a select committee to examine all the issues and come up with a series of recommendations that the Government would accept and implement over a period.

Select committees in this place have been used for many different subject areas, as is proper, and in many respects there has been a general acceptance that they are by far the best process in place to deal with issues of public concern or the law or whatever the case may be. For example, the recent review into the in-vitro fertilisation legislation is something I proposed when I was the Minister for Health, and a select committee was subsequently set up. Never before in the history of the Parliament has a select committee been used for what is otherwise a statutory review of legislation. That was an appropriate thing to do, and the report that committee presented, after a great deal of deliberation over a long period, is a first-class piece of work. The report prepared by the committee that inquired into road safety, in like fashion, was extensive and took a long time. The committee considered a plethora of matters. It was a watershed and will undoubtedly guide new legislation in that area over a long period.

We have only about two minutes remaining. I intend to seek that the debate be adjourned so that we can continue it at some other time. However, when the member's proposal for a select committee was put forward, it was put forward by press release from the Leader of the Opposition to *The West Australian* on a Sunday afternoon. I know that Sunday afternoon is opposition leader stunt time. It has been for six years; it probably was before the change of Government.

Mr Barnett: It was for four years before that too.

Mr PRINCE: The Leader of the House confirms that it was for four years before that. Therefore, for the past decade Sunday afternoon has been stunt time for the Leader of the Opposition. Here we have on Sunday afternoon a stunt by the Leader of the Opposition, wanting a select committee to inquire into the mess that is emergency management in cyclones. That is the way it was presented and the way it was handled publicly. If the member for Pilbara had followed the normal process when dealing with select committees and had come into the House and given notice, as he has subsequently done, and argued his case, it may be that he would have been better heard. However, firstly, he was not to be seen when it was first made public; secondly, it was done politically. The member spoke about who politicised this exercise. He may not have done, but his side of politics has. What does he expect by way of a response to the Sunday afternoon stunt? The answer is that it was just after cyclone Vance had gone through and cyclone Gwenda had finished. It was just after we had encountered a cyclone season that had more cyclones, more destructive cyclones, and more powerful cyclones and probably the longest season ever from early November through to April. It was possibly not the longest, but it was certainly the most destructive.

Mr Graham: I will give you a bit of credit, because you did forecast that at the start of the season.

Mr PRINCE: Exactly. I said that would happen, because of the information that had been given to me by the Bureau of Meteorology last August-September. If the Opposition comes out with this politicised, apparent grandstanding, what does it expect?

Mr Graham: I expect you to live up to the commitment that you gave in the country edition; that is, to consider what we put forward.

Mr PRINCE: I did; and what was put forward by way of political grandstanding was arrant nonsense, because we do not need to have a select committee of inquiry into the disaster that is emergency management, because plainly and self-evidently it was not a disaster. It was extremely well handled during that five months. What should happen and is happening now is a process of debriefing which involves outside people running it; and they will talk to the member. I seek leave to continue my remarks at a later stage.

[Leave granted for speech to be continued.]

Debate thus adjourned.

PETROLEUM SAFETY BILL

Returned

Bill returned from the Council with amendments

House adjourned at 7.01 pm

APPENDIX A

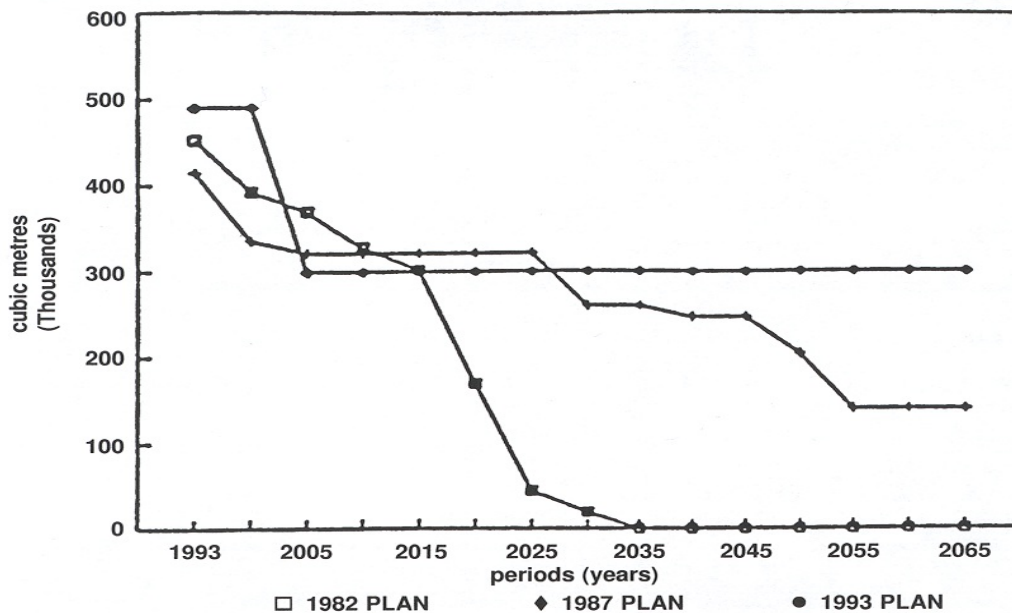
Native Forest Management
and
The Future for the
Native Hardwood Timber Industry
A Ministerial Response to
The Report of the Scientific and Administrative Committee
Established Under Ministerial Conditions In respect of CALM's 1992 Forest Management Proposals

Hon Kevin Minson MLA
Minister for the Environment

5 August 1993

Long-term Sawlog Yield Scenarios
(from the last three management plans)

**LONG TERM JARRAH SAWLOG YIELD
SUPPLY SCENARIOS FROM THE LAST 3 PLANS**



TIMBER PRODUCTION

IN

WESTERN AUSTRALIA

A Strategy to take W.A.'s south-west
Forests into the 21st Century

This plan was adopted by the Lands and Forests Commission
on 9th December 1987.

TABLE 15

PROJECTED SUPPLY OF JARRAH SAWLOGS IN THE SOUTHERN FOREST REGION

Volume (cubic metres)

YEAR	1ST GRADE	2ND GRADE	SHORT LOGS	TOTAL SAW- LOGS	COMMENTS
1987	199 000	10 000	0	209 000)
1988	150 000	23 000	0	173 000)
1989	150 000	23 000	0	173 000	) Period of Plan.
1990	150 000	23 000	0	173 000)
1991	150 000	23 000	11 000	184 000)
1992	150 000	23 000	11 000	184 000	) Supply to be reviewed
1993	150 000	23 000	11 000	184 000	] following inventory results
1994	150 000	23 000	11 000	184 000]
1995	150 000	23 000	11 000	184 000	] Subject to review
1996	100 000	15 000	6 000	121 000	] but not less than.
1997	100 000	15 000	6 000	121 000	] Plan expires end 1997.
1998	100 000	15 000	6 000	121 000	
1999	100 000	15 000	6 000	121 000	Revision of Plan required.
2000	100 000	15 000	6 000	121 000	Figures beyond here are
2001	100 000	15 000	6 000	121 000	indicative only and do not
2002	100 000	15 000	6 000	121 000	represent a commitment to
2003	100 000	15 000	6 000	121 000	harvest the set amounts shown.
2004	100 000	15 000	6 000	121 000	
2005	100 000	15 000	6 000	121 000	
2006-2010	100 000	15 000	6 000	121 000	
2011-2020	100 000	15 000	6 000	121 000	
2021-2030)	Total Volume Only Projected			48 000	
2031-2040)				48 000	

TABLE 17

PROJECTED SUPPLY OF JARRAH SAWLOGS FROM THE CENTRAL AND NORTHERN FOREST REGIONS

Volume (cubic metres)

YEAR	1ST GRADE	2ND GRADE	SHORT LOGS	SMALL DIA. & RE- GROWTH SAW LOGS	TOTAL SAW- LOGS	COMMENTS
1987	350 000	35 000	0	0	385 000)
1988	309 000	45 000	0	0	354 000)
1989	309 000	45 000	0	0	354 000	) Plan Commitment
1990	309 000	45 000	0	0	354 000)
1991	309 000	38 000	15 000	36 000	398 000)
1992	309 000	38 000	15 000	36 000	398 000	) Review following
1993	250 000	38 000	15 000	36 000	339 000	] inventory results
1994	250 000	38 000	15 000	36 000	339 000]
1995	250 000	38 000	15 000	36 000	339 000	] Subject to review but
1996	200 000	30 000	12 000	36 000	278 000	] not less than.
1997	200 000	30 000	12 000	36 000	278 000	] Plan expires.
1998	200 000	30 000	12 000	36 000	278 000	
1999	200 000	30 000	12 000	36 000	278 000	Revision of Plan
2000	200 000	30 000	12 000	36 000	278 000	required. Figures beyond
2001	180 000	26 000	11 000	36 000	253 000	here are indicative only
2002	180 000	26 000	11 000	36 000	253 000	and do not represent
2003	180 000	26 000	11 000	36 000	253 000	a commitment to harvest
2004	180 000	26 000	11 000	36 000	253 000	the set amounts shown.
2005	180 000	26 000	11 000	36 000	253 000	
2006-2010	180 000	26 000	11 000	36 000	253 000	
2011-2020	180 000	26 000	11 000	36 000	253 000	
2021-2030	115 000	18 000	8 000	70 000	239 000	
2031-2040	50 000	7 000	2 000	140 000	195 000	

Figure 6(b)

THE LONG TERM PROJECTED SUPPLY OF JARRAH SAWLOGS FROM THE CENTRAL AND NORTHERN FOREST REGIONS

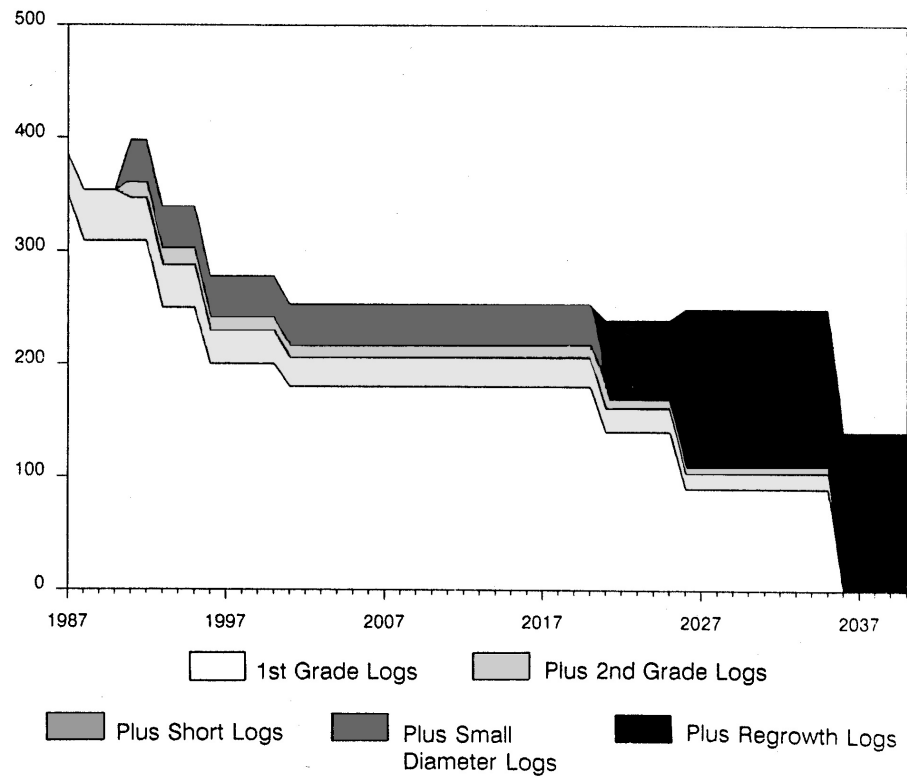
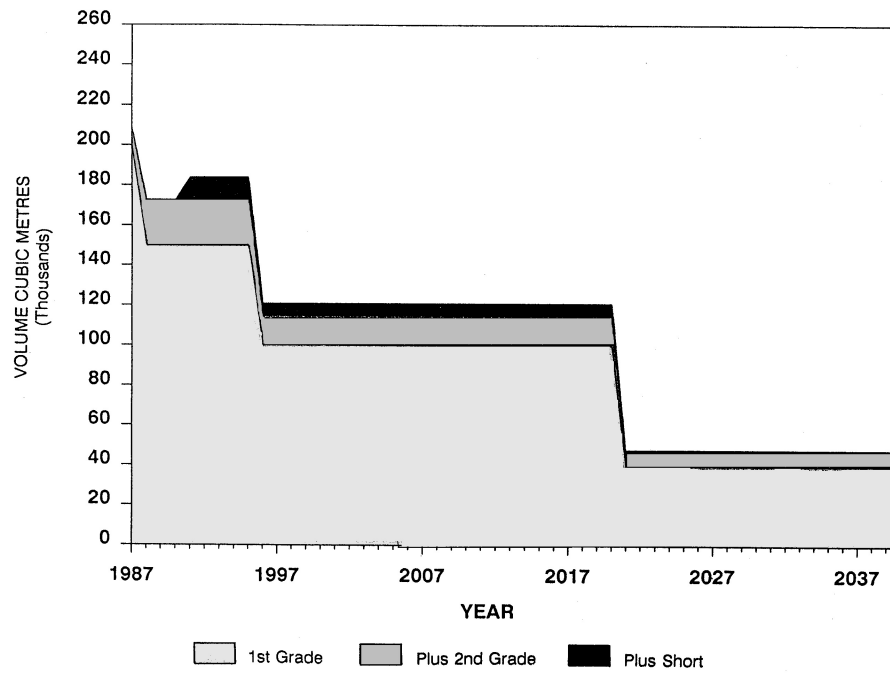


Figure (4b)

THE LONG TERM PROJECTED SUPPLY OF JARRAH SAWLOGS IN THE SOUTHERN FOREST REGION

JARRAH SAW LOG SUPPLY

YEAR	ALP TIMBER STRATEGY m ³	LIBERAL TIMBER STRATEGY m ³	RFA m ³
1987	594 000	--	--
1993	456 000	490 000	--
1999	345 000	490 000	324 000
2004	321 000	490 000	286 000

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Questions and answers are as supplied to Hansard.

HORMONE GROWTH PROMOTANTS, ADMINISTRATION TO LIVESTOCK

1937. Dr CONSTABLE to the Minister for Primary Industry:

With reference to question on notice No 3496 (2)(c) of 1998, is the testing to monitor usage and effect of HGP's on livestock, carried out by the National Residues Survey (NRS) Section, based on internationally accepted and applied scientific practice?

Mr HOUSE replied:

The National Residues Survey (NRS) requires that all testing laboratories hold National Association of Testing Authorities Australia (NATA) accreditation. NRS monitoring of HGP use in livestock is accepted internationally.

STOCKFEED, LISTING OF INGREDIENTS

1939. Dr CONSTABLE to the Minister for Primary Industry:

- (1) Is there legislation or a regulation for all the ingredients and additives of stockfeed to be listed on containers of stockfeed items?
- (2) If the answer to (1) above is no, is the Government currently considering such a regulation?

Mr HOUSE replied:

- (1) The legislative labelling requirements are: that the nutritive value of the feed be specified and any veterinary chemicals added must be on the label, along with directions for use. Regulations specify additives which are prohibited, and maximum allowable levels for other additives. There are also maximum levels listed for adulterants, which relate to the quality of the ingredients used in the stockfeed. The regulations are based on the recommendations of the National Working Party on Animal Feedstuffs, with the aim of harmonising State requirements for stockfeeds.
- (2) Not applicable.

GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCIES, EMPLOYEES UNDER 21 YEARS OF AGE

2037. Mr BROWN to the Minister for Primary Industry; Fisheries:

How many employees under the age of 21 years were recruited by each department and agency under the Minister's control in the -

- (a) 1997-98 financial year; and
- (b) 1998-99 financial year (to date)?

Mr HOUSE replied:

Agriculture Western Australia:

- (a) 83
- (b) 91

Fisheries Western Australia:

- (a)-(b) 7

GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCIES, EMPLOYEES UNDER 21 YEARS OF AGE

2039. Mr BROWN to the Minister for Planning; Employment and Training; Heritage:

How many employees under the age of 21 years were recruited by each department and agency under the Minister's control in the -

- (a) 1997-98 financial year; and
- (b) 1998-99 financial year (to date)?

Mr KIERATH replied:

Planning:

Ministry for Planning

(a)-(b) Nil.

Western Australian Planning Commission

(a)-(b) Nil.

Office of the Minister for Planning (Planning Appeals)

(a)-(b) Nil.

East Perth Redevelopment Authority
(a)-(b) Nil.

Subiaco Redevelopment Authority
(a)-(b) Nil.

Training:

Western Australian Department of Training
(a) 40
(b) 25

Central Metropolitan College of TAFE
(a) 39
(b) 16

West Coast College of TAFE
(a) 31
(b) 17

South East Metropolitan College of TAFE
(a) 51
(b) 36

South Metropolitan College of TAFE
(a) 57
(b) 36

Midland College of TAFE
(a) 2
(b) 0

Central West Regional College of TAFE
(a) 6
(b) 8

Great Southern Regional College of TAFE
(a) 6
(b) 11

Hedland College
(a) 4
(b) 6

Karratha College
(a)-(b) Nil.

South West Regional College of TAFE
(a) 28
(b) 9

Heritage:

Heritage Council of Western Australia
(a)-(b) Nil.

GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCIES, CASH PROFILING

2140. Mr BROWN to the Minister for Planning; Employment and Training; Heritage:

- (1) Has the Government/Under Treasurer introduced a new process of financial management incorporating cash profiling on a fortnightly basis for the whole financial year, and an exception-reporting mechanism against that profile?
- (2) Will the Minister provide all of the latest documents necessary to understand the profiling of the departments and agencies under the Minister's control?
- (3) If not, why not?

Mr KIERATH replied:

- (1)-(3) Please refer to the response to question on notice 2134 of 9 March 1999.

EMPLOYMENT, FULL-TIME

2208. Mr BROWN to the Minister for Employment and Training:

- (1) Is the Minister aware of the *BankWest Review* of January 1999, volume 5, number 1?
- (2) Is the Minister aware that in discussing the unemployment rate for this State the bank observes "full-time jobs growth has all but evaporated, but part-time employment grew by around nine percent in the year to November 1998"?
- (3) Is the Bank accurate in making this statement?

(4) If not, why not?

(5) If so, what initiatives has the State Government developed to create full time jobs?

Mr KIERATH replied:

I refer the member to the reply to question number 2207.

GRANT THORNTON, CONTRACTS

2219. Ms MacTIERNAN to the Minister for Planning; Employment and Training; Heritage:

(1) How many contracts have been awarded to Grant Thornton since 1 January 1997?

(2) For each contract, will the Minister state -

- (a) the project the contract was awarded for;
- (b) the original contract cost;
- (c) the actual final cost of the contract;
- (d) the date the contract was awarded and the date it was completed; and
- (e) whether the contract went out to tender, and if not, why not?

Mr KIERATH replied:

Planning:

Ministry for Planning

- (1) Nil.
- (2) Not applicable.

Western Australian Planning Commission

- (1) Nil.
- (2) Not applicable.

Office of the Minister for Planning (Planning Appeals)

- (1) Nil.
- (2) Not applicable.

East Perth Redevelopment Authority

- (1) Nil.
- (2) Not applicable.

Subiaco Redevelopment Authority

- (1) Nil.
- (2) Not applicable.

Training:

Western Australian Department of Training

- (1) Nil.
- (2) Not applicable.

Central Metropolitan College of TAFE

- (1) Nil.
- (2) Not applicable.

West Coast College of TAFE

- (1) Nil.
- (2) Not applicable.

South East Metropolitan College of TAFE

- (1) Nil.
- (2) Not applicable.

South Metropolitan College of TAFE

- (1) Nil.
- (2) Not applicable.

Midland College of TAFE

- (1) Nil.
- (2) Not applicable.

Central West College of TAFE

- (1) Nil.
- (2) Not applicable.

Great Southern Regional College of TAFE

- (1) Nil.
- (2) Not applicable.

Hedland College

- (1) Nil.
- (2) Not applicable.

Karratha College

- (1) Nil.
- (2) Not applicable.

South West Regional College of TAFE

- (1) Nil.
(2) Not applicable.

Heritage:

Heritage Council of Western Australia

- (1) Nil.
(2) Not applicable.

GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCIES, LEVEL ONE EMPLOYEES

2285. Mr RIEBELING to the Minister for Planning; Employment and Training; Heritage:

In relation to the employment status of Level One employees of the agencies falling within the Minister's responsibility -

- (a) what is the total number of Level One employees at each agency as at 9 March 1999; and
(b) of these employees, how many were -
(i) permanent full time; and
(ii) on short term contract?

Mr KIERATH replied:

Planning:

Ministry for Planning

- (a) 35
(b) (i) 28
(ii) 7

Western Australian Planning Commission

- (a) Nil.
(b) (i)-(ii) Not applicable.

East Perth Redevelopment Authority

- (a) One.
(b) (i) One.
(ii) Nil.

Subiaco Redevelopment Authority

- (a) Nil.
(b) (i)-(ii) Not applicable.

Training:

Western Australian Department of Training

- (a) 100
(b) (i) 54
(ii) 37
(9 are permanent part time)

Central Metropolitan College of TAFE

- (a) 36
(b) (i) 25
(ii) 11

West Coast College of TAFE

- (a) 112
(b) (i) 87
(ii) 25

South East Metropolitan College of TAFE

- (a) 67
(b) (i) 34
(ii) 19
(14 are permanent part time)

South Metropolitan College of TAFE

- (a) 63
(b) (i) 29
(ii) 12
(22 are permanent part time)

Midland College of TAFE

- (a) 31
(b) (i) 18
(ii) 13

Central West College of TAFE

- (a) 20
(b) (i) 3
(ii) 16
(1 is permanent part time)

Great Southern Regional College of TAFE

- (a) 28
 (b) (i) 5
 (ii) 20
 (3 are permanent part time)

Hedland College

- (a) 17
 (b) (i) 5
 (ii) 12

Karratha College

- (a) 13
 (b) (i) 6
 (ii) 2
 (5 are permanent part time)

South West Regional College of TAFE

- (a) 39
 (b) (i) 5
 (ii) 31
 (3 are permanent part time)

Heritage:

Heritage Council of Western Australia

- (a) 2
 (b) (i)-(ii) 1

MINISTERS OF THE CROWN, FREE TICKETS TO SPORTING EVENTS

2319. Mr GRAHAM to the Minister for Planning; Employment and Training; Heritage:

- (1) Has any sporting club or organisation provided the Minister with free tickets to any major sporting events in Western Australia?
- (2) If so -
- (a) to which events were the tickets provided; and
 (b) on how many occasions have tickets been provided?

Mr KIERATH replied:

- (1) All members of Parliament, and the Minister in particular, receive hundreds of invitations to attend sporting, arts and social events every year. Whilst the Minister tries to attend as many events as possible, regrettably this is not always possible.
- (2) (a)-(b) This information is not readily available. Provision of this information would require considerable research which would divert staff away from their normal duties and I am not prepared to allocate the State's resources to provide a response. If the member has a specific enquiry I will endeavour to provide a reply.

MINISTERS OF THE CROWN, FREE TICKETS TO SPORTING EVENTS

2333. Mr GRAHAM to the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Justice:

- (1) Has any sporting club or organisation provided the Minister with free tickets to any major sporting events in Western Australia?
- (2) If so -
- (a) to which events were the tickets provided; and
 (b) on how many occasions have tickets been provided?

Mrs van de KLASHORST replied:

The Minister for Justice has provided the following reply:

- (1) All members of Parliament, and the Minister in particular, receive hundreds of invitations to attend sporting, arts and social events every year. Whilst the Minister tries to attend as many events as possible, regrettably this is not always possible.
- (2) (a)-(b) This information is not readily available. Provision of this information would require considerable research which would divert staff away from their normal duties and I am not prepared to allocate the State's resources to provide a response. If the member has a specific enquiry I will endeavour to provide a reply.

FRINGE BENEFITS TAX RULES

2374. Mr BROWN to the Minister for Commerce and Trade:

- (1) Is the Minister aware of an article that appeared in *The West Australian* on Wednesday 10 March 1999 concerning new fringe benefit tax rules giving business a jolt?

- (2) Is the Minister aware that the proposed rules will require specified benefits, such as cars and expense payments for electricity, gas and school fees to be grossed up and identified as a separate entry on employees group certificates?
- (3) Will this new requirement add to the administration costs of business?
- (4) What representations have been made by the State Government to the Federal Government to modify the rule so that it does not have a significant impact on business administrative costs?
- (5) What was the nature of the representations made?
- (6) When were the representations made?

Mr COWAN replied:

See answer provided to 2375. This question is identical.

GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCIES, CREDIT CARD USE

2409. Mr CARPENTER to the Minister representing the Attorney General:

In relation to the use of Government credit cards -

- (a) have any credit cardholders either working in the Ministerial office or with a Department/Agency for which the Attorney General has responsibility used their cards -
 - (i) for personal use; or
 - (ii) to gain frequent flyer points; fly buys or similar benefits;
- (b) if yes, will the Attorney General provide details of this use;
- (c) if not, why not?

Mr PRINCE replied:

The Attorney General has provided the following reply:

- (a)-(c) I refer the member to the answer to Assembly Question Without Notice 627 asked on 16 March 1999.

GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCIES, CREDIT CARD USE

2413. Mr CARPENTER to the Minister for Planning; Employment and Training; Heritage:

In relation to the use of Government credit cards -

- (a) have any credit cardholders either working in the Ministerial office or with a Department/Agency for which the Minister has responsibility used their cards -
 - (i) for personal use; or
 - (ii) to gain frequent flyer points; fly buys or similar benefits;
- (b) if yes, will the Minister provide details of this use;
- (c) if not, why not?

Mr KIERATH replied:

- (a)-(c) I refer the member to the answer to Assembly Question Without Notice 627 asked on 16 March 1999.

GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCIES, CREDIT CARD USE

2423. Mr CARPENTER to the Minister for Police; Emergency Services:

In relation to the use of Government credit cards -

- (a) have any credit cardholders either working in the Ministerial office or with a Department/Agency for which the Minister has responsibility used their cards -
 - (i) for personal use; or
 - (ii) to gain frequent flyer points; fly buys or similar benefits;
- (b) if yes, will the Minister provide details of this use;
- (c) if not, why not?

Mr PRINCE replied:

- (a)-(c) I refer the member to the answer to Assembly Question Without Notice 627 asked on 16 March 1999.

GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCIES, CREDIT CARD USE

2424. Mr CARPENTER to the Minister representing the Minister for the Arts:

In relation to the use of Government credit cards -

- (a) have any credit cardholders either working in the Ministerial office or with a Department/Agency for which the Minister has responsibility used their cards -
 - (i) for personal use; or
 - (ii) to gain frequent flyer points; fly buys or similar benefits;
- (b) if yes, will the Minister provide details of this use;
- (c) if not, why not?

Mrs EDWARDES replied:

The Minister for the Arts has provided the following reply:

- (a)-(c) I refer the member to the answer to Assembly Question Without Notice 627 asked on 16 March 1999.

GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCIES, CREDIT CARD USE

2427. Mr CARPENTER to the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Justice:

In relation to the use of Government credit cards -

- (a) have any credit cardholders either working in the Ministerial office or with a Department/Agency for which the Minister has responsibility used their cards -
 - (i) for personal use; or
 - (ii) to gain frequent flyer points; fly buys or similar benefits;
- (b) if yes, will the Minister provide details of this use;
- (c) if not, why not?

Mrs van de KLASHORST replied:

The Minister for Justice has provided the following reply:

- (a)-(c) I refer the member to the answer to Assembly Question Without Notice 627 asked on 16 March 1999.

MINIM COVE RAILWAY CUTTING

2439. Dr EDWARDS to the Minister for Planning:

- (1) Is the Minister aware that the Minim Cove railway cutting was recommended for preservation in the Vlamingh Parklands Concept summary, October 1998, page 27?
- (2) Is the Minister aware that the current concept plan for Minim Cove put forward by the Government developer LandCorp, shows the cutting buried under metres of soil?
- (3) Will the Minister take immediate action to ensure that the final Vlamingh Parklands concept is preserved and deny LandCorp the levels required to bury this icon?

Mr KIERATH replied:

- (1)-(2) Yes.
- (3) The Western Australian Planning Commission who is responsible for approving applications for subdivisions considered the LandCorp subdivision proposal including the Vlamingh Parklands recommendations, and heritage issues, on 23 March 1999. It was not appropriate that I directed the Commission on its consideration of this matter.

CONTRACTORS, RETAIL GENERIC SAFETY TRAINING INDUCTION COURSE

2441. Mr BROWN to the Minister for Employment and Training:

- (1) Is the Minister aware that some larger retail outlets have advised their contractors they will be required to have their (the contractors) employees undergo the retail generic safety training induction course conducted by the Chamber of Commerce and Industry from 1 March 1999?
- (2) Is the Minister aware the short course costs \$125 which is beyond the capacity to pay of some small contractors who are engaged for one off events?
- (3) What action does the Government intend to take to protect the interests of contractors so they will not be required to comply with such demands?

Mr KIERATH replied:

- (1)-(3) This question relates to a private sector commercial operation. The Government has no regulatory role to play in the matter.

LEIGHTON MARSHALLING YARDS

2521. Dr EDWARDS to the Minister for Planning:

I refer to tenders currently being assessed by Westrail for the redevelopment of the Leighton Marshalling Yards, which may include -

- (a) the realignment of Port Beach Road to allow development on the current Port Beach Road site;
- (b) the development of a resort/convention complex on the Port Beach Road site;
- (c) the development of multi-storey housing on the Port Beach Road site; and
- (d) the development of new jetties on Leighton and Port Beaches,

and I ask -

- (i) is the Minister confident that the successful tender will, as stated in the Vlamingh Parklands Final Report, give "a generous allocation of additional open space to cater for the recreational requirements of the future population"; or
- (ii) is the Minister concerned that "there appears to be a lack of useable open space outside the beach area and corridors"?

Mr KIERATH replied:

- (i) Yes.
- (ii) No. The North Fremantle peninsula was the subject of an extensive study culminating in the *Fremantle Regional Strategy* report which was released in December 1994. The Strategy provides an overall framework for the future development of the Fremantle region. Although not a fixed and rigid blueprint, it is a statement of the broad principles and objectives for future development of the Fremantle region and provides a regional context within which more detailed regional and local planning can take place. The proposals contained in the Strategy will need to be progressively refined through more detailed planning. The Strategy recommends the establishment of a proposed integrated parkland network within the peninsula to provide public open space linkages between the Swan River and the coast. *The Vlamingh Parklands* report, which is based on the recommendations of the Fremantle Regional Strategy, provides greater definition to the Strategy recommendations via the concept plan. In addition to its support for the public open space linkages, the Strategy also recommends the realignment of Port Beach Road to a position adjacent to the Perth-Fremantle passenger railway. The realignment of Port Beach Road further from the coast will enhance the coastal environs and amenity by removing regional through traffic from the coastal recreation areas. Westrail, as custodian of the Leighton marshalling yard, is currently investigating options for progressing planning for the future development of the yard when it is no longer required for its railway purposes. In this regard any proposals for its future development will need to have full regard to the recommendations of the *Fremantle Regional Strategy* and the associated *Vlamingh Parklands* report. I am convinced of the benefits of forward planning and confident that the planning process will deliver a balanced outcome that is responsible and sensitive to the overall interest of the community.

CURTIN UNIVERSITY, ARTS COURSES AT KALGOORLIE CAMPUS

2524. Ms ANWYL to the Minister for Employment and Training:

- (1) What amount of funding has been made available to Curtin University to provide Arts Courses at the Kalgoorlie Campus for each of the following years -
 - (i) 1993;
 - (ii) 1994;
 - (iii) 1995;
 - (iv) 1996;
 - (v) 1997;
 - (vi) 1998; and
 - (vii) 1999?
- (2) Is the Minister aware that there have been cut-backs to Arts Courses offered by Curtin University, Kalgoorlie Campus?

Mr KIERATH replied:

- (1) Prior to 1997, the Kalgoorlie College was not a Campus of Curtin University. It was an Independent Community College primarily funded directly by Treasury, however, the Department of Training has records of actual delivery going back to 1995. Since 1997, the Department of Training has been funding the Kalgoorlie Campus. However, the college funding model does not directly fund Arts Courses but determines 'bottom line' funding for the College based on its overall profile of delivery. The most appropriate measure for comparing delivery in Arts courses for Kalgoorlie Campus from year to year is the College's actual delivery in Student Curriculum Hours (SCH) in Visual and Performing Arts for the years 1995 to 1998 and the Colleges' planned Delivery for 1998 and 1999.

	Actual SCH	Planned SCH
1995	50,848	---
1996	56,285	---
1997	41,678	---
1998	49,462	56,012
1999	---	46,012

- (2) The Kalgoorlie College requested a decrease in its planned delivery in Visual and Performing Arts so that it could increase its delivery in Occupational Areas with higher employment outcomes. As the College's planned delivery in 1998 represented 11% of the College's delivery profile compared to State and National averages of approximately 5%, this request was approved. After the decrease in planned delivery, Visual and Performing Arts still represents 9% of the College's delivery profile which is still considerably above the State and National averages. Quite apart from the publicly funded profile delivery, the Kalgoorlie Campus is still able to offer art courses through its Adult Community Education (ACE) programs.

PUBLIC SERVICE, APPOINTMENTS PURSUANT TO SECTION 64(1)(a) OF PUBLIC SECTOR MANAGEMENT ACT

2535. Mr RIPPER to the Minister for Primary Industry; Fisheries:

- (1) At any time since 1994, has the Minister, or the Minister's office, requested the appointment of a person to the public service pursuant to section 64(1)(a) of the Public Sector Management Act 1994?
- (2) Were any of the people the subject of such a request actually appointed pursuant to the Act?
- (3) If so, for each such appointment, will the Minister specify -
- the officer's name;
 - their classification and position at appointment;
 - the date their appointment took effect; and
 - their relevant employing authority?
- (4) Were any of these officers subsequently seconded to work in a Ministerial office?
- (5) If so, for each secondment, will the Minister specify -
- the officer's name;
 - the classification and position to which the officer was seconded;
 - the date this secondment was requested;
 - the date this secondment took effect; and
 - the Ministerial office to which the officer was seconded to?

Mr HOUSE replied:

Fisheries Western Australia:

- (1) No.
(2)-(5) Not applicable.

Agriculture Western Australia

- (1) No.
(2)-(5) Not applicable.

EAST PERTH REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY'S PLAN, LOW COST HOUSING

2553. Ms WARNOCK to the Minister for Planning:

- (1) How many units of either affordable or social or public housing have been allowed for in the East Perth Re-Development Authority (EPRA) Plan so far?
- (2) Where are they located?
- (3) How many others are planned for the future?
- (4) What are the EPRA's plans for the site now occupied by City Farm?
- (5) What are the EPRA's plans for the Old Power Station on Summers Street?
- (6) Now that the Saunders Street Warehouse has been demolished does the EPRA have any plans for any large Arts or Community Centres in East Perth?
- (7) What are the EPRA's plans for any future residential projects on the Gloucester Park site?
- (8) What are the EPRA's plans for the future development of the old Transperth site in Adelaide Terrace?
- (9) Has the Planning Ministry completed its study of the viability of ferry services on the Swan and Canning Rivers and if so, what does it show about the possibility of establishing a ferry service to Claisebrook Cove?
- (10) If it is not completed, when will the study be completed?

Mr KIERATH replied:

- (1) Land for 56 units.

- (2) 15 in Brown Street; 22 in Plain Street and 19 in the Haig Park Subdivision.
- (3) No further land releases for this purpose have been proposed. All commitments have been met.
- (4) Redevelopment.
- (5) The old Power Station is owned by Western Power. The East Perth Redevelopment Scheme gives guidance on development options.
- (6) No.
- (7) The East Perth Redevelopment Scheme provides guidance on development options if the WA Trotting Association seeks to redevelop the site.
- (8) The site is presently in the ownership of Transperth and a redevelopment scheme for the extended area will be developed to provide guidance for the redevelopment of this area.
- (9) The study has not been completed at this stage.
- (10) The study is scheduled to be completed by September 1999.

TAFE, COLLEGE MANAGEMENT INFORMATION SYSTEM 2000

2559. Mr KOBELKE to the Minister for Employment and Training:

- (1) On what basis was the decision taken to stop committing resources to the development of the 'College Management Information System 2000' in October 1998?
- (2) Was the decision influenced by advice from a company engaged to work on the development of the 'College Management Information System 2000'?
- (3) If yes, which company?
- (4) Will the Minister release this advice?
- (5) If not, why not?
- (6) Is the Department of Training still considering the software developed in Victoria to meet Western Australia's requirements for a "College Management Information System"?
- (7) If yes, when is a decision due to be made?
- (8) Will the Minister give an assurance that the 'year 2000 bug' will not affect TAFE college enrolments in 2000?

Mr KIERATH replied:

- (1) The decision to suspend what has been broadly referred to as CMIS 2000 development was based on the critical need to ensure that the current College Management Information System was made Year 2000 compliant; a need to review functional requirements necessary to support emerging national training reforms to the vocational education and training system; and technology issues.
- (2) Yes, partly.
- (3) Platinum Technology Solutions provided advice relating to the proposed technology solution.
- (4) Not at this time.
- (5) The Department is still considering various recommendations contained in the report including the assessment of alternative commercial options.
- (6) The Victoria system is one of the options being considered.
- (7) In the latter part of 1999.
- (8) The Department in close cooperation with TAFE colleges is implementing a comprehensive Year 2000 program which includes the College Management Information System. This system is scheduled for final Year 2000 user acceptance testing in September 1999.

STANTON PARTNERS, REVIEW OF APPRENTICESHIP SUBSIDIES

2621. Mr KOBELKE to the Minister for Employment and Training:

- (1) When were Stanton Partners given the consultancy to provide a review of the "Provision of Apprenticeship Subsidies by the Building and Construction Industry Training Fund"?
- (2) On what date was this consultancy by Stanton Partners concluded?
- (3) How much were Stanton Partners paid for undertaking this consultancy and what were the dates and amounts of payment for each date?
- (4) Will the Minister explain why he tabled two separate reports, each bearing the same cover and with neither report bearing any cross reference to the other report?

Mr KIERATH replied:

- (1) Stanton Partners commenced the consultancy on 21 October 1997
- (2) Stanton Partners provided their final reports to the consultancy Project Reference Group on 2 April 1999
- (3) \$44,500 in 3 instalments as follows:

(i)	27 October 1997 -	\$11,125
(ii)	24 March 1998 -	\$22,250
(iii)	20 April 1998 -	\$11,125
- (4) One report was an abridged version that contained only the primary findings and recommendations of the consultancy. The other report included the relevant information collected and analysed pertaining to the background, findings and recommendations of the consultancy.

POLICE OFFICERS, NUMBER AND QUALIFICATIONS

2640. Mr BROWN to the Minister for Police:

- (1) How many sworn police officers are there in the Western Australian Police Service?
- (2) What is the minimum level entry educational qualification?
- (3) How many serving sworn police officers were graduates before their training?
- (4) How many sworn police officers are university graduates now?
- (5) Recognising that four year graduates in Nursing and Education commence their professional careers at some \$30,000 per year, and police officers at some \$43,000 per year, is it intended to increase the base recruiting education standard for police officers from "completed year 10"?

Mr PRINCE replied:

- (1) The approved average staffing levels for sworn officers is 4698.
- (2) The minimum level entry educational qualification for sworn officers is to have successfully completed at least Year 10 of school education in a school in Western Australia or to have achieved an equivalent standard. The Police Entry Evaluation, to assess literacy and numeracy, has been designed to target Year 12 competency.
- (3) 23% of recruits inducted into the Police Service since July 1997 were tertiary graduates (which includes Diplomas) before commencing their training.
- (4) This information is not available electronically. Due to the resources and time required to provide a response to the member's question, I am unwilling to commit resources required. The Western Australia Police Service is currently upgrading its information systems that will enable the provision of this data in the future.
- (5) In view of the current level of education of successful recruits, 77% of recruits having achieved Year 12 or higher, it is not considered necessary at this time to change the minimum academic standard. Recruits currently undertake a rigorous 26 week training course prior to 18 months of on the job training and assessment. All police officers are required to progress through a structured Police Training and Development Program which requires tertiary study leading to a Diploma of Policing. The commencement salary for recruits graduating from the Western Australia Police Academy is \$36,128 per year and increases to \$39,639 per year as a Fifth Year Constable.

CENTRAL POLICE LOCKUP, LEGAL PRACTITIONERS' ACCESS TO CLIENTS

2643. Mrs ROBERTS to the Minister for Police:

What are the policies or procedures for a legal practitioner to personally see a client at the Central Police lockup?

Mr PRINCE replied:

Please refer to answer to Question 2190 dated 23 March 1999.

PLANNING, LOT 104 BOULONNAIS DRIVE, BRIGADOON

2644. Mrs ROBERTS to the Minister for Planning:

- (1) How many letters of concern has the Minister received regarding the proposed subdivision of Lot 104 Boulonnais Drive, Brigadoon?
- (2) Will the Minister ensure that an Outline Development Plan is prepared for the area and that local residents are given a statutory opportunity to comment on the proposed developments in Brigadoon?
- (3) If not, why not?
- (4) Has the Minister received a report from the Town Planning Appeals Board on this matter?
- (5) If so, when did the Minister receive the report and what are the recommendations?
- (6) If not, when does the Minister expect to receive the report?

Mr KIERATH replied:

- (1) 48 as at 20 April 1998.
- (2)-(3) The proposed subdivision of Lot 104 is currently before me as an appeal. It is inappropriate that I comment on any particular course of action while the appeal is under consideration.
- (4) No.
- (5) Not applicable.
- (6) By the end of May 1999.

SCHOOLS, INSTRUCTION ON CHILD CARE BEFORE SCHOOL

2646. Mr RIPPER to the Minister for Education:

- (1) Has the Education Department issued any instruction to Government schools regarding the care of children arriving at school well before the commencement of school hours?
- (2) If yes, will the Minister table the relevant instruction?
- (3) If not, why not?

Mr BARNETT replied:

- (1) Yes *Education Circular* June 1994 pages 69-71.
- (2) Please see tabled paper No 922.
- (3) Not applicable.

BATAVIA, SELECT COMMITTEE'S REPORT

2670. Mr PENDAL to the Minister representing the Minister for the Arts:

- (1) Is the Minister aware of the findings contained in the report of the Select Committee on the Batavia Relics of December, 1992, that -
 "... the role of Max Cramer, Hugh Edwards, Henrietta Drake-Brockman and Dave Johnson in putting the State's and nation's interests .. is an enduring credit to them ..."?
- (2) Is it correct that at the Maritime Museum in Fremantle there is no recognition given to the actual discovery of the Batavia and the first expedition in 1963?
- (3) If the answer to (2) above is yes, why has due recognition not been given in displays, especially in the light of the findings of the Select Committee, and given that discoverers of other important Dutch wrecks are correctly recognised?
- (4) Will the Minister take action to ensure that this long-awaited recognition is given?

Mrs EDWARDES replied:

The Minister for the Arts has provided the following response:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) No. The shipwreck discoverers are acknowledged in a display in the entrance gallery of the Fremantle Maritime Museum. The video "The Unlucky Voyage" which runs in the Dutch Wrecks Gallery also acknowledges the Batavia discoverers.
- (3)-(4) Not applicable.

POLICE BILL, IMMUNITY FROM CIVIL LIABILITY

2679. Mr PENDAL to the Minister for Police:

I refer to the Private Member's Bill titled Police (Immunity from Civil Liability) Bill 1998 and ask -

- (a) will the Minister confirm that the Government agrees with the principle and now intends to incorporate such immunity into a rewritten Police Bill;
- (b) if so, will the Minister confirm that the legislation will be introduced this year;
- (c) if not, when will legislation be introduced?

Mr PRINCE replied:

- (a) Yes. The Government supports the principle and intends to incorporate such immunity into legislation.
- (b) It is our intention to introduce the legislation this year.
- (c) Not applicable.

ABORIGINAL VISITORS SCHEME

2689. Dr GALLOP to the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Justice:

- (1) How many Aboriginal people are engaged by the Ministry of Justice to provide support and counselling as part of the Aboriginal Visitors Scheme?
- (2) How many contacts have been made in each year since the scheme was established (including 1999-2000 thus far)?

Mrs van de KLASHORST replied:

The Attorney General has provided the following reply:

- (1) The Aboriginal Visitors Scheme consists of a Manager, four project officers and an Administrative Officer. Currently 48 Aboriginal visitors are employed on a part time basis in the Perth metropolitan and country regions to provide support and counselling.

- (2) Number of contacts made since the establishment of the scheme are:

1988-1989	No data collected
1989 - 1990	No data collected
1990 - 1991	3,292
1991 - 1992	3,042
1992 - 1993	No data available
1993-1994	4,341
1994 - 1995	4,234
1995 - 1996	4,310
1996 - 1997	6,819
1997 - 1998	7,991
1998 - 1999	6,746*

* as of 21/4/99

HERITAGE OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA ACT, REVIEW

2698. Ms McHALE to the Minister for Heritage:

- (1) Is the Minister aware that S.84 requires the Minister to institute a review of the operations of the Heritage of Western Australia Act 1990 "as soon as practicable after the expiration of three years" from the date the Act comes into operation?
- (2) If the Minister is aware of the above, why has there been no progress on amending the Heritage of Western Australia Act 1990?

Mr KIERATH replied:

- (1) Yes. The review required by section 84 of the Heritage of Western Australia Act 1990 has been undertaken and a report on the review was tabled in Parliament in December 1995.
- (2) The review concluded that the Act should be redrafted, and the preparation of a new Bill to give effect to that recommendation is well advanced. I am hopeful that it can be introduced during the current session.

GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCIES, LEVEL TWO EMPLOYEES

2759. Mr RIEBELING to the Minister for Primary Industry; Fisheries:

In relation to the employment status of Level Two employees of the agencies falling within the Minister's responsibility -

- (a) what was the total number of Level Two employees at each agency as at 20 April 1999; and
- (b) of these employees, how many were -
 - (i) permanent full time;
 - (ii) permanent part time; and
 - (iii) on short term contract?

Mr HOUSE replied:

Fisheries Western Australia:

- (a) 110 employees
- (b)
 - (i) 61
 - (ii) 2
 - (iii) 47

Agriculture Western Australia:

- (a) 329 employees
- (b)
 - (i) 207
 - (ii) 9
 - (iii) 113

GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCIES, LEVEL TWO EMPLOYEES

2771. Mr RIEBELING to the Minister for Police; Emergency Services:

In relation to the employment status of Level Two employees of the agencies falling within the Minister's responsibility -

- (a) what was the total number of Level Two employees at each agency as at 20 April 1999; and
- (b) of these employees, how many were -
 - (i) permanent full time;
 - (ii) permanent part time; and
 - (iii) on short term contract?

Mr PRINCE replied:

WA Police Service

- (a) The Actual Level (Headcount) for Level Two employees within the Western Australia Police Service as at 20 April 1999 was 281.

- (b) Of these 281 employees there were:
 - (i) 239 permanent full time employees;
 - (ii) 14 permanent part time employees;
 - (iii) 19 contract employees; and
 - (iv) 9 employees seconded in.

Emergency Services

- (a) 44.
- (b)
 - (i) 27.
 - (ii) 3
 - (iii) 14.

GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCIES, LEVEL TWO EMPLOYEES

2772. Mr RIEBELING to the Minister representing the Minister for the Arts:

In relation to the employment status of Level Two employees of the agencies falling within the Minister's responsibility -

- (a) what was the total number of Level Two employees at each agency as at 20 April 1999; and
- (b) of these employees, how many were -
 - (i) permanent full time;
 - (ii) permanent part time; and
 - (iii) on short term contract?

Mrs EDWARDES replied:

The Minister for the Arts has provided the following response:

- (a) 124 Level 2 employees (including 13 casuals).
- (b)
 - (i) 71 permanent fulltime.
 - (ii) 11 permanent part time.
 - (iii) 21 short term contract (less than 12 months).
 - 8 short term contract (12 months or greater).

RAFFLES HOTEL

2787. Mr PENDAL to the Minister for Heritage:

- (1) I refer to efforts to place the Raffles Hotel on the State Heritage Register and ask if the matter has been dealt with by -
 - (a) the Heritage Council; and/or
 - (b) the Minister himself?
- (2) If the answer to (1)(a) and/or (b) above is yes, what has been the outcome?
- (3) If the answer to (1)(a) and/or (b) above is no, will the Minister advise when the issue will be decided?

Mr KIERATH replied:

- (1)
 - (a) Yes.
 - (b) No.
- (2) The Council has made its recommendation to the Minister with respect to the entry of the Raffles Hotel on the Register of Heritage Places on an interim basis.
- (3) The matter will be determined in due course.

APPRENTICES, RESOURCE PROJECTS

2801. Mr KOBELKE to the Minister for Employment and Training:

For each of the following resource projects, what has been the number of apprentices employed on site at the project and what was the average length of time spent by these apprentices on site -

- (a) Murrin Murrin;
- (b) Worsley expansion; and
- (c) BHP HBI plant - Hedland?

Mr KIERATH replied:

It is not possible to provide this information as there is a large range of subcontractors involved in such projects. The Department does not have access to details of the contracts that were let for these projects.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

REGIONAL FOREST AGREEMENT, ANNUAL HARVEST REDUCTION

756. Dr GALLOP to the Minister for the Environment:

I refer to the Regional Forest Agreement signed yesterday. Can the minister explain how a 25 per cent cut in allowable annual harvest by 2003 will result in only 400 job losses when she is on record as stating that a 10 per cent reduction will result in up to 620 job losses?

Mrs EDWARDES replied:

Obviously that comes through from the reserve design.

Dr Gallop: Obviously? How is it obvious?

Mrs EDWARDES: I was not here yesterday -

Dr Gallop: Answer the question!

Mrs EDWARDES: I find it amazing that when we have 12 new national parks, 25 additions to national parks and 90 conservation reserves, all we get is carp, carp, carp from the Leader of the Opposition.

REGIONAL FOREST AGREEMENT, ANNUAL HARVEST REDUCTION

757. Dr GALLOP to the Minister for the Environment:

I ask a supplementary question. Can the minister explain how the particular reserve design in this case will result in only 400 job losses, when other documents that have come out with the RFA indicate that a 10 per cent reduction will result in up to 620 job losses?

Mrs EDWARDES replied:

Again, that shows just how little the Leader of the Opposition knows about the south west forest. I suggest to the Leader of the Opposition that all the information is available on the Internet -

Dr Gallop: It is not available.

Mrs EDWARDES: Every time the Leader of the Opposition's research officer has rung my office to ask questions, or has rung the Department of Conservation and Land Management to ask questions, we have provided the answer to him.

Dr Gallop: What is the answer?

Mrs EDWARDES: It depends on where the lines have been drawn for the particular reserve design. The Leader of the Opposition knows that, because we have been giving him the answer to every one of his questions. The conservation movement said yesterday that the greens have the low quality timber, and the high quality timber has gone back to the timber industry. There is high quality, medium quality and low quality timber. Fifty-one per cent of the high quality timber, and 43 per cent of the medium quality timber, has been put into reserves.

HMAS *SWAN*, NO-FISHING ZONE

758. Mr MASTERS to the Minister for Fisheries:

The HMAS *Swan* dive wreck has attracted over 10 000 dive visits since its scuttling in December 1997. Will the Minister advise what enforcement action will be put in place to ensure that the no-fishing zone around the wreck is respected?

Mr HOUSE replied:

Mr Deputy Speaker -

Mr Marlborough: I hope you are not diving on anything, minister!

Mr HOUSE: I will let that go through, Mr Deputy Speaker; I am sure you would agree. HMAS *Swan* was sunk specifically as a dive site and a non-fishing site. After representations from the member for Vasse, because we had experienced some problems, we have increased the number of patrols. A patrol boat is situated in the Bunbury-Busselton region, and it has spent some of its time there. We have run an education campaign locally so that people are well aware that it is a dive site and a non-fishing site. If we really had to, we could legislate to create an area around that site and make the penalties severe, but I hope that will not be necessary. However, I will continue to liaise with the member and make sure that the site is being respected for what it was originally intended; that is, a dive site.

GOODS AND SERVICES TAX, CASINO CONCESSIONS

759. Dr GALLOP to the Premier:

Does the Premier agree with the Commonwealth Government that high-roller casino gamblers deserve to be cushioned from the impact of a goods and services tax? Does the Premier also agree with Jeff Kennett, the Premier of Victoria, that concessions are needed to ensure that Australian casinos are internationally competitive? If so, does the Premier intend to offer state-based concessions in the event that the Commonwealth's proposed concessions are rejected by the Senate?

Mr COURT replied:

It is not our intention to change the concessions that have been offered. There has been an ongoing debate about the differences in the concessions, particularly between New South Wales and Victoria, but when we look at the figures, we need to look also at the other rates, because Western Australia, Victoria and New South Wales have different rates for different parts of the gambling taxes. With regard to the overall net result to Western Australia, under the agreement that has been reached, our revenues will be protected. I appreciate that there are some difficulties in the way that the legislation is going through the Parliament, but in the balancing that takes place to make sure that the States' revenues are protected, we do not foresee any problems. With regard to the competition between this and the other States, they have lowered their so-called junket taxes in some cases, and we have come under some pressure to change taxes here. However, we have pointed out to the casino that it has advantages because of the way in which some of the other taxes are presented. We need to compare apples with apples. With regard to casinos and gambling overall, we have made a conscious decision not to allow the use of poker machines throughout the State.

Mr Brown: Was that a cabinet decision or your decision?

Mr COURT: It did not have to go to Cabinet, because we have had -

Mr Brown: It was your decision, not a cabinet decision.

Mr COURT: It is a position that we took when in opposition, and in government we have also decided not to go down that path.

Mr Brown: Not all of your cabinet ministers agree with that. Some of your cabinet colleagues are very much opposed to it.

Mr COURT: Members opposite introduced a casino into this State, under what turned out to be incredibly favourable conditions for the casino operators, to the point where they effectively have a monopoly on poker machines across the State.

Mr Brown: Will you close it down?

Mr COURT: In answer to the question, our policy on gambling is well known. The social consequences of the widespread gambling that takes place in many States are now starting to come home, and fortunately we are being protected from that onslaught.

GELORUP QUARRIES, TECHNICAL CONSULTANCY

760. Mr BARRON-SULLIVAN to the Minister for Planning:

I refer to the proposed technical consultancy regarding the Gelorup quarries. When can residents and landowners in the Gelorup area expect that consultancy to proceed; and who will fund it?

Mr KIERATH replied:

I thank the member for some notice of the question. There has been some delay owing to the fact that this consultancy was to be financed by a variety of organisations, including local government and private companies. These financial arrangements have proved to be complicated to arrange. It is anticipated the consultancy will commence this month. The technical advisory group sought financial contributors to the study from a number of agencies and commercial organisations. Contributions have been made from the Western Australian Planning Commission, the City of Bunbury, the Shire of Capel, the South West Development Commission, the Department of Resources Development, CSR Limited, Pioneer quarries and Giacci quarries. The total amount committed is \$54 000, and that will enable the study to proceed.

GOODS AND SERVICES TAX, LOCAL GOVERNMENT

761. Mr McGOWAN to the Treasurer:

- (1) If the goods and services tax legislation passes through the Federal Parliament, will the Treasurer offer local government in Western Australia a guaranteed share of revenue from that tax?
- (2) If so, will it be a fixed percentage of the GST pool each year? If not, why not?

Mr COURT replied:

- (1) I think it is included in the agreement I tabled this morning. We must make sure that local government is not worse off than under the current funding arrangements. That is something we will stick to.
- (2) It is not the intention of the States to go down the path of a fixed share -

Mr McGowan: Queensland has.

Mr COURT: One State might have, but our commitment is that under the current funding formulae, local government cannot be worse off.

*AUSTRALIND TRAIN, PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES***762. Mr BRADSHAW to the minister representing the Minister for Transport:**

- (1) Does Westrail have any plans to make access for people with disabilities to board the *Australind* train at stations between Perth and Bunbury?
- (2) If yes, when is it expected that these changes will be put in place?

Mr OMODEI replied:

The minister has provided the following response -

- (1)-(2) I am pleased to advise the member that Westrail is considering two options to assist its customers with disabilities. The first option being considered is the construction of a ramp at Harvey Railway Station, to be trialled over a period of 12 months. The trial will assess the suitability of providing similar ramps at other stations with low-level platforms. The second option being considered is fitting an on-board ramp or chairlift to the *Australind* railcars. It is anticipated that a decision on the option to be adopted will be made by the end of July this year. That is the response given to me by the Minister for Transport. If I may add some comments as Minister for Disability Services, the member for Murray-Wellington raised this issue with me when I opened the shire offices in Harvey. We put that proposition to the Department of Transport. Its response has been fairly quick, but there is a question concerning the low level of the ramps at all the stations from Perth to Bunbury. The fact that Transport has moved quickly to trial this program is a credit not only to its officers but also to the member for raising the issue.

*KINGS IN GRASS CASTLES FILM***763. Ms McHALE to the Treasurer:**

- (1) Will the Treasurer confirm that in August 1997 he advanced \$500 000 to the Minister for the Arts to invest in the Barron film *Kings in Grass Castles* and that the money was granted on a total-cost-recovery basis and on the proviso that any shortfall would be met from the Arts budget?
- (2) As the Minister for the Arts has now informed Parliament that no money has to date been repaid, will the Treasurer guarantee members of the arts community that they will not be disadvantaged by the Minister for the Arts' actions and that the Arts budget will not be reduced by \$500 000?

Mr COURT replied:

- (1)-(2) I cannot confirm the detail of that question but I am prepared to obtain the information and provide it to the member.

*KINGS IN GRASS CASTLES FILM***764. Ms McHALE to the Treasurer:**

Who is right, the Treasurer when he states in official Treasury documents that any unpaid shortfall must be made up from the Arts budget or his Minister for the Arts, who told Parliament last week that it would not come out of his budget?

Mr COURT replied:

The member will learn the answer tomorrow.

*SUICIDES IN PRISON***765. Mr BAKER to the minister representing the Minister for Justice:**

Will the minister please inform this House of any steps being taken by the Government to reduce the number of suicides in our State's prison system?

Mr PRINCE replied:

I thank the member for some notice of this question. The Minister for Justice has provided me with the following information.

An at-risk management system has been used in all prisons. A component of the system in each prison is the establishment of a prisoner risk assessment group to monitor the management of distressed and suicidal prisoners. In Casuarina Prison there is a crisis care unit staffed by a range of disciplines. It was officially opened on 13 April this year. The unit can accommodate up to 12 prisoners who are experiencing acute distress. A similar unit is planned for the amalgamated Canning Vale site. The staff complement of the forensic case management team has been enhanced during the past year. The team comprises psychologists, social workers and prisoner support officers. There has also been extensive consultation with a wide range of organisations with an interest in the welfare of prisoners with a view to ensuring a much more harmonious working relationship between the Ministry of Justice and external stakeholders. That process of consultation will continue as part of the ministry's commitment to reduce the rate of self-harm and suicide among prisoners. Those initiatives have been taken in the past six months.

FIRE SERVICE LEVY**766. Mrs ROBERTS to the Minister for Emergency Services:**

- (1) Is the Government still committed to introducing the new fire service levy on 1 July this year?
- (2) If so, why has the required legislation not been introduced?
- (3) Why is it not on the list of Bills either required to be or desired to be passed in the autumn session tabled in this House in March 1999 by the Leader of the House?
- (4) If the minister is to proceed, when does he propose to provide a copy of the legislation to the Opposition, the minor parties and the Independent members?

Mr PRINCE replied:

I gather that in my absence yesterday the matter came before members of the government parties. It is a matter now for debate. I will do my best to progress that in the next little while.

Mr Ripper: They are hard work, are they not?

Mr PRINCE: I must say I find it harder work dealing with opposition members than I ever do with my members.

Dr Gallop: That is because we have a little more intellect.

Mr PRINCE: Does the Leader of the Opposition wish to know why? It is because opposition members have ideological shutters on their ears and they do not want to hear things that do not agree with what they want to think. At least my members are prepared to listen to everything and debate it.

As soon as I can bring the matter forward, I will, and I will arrange for the Opposition, the minor parties and the Independent members to be briefed.

GREAT EASTERN HIGHWAY, GREENMOUNT HILL ROADWORKS**767. Mrs van de KLASHORST to the minister representing the Minister for Transport:**

Will the minister please advise of the status of the Greenmount Hill roadworks project on the Great Eastern Highway? Although there has been activity for some time, the Swan Hills community is understandably anxious to know start and completion dates.

Mr OMODEI replied:

The Minister for Transport has provided the following response.

I can certainly appreciate concerns over the delay in commencement of the Great Eastern Highway upgrade between Roe Highway and Scott Street. The Great Eastern Highway forms part of the national highway and as such, funding for the project is the responsibility of the Federal Government. I understand from the Minister for Transport that Main Roads Western Australia has sought funding from the federal Department of Transport, and is currently awaiting advice on funding approval. Work on this important and long-overdue project will commence as soon as federal funding approval is obtained.

GRUBB REAL ESTATE AND FINANCE**768. Ms MacTIERNAN to the Minister for Fair Trading:**

I have given the Minister for Fair Trading lots of notice of this question. I refer to the closure of finance broker Grubb Real Estate and Finance following an investigation by the Australian Securities and Investments Commission and to the \$70m of small investor funds now at risk, and ask -

- (1) What action did the Finance Brokers Supervisory Board or the Ministry of Fair Trading take to review Graeme Grubb's suitability to hold a brokers licence after he was found guilty by the Real Estate and Business Agents Supervisory Board of serious breaches of audit and trust fund provisions of the real estate legislation and was found to lack financial expertise?

- (2) What action did the ministry or the Finance Brokers Supervisory Board take in respect of complaints made to the ministry about Mr Grubb's behaviour as a finance broker?
- (3) Has Graeme Grubb's son Bruce applied for a provisional finance brokers licence and will the minister ensure the board takes into account Brian Grubb's involvement in his father's failed business before granting him any such licence?

Mr SHAVE replied:

Mr Deputy Speaker -

Mr Graham: Do you have an interest in Grubb? You are the Liberal Party's fundraiser.

Mr SHAVE: That is not very nice, Mr Deputy Speaker; in fact, it is very distasteful. I thank my good friend the member for Armadale for some notice of the question.

Several members interjected.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Let the minister answer the question.

Mr SHAVE: The Leader of the Opposition is very sensitive today. That was not so when his lot were in government and losing hundreds and hundreds of millions of taxpayers' dollars. Battlers in wheelchairs could not obtain wheels for their wheelchairs as a result of this lot opposite, yet they have a go at me when I rise to answer a question. They are a dreadful lot of people! Talk about financial management. They could not manage the local kindy's trust fund.

- (1) In 1993, the Real Estate and Business Agents Supervisory Board conducted an inquiry into the theft of money by an employee, not by Mr Grubb. The board noted that the money was repaid by the employee. Action was taken by Grubb Real Estate and Finance to introduce new office procedures. After considering the evidence, the board resolved that Grubb Real Estate and Finance be fined \$850, plus costs. Given the nature of the offence and the penalty imposed by the Real Estate and Business Agents Supervisory Board, together with the remedial action by Grubb Real Estate and Finance, the matter was not referred to the Finance Brokers Supervisory Board.
- (2) The Ministry of Fair Trading has investigated all formal complaints received. In many cases the matters have been resolved. However, some areas of concern have been identified and are the subject of ongoing investigations. As a result of these investigations, I advise that in December 1998 the Finance Brokers Supervisory Board requested Grubb's nominated auditor to conduct a special audit as part of the standard audit for the year ended 31 December 1998. That audit report was signed by the auditor on 30 April and indicated that he was unable to complete the audit as a result of new software installed by Grubb, together with a lack of regular reconciliation and balancing.

Grubb Real Estate and Finance has entered into an enforceable undertaking with the Australian Securities and Investments Commission, which is responsible for the regulation of pooled mortgages. This has resulted in an independent accountant, Bird Cameron, being appointed to conduct a comprehensive review of the operations of the trust account. It is appropriate for the board to await the outcome of that review before considering any further action.
- (3) Bruce Grubb has not applied for a finance brokers licence. However, should he do so, the board will assess his application, including any formal involvement he may have had in his father's finance broking business.

GRUBB REAL ESTATE AND FINANCE

769. Ms MacTIERNAN to the Minister for Fair Trading:

What action is the minister taking to protect the hundreds of small investors at risk of losing their funds?

Mr SHAVE replied:

The Ministry of Fair Trading will do whatever it can to assist these people. Essentially, the control of pooled mortgages resides with the Australian Securities and Investments Commission. As I said in the earlier answer - if the member for Armadale had listened, she would know - the advice I have from the ministry is that it is appropriate for the board to await the outcome of the review it has been considering before taking any further action.

Ms MacTiernan: It is not appropriate!

Mr SHAVE: That is the view of the member for Armadale, not the ministry.

ESSENTIAL SERVICES, 1 JANUARY 2000

770. Mr JOHNSON to the Minister for Water Resources:

Can the minister describe the steps taken by the Government to ensure a continuation of essential services, particularly water supply and sewage treatment, on 1 January 2000?

Dr HAMES replied:

I thank the member for his question. A lot of work is being done to ensure the continuation of services by not only departments under my control, but all government departments. The Water Corporation has been working since 1996 to ensure that its appropriate systems are in place for 2000. That should be the case, given that it has responsibility for the supply of water and the management of sewerage. We do not want anything to go wrong in those areas. We have set a target

to have the matter sorted out by July 1999, and we are well on target to achieve that goal. Large amounts of money have been spent by the Water Corporation to ensure everything will be okay. However, no absolute guarantee can be given, and we will have to wait until the night in question to ensure that everything is okay.

Dr Gallop: Thank you - I feel very assured by that!

Dr HAMES: The relevant document is titled "The Year 2000 Disclosure Statement". The Water Corporation and I are very confident that everything will be okay. I certainly will not be putting bottles of water in the cupboard.

BUILDING AND CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY TRAINING LEVY, THOM LETTER

771. Mr KOBELKE to the Minister for Employment and Training:

(1) Is the minister aware of the letter from Mr James Thom of the Housing Industry Association dated 23 April 1999 stating how the minister has changed the allocation of funds from the building and construction industry training levy to the advantage of the HIA?

(2) Is Mr Thom correct in his assertions in his letter? This reads -

The changes indicated by the Minister will allow building companies contributing to the fund to identify a training association they wish to control these funds in place of the BCITF. Thus your contribution collected by the BCITF would be placed directly to the HIA Training Foundation.

(3) If this is not true, will the minister reject this assertion and ask Mr Thom to publicly correct this false statement?

Mr KIERATH replied:

(1)-(3) First, the man's name is pronounced "Tom"; I have never heard him referred to as Mr "Thom" before. I have not seen the letter to which the member refers.

Mr Kobelke: You would have seen correspondence complaining to your office about the letter, and you have not seen the letter!

Mr KIERATH: I am not aware of the letter, although I am aware of the issue - I am not trying to get around it. I do not have the letter in front of me and I will not comment on the letter's contents. I have been lobbied by various groups, including the HIA, regarding exemptions and the relevant procedures to be involved. It is true that in the next couple of months we will be developing criteria for those exemptions. The new board meets tomorrow for the first time. As minister, I have an operational part to play in the plan, which is subject to my approval.

Mr Kobelke: And the board's.

Mr KIERATH: Yes. I have a role to play. We hope that in the next two months, criteria will be available for those exemptions in the allocation of training funds. It is true that it is anticipated at this stage that if people gain exemptions, they will be able to channel training money to authorised agencies.

Mr Kobelke: So the HIA is correct in the letter.

Mr KIERATH: I cannot say that is the case as I do not have a copy of the letter here. We are developing criteria; they have not been published yet as they have not been finalised. As soon as they are finalised, the member for Nollamara will be one of the first to know.

BELBRIDGE SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL, BUSES

772. Mr BAKER to the Minister for Education:

I refer to the recent misunderstanding between the Departments of Transport and Education concerning the funding of additional buses to cater for secondary school students attending Belridge Senior High School when it closes early on Wednesday of each week. Can the minister indicate the Education Department's policy on the funding of such buses, and whether this dispute has been resolved?

Mr BARNETT replied:

I am pleased to advise the member for Joondalup that the Education Department, and Belridge Senior High School in particular, have had negotiations with Path Transit. The service can be funded out of the school's budget and is now operational.

FIRE BRIGADES, GOODS AND SERVICES TAX

773. Mr GRAHAM to the Minister for Emergency Services:

(1) Is the minister aware of the voluntary fire brigades in Western Australia?

(2) If so, is the minister also aware that these unpaid volunteers give their free time to carry out works such as checking fire extinguishers and arranging for controlled burns in order to raise funds to equip their brigades?

(3) Is the minister also aware that if the Howard Government's goods and services tax is introduced in its current form these voluntary bodies will be required to pay the GST on their fund-raising activities and does he think this is fair?

(4) What action has the minister taken to ensure this tax is not levied on these organisations' funds?

Mr PRINCE replied:

- (1)-(4) Yes, I am aware of the activities of not only the 2 500 Fire and Rescue Service volunteers but also the 16 500 bush fire volunteers and the 2 500 State Emergency Service volunteers throughout the State, all of whom, in one form or another, fund raise either by conducting burns for people on properties or whatever. That is an activity that I and every member here would encourage, because without those volunteers we would not be able to have an emergency service operating in this State. They do a brilliant job.

This issue was raised with me a little while ago by a Lions club. It is similar to the question of whether fund raising by non-profit-making organisations in our society should be the subject of the GST. It is my view that it should not. I cannot see how it would be. However, I have sought clarification from federal members of Parliament. I have yet to receive it. I take it strongly and seriously that it should not be an activity that is subject to the GST, because it is not appropriate.

FIRE BRIGADES, GOODS AND SERVICES TAX

774. Mr GRAHAM to the Minister for Emergency Services:

Will the minister raise the issue with the federal Treasurer to ensure that these organisations do not pay the GST? I am not interested in the minister's view; I am interested in the Treasurer's view and what the minister will do.

Mr PRINCE replied: I have not raised it with the federal Treasurer but with other federal members of Parliament. I will write to the federal Treasurer.

BOAS AVENUE-GRAND BOULEVARD, JOONDALUP, TRAFFIC LIGHTS

775. Mr BAKER to the minister representing the Minister for Transport:

I refer to my previous representations to the minister regarding the urgent need for the installation of traffic control signals at the intersection of Boas Avenue and Grand Boulevard in Joondalup. When will these vitally important traffic control signals be installed?

Mr OMODEI replied:

The member for Joondalup has been pursuing this matter for quite some time. I am sure that he will be pleased with the result. The Minister for Transport has advised that the works associated with the installation of the traffic signals at this intersection commenced on Saturday, 24 April. It is expected that the signals will be operational by mid-May. The member for Joondalup's concern for the safety of this location and his efforts to ensure the early installation of signals is appreciated.

CHARITABLE INSTITUTIONS, GOODS AND SERVICES TAX

776. Mr CARPENTER to the Minister for Disability Services:

- (1) Does the minister agree with the national President of the Australian Council for Rehabilitation of Disabled, Mr Michael Sumner, when he says that the GST is the greatest threat to the charitable not-for-profit sector for more than a decade?
- (2) Does the minister also agree with Mr Sumner when he says that the platitudinous response from the federal Treasurer that all charities will be better off is rubbish?

Mr OMODEI replied:

- (1)-(2) The national body of ACROD and the National Council of the Intellectually Disabled have been effective in their lobbying of members of Parliament in the Federal Government in particular. The Federal Government has said that disability bodies and non-government organisations will not be worse off under the GST. However, that is yet to be tested. A number of submissions have been made to the various inquiries into the GST. I can assure the member that this State will use its strongest voice to protect people with disabilities. Our track record has been pretty good in that area. I am sure the member for Willagee would agree with that. NCID and ACROD have been supportive of the Western Australian Government, and me as the minister, in the submissions I have made to the Federal Government on a range of issues.

CHARITABLE INSTITUTIONS, GOODS AND SERVICES TAX

777. Mr CARPENTER to the Minister for Disability Services:

Is the minister prepared to say that charitable organisations in the disability sector will not be better off under a GST?

Mr OMODEI replied:

Until the effects of the GST are known, I cannot make a judgment on that.
