



WESTERN AUSTRALIA

# **Parliamentary Debates**

**(HANSARD)**

THIRTY-FIFTH PARLIAMENT  
SECOND SESSION  
1999

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Thursday, 13 May 1999

*Legislative Assembly*  
Thursday, 13 May 1999

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**THE SPEAKER** (Mr Strickland) took the Chair at 9.00 am, and read prayers.

**CASTLEDARE ESTATE**

*Petition*

Dr Gallop (Leader of the Opposition) presented the following petition bearing the signatures of 14 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 State Government to purchase that portion of the Castledare estate zoned "Parks and Recreation" in the City of Canning Town Planning Scheme No. 40 to allow for its full and proper incorporation into the Canning River Regional Park as recommended by a series of reports to Government.

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 212.]

**VACATION SWIMMING CLASSES**

*Petition*

Mrs Edwardes (Minister for the Environment) presented the following petition bearing the signatures of 82 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 Trenorden (13 signatures).

[See petitions Nos 213 and 217.]

**NORTH BEACH JETTY**

*Petition*

Mrs Hodson-Thomas presented the following petition bearing the signatures of 235 persons -

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

We, the undersigned residents, respectfully call upon the State Government to source funding to upgrade the North Beach Jetty in accordance with the design commissioned by the City of Stirling and prepared by consultants Halpern Glick Maunsell, to provide a suitable recreational fishing venue which will better cater for people with disabilities and elderly anglers; provide facilities for families to enjoy fishing; and encourage youth to participate in constructive activity.

We wish to bring to your attention that there are limited fishing platforms with disabled and elderly access in the north metropolitan coastal area, and it is only possible to use the present North Beach jetty at high tide in favourable weather.

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 214.]

**LEEUEWIN-NATURALISTE NATIONAL PARK - SURF BEACH ACCESS**

*Petition*

Dr Gallop (Leader of the Opposition) presented the following petition bearing the signatures of 48 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 State Government to reverse its decision to impose visitor entry fees for people accessing surfing beaches within Leeuwin Naturaliste National Park and further call on the Government to recognize that free access to our beaches is fundamental to our way of life.

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 215.]

### APPRENTICESHIPS

#### *Petition*

Dr Gallop (Leader of the Opposition) presented the following petition bearing the signatures of 111 persons -

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

We the undersigned citizens recognise that apprenticeships are an important way of providing life opportunities for young Western Australians and also to securing the skilled workforce needed to develop the wealth of our state.

We therefore call on the Government to address the threat of cancellation of many apprenticeships due to the shortage of work during the current downturn in the resources sector by establishing targeted short term support programs to ensure existing apprentices do not lose their apprenticeship.

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 216.]

### REGIONAL FOREST AGREEMENT

#### *Substitution of Tabled Document*

**THE SPEAKER** (Mr Strickland): I advise members that I have received a letter from the Premier concerning the original copy of the Regional Forest Agreement document which he tabled in the House on 5 May 1999. As it is a 20-year agreement, it is preferable that it be filed in a departmental office and in accordance with Standing Order No 52 the Premier has requested that the original document be returned to him. The letter was accompanied by a copy of the agreement and accordingly I have authorised the substitution of the copy for the original signed Regional Forest Agreement tabled in the House on 5 May 1999.

### SWAN DISTRICT HOSPITAL - KIDNEY DIALYSIS UNIT

#### *Grievance*

**MRS ROBERTS** (Midland) [9.10 am]: My grievance is to the Minister for Health and it is about the Government's failure to provide a kidney dialysis unit at Swan District Hospital. I have been calling on the Government to act on this matter for more than a year. On 1 May 1998, I met with a Mr Hecquet of Midvale who came to see me about his wife, Mrs Hecquet, who at that time was 74 years of age. She uses a dialysis unit three times a week and, at present, she must travel to Shenton Park. On that same day, I wrote to the then Minister for Health, the member for Albany. His response a couple of weeks later was that a business plan and so forth was being prepared by Royal Perth Hospital and active discussion with the Health Department of Western Australia was taking place. In the latter part of last year, I was contacted by numerous other people. These included a number of my constituents, including a Mrs Dent of Swan View, who must go to dialysis at Royal Perth Hospital three times a week. I have also been contacted by people as far afield as Northam. There is a particularly sad case in Northam in which a lady must make her way by train to East Perth, catch a taxi to Shenton Park and then return home. The dialysis treatment is very debilitating for most people. Often they are picked up an hour before the treatment takes place. The treatment itself is debilitating. They must then wait for taxis and transport to return to Midland and further afield. That results in those people being tired and worn out at the end of the day. I have no criticism of the staff at Swan District Hospital who do an excellent job with their patients. I have also received supportive correspondence from the staff at the Swan Caring Centre, who, in transporting many of these patients, also do an excellent job in caring for them and treat them in a good way. However, these patients should not need to be transported to either Royal Perth Hospital or Shenton Park for that treatment. I raised this matter with the current Minister for Health by way of questions last year. The response to parliamentary question 1576 which I asked on Wednesday, 2 December 1998, was that the Health Department had initiated an expression of interest process that would be publicly released in December 1998. A tendering process would follow in January 1999, and some dialysis service may be available in the latter half of 1999. The need for this dialysis unit is absolutely urgent.

A further case, and probably the saddest so far, was brought to me by way of correspondence which I received on 29 April. It was from one of my constituents in Bellevue whose mother-in-law is a dialysis patient who lives in Koongamia which is also in my electorate. This lady is 71 years of age. She has an additional complication of being a diabetic. She has also had two bouts of cancer; one bout required her to have a mastectomy and the other, some years later, required her to have a hysterectomy. Because of her cancer history, she is not on the transplant list, and her family has no argument with this. They would like her to receive her dialysis treatment at Swan District Hospital. Up until a week before this incident, which occurred on 23 April, she had a 9.00 am appointment at Royal Perth Hospital. Apparently, because of demand for dialysis

at Royal Perth Hospital, her regular 9.00 am appointment for three times a week was changed to 1.00 pm. This has resulted in some unfortunate circumstances. She has been a patient at Swan District Hospital and must be transported by ambulance to Royal Perth Hospital for treatment. Sometimes, because of the 1.00 pm slot, she does not get her meal, which is very important for a diabetic, before she goes for dialysis. By the time she returns, she is offered only a sandwich as an evening meal. This is not suitable either. The incident to which I refer happened on 23 April and, according to her son-in-law, the lady in question could have died on this occasion. This woman can barely sit up in bed and, these days, she must make use of a wheelchair because of her failing health. Rather than being transported to Swan District Hospital by ambulance, an orderly took her to take the first taxi off the rank. Either the orderly or the taxi driver must have helped her into and out of the vehicle. Unfortunately, she was taken to her home rather than to the hospital. Although she is unclear of the circumstances, it seems she was placed in a chair at the bottom of five steps after the taxi driver opened her front door with her keys at around 7.00 or 7.30 pm. She was not supposed to be there; she was supposed to be taken back to the hospital. She obviously tried to get up at some point. She fell over in her driveway and, unfortunately, was left lying in her driveway for many hours. It was not until the staff from Swan District Hospital made some inquiries about where their patient was, that they contacted her family at about 10.00 pm. Her family, who fortunately do not live too far away, went to look for her and found her lying in her driveway. She was still dressed in only a nightdress and dressing gown, from when she had been transported originally from Swan District Hospital. This could have been avoided had she been able to have treatment on site. There are many examples of this and elderly people who require dialysis must have that service provided locally. I would like an assurance from the minister that the plan to have a kidney dialysis unit at Swan District Hospital is not on the backburner and that Swan District Hospital will get a kidney dialysis unit as a matter of urgency.

**MR DAY** (Darling Range - Minister for Health) [9.16 am]: I agree entirely with the sentiments expressed by the member for Midland about the need to make renal dialysis available in the Midland area under the auspices of the Swan Health Service. I say that because I am aware, as the minister for Health, that we have a growing need for renal dialysis in this State. I am told that about 530 patients are in need of renal dialysis in Western Australia and that number is growing rapidly. It is a major challenge for the State Government to keep up with providing the services that are necessary. I will also make a comment representing the electorate of Darling Range. From a local point of view, I have as much interest in ensuring that renal dialysis is available in the east metropolitan region around the Midland district. The good news is that it is happening. This Government has a strong record of providing patients with renal dialysis which is closer to where they live and of decentralising the provision of services, much more so than has been the case in the past. A statewide renal dialysis program was prepared in 1997-98. It was developed to improve service coordination and also to enable the establishment of satellite renal services which are closer to where patients in need of treatment are living.

Over the past two years, we have had an impressive record of ensuring that services are provided closer to where people live. Satellite services have been established in Geraldton, Kalgoorlie, Joondalup, Armadale and Peel. Services will also occur soon in Bunbury and Albany. I was in Port Hedland last Thursday, and as part of the provisions in the current budget, \$1m has been made available for the provision of renal dialysis in both Port Hedland and Broome. That is another very welcome development for the people in the north west of the State. As far as the Midland area is concerned, an expression of interest process was started in December last year. Following the expressions of interest process, all of the proponents were invited to participate in a request for proposal process. At the moment, the Health Department is in receipt of proposals that were made under that process and they are being assessed. A selection panel will meet at the end of this month and selection of the service provider will be made soon thereafter.

In other words, in early June a decision will be made about who will be nominated to provide the service in the Swan Health Service area. We expect the satellite facility will commence operation within 25 weeks of the award of the contract. The Health Department and I want it to commence earlier than 25 weeks and pressure will be applied by the department to ensure that if possible it will commence sooner. However, there are complications involved with purchasing the equipment as it is specialist equipment and must be imported from overseas. The facility in the Midland area should be operational by January 2000 but I hope sooner. We are, therefore, fulfilling our commitment. We have a strong program of providing services closer to where people live and it will happen in Midland because the process is currently underway. The satellite service will have the initial capacity to treat between 16 and 20 patients, with a maximum capacity of 40 patients, which will be a very welcome service for residents of the electorates of Midland, Darling Range and Swan Hills as well as the surrounding areas.

I take the opportunity also to advise the House that the same process is being followed to provide a similar service in the near future to the Fremantle district. Although I do not have specific times for the provision of the satellite service for Fremantle, I assume that the time frame is similar to that for the Midland service. As I said, the good news is that it is happening; I am very keen that it happen; and the Health Department is actually making it happen.

### **JOONDALUP TRAIN STATION, POLICING MEASURES**

#### *Grievance*

**MR BAKER** (Joondalup) [9.21 am]: My grievance is directed to the minister representing the Minister for Transport and concerns the urgent need for appropriate and vastly improved policing measures to be introduced at the Joondalup train station located in the heart of the Joondalup regional city centre. As the minister is well aware, the Joondalup central business district is now booming with several five-star restaurants, licensed nightclubs, taverns, bars and also a multi-screen cinema complex. The area is being promoted generally as a family-friendly entertainment precinct for young families residing in the northern suburbs.

Unfortunately, hand in hand with the ongoing growth and development of the Joondalup CBD, there seems to be an ever

increasing presence of young street gangs in that area. Many of these gangs access the area by the Joondalup train station. They catch the train from the Perth station on Friday and Saturday evenings to Joondalup, after having done the rounds of the Northbridge area. This is causing a great deal of concern in the area, particularly for small business proprietors and families. A great deal of anecdotal evidence strongly indicates that these gang members do not live in the Joondalup region but target the Joondalup CBD as their new playground.

In the past 14 days I have received at least 10 complaints from the parents of teenage school children who have been assaulted, bashed and robbed by these well organised gangs. I will read from a letter I received a couple of weeks ago from the stepfather of a teenage boy who complained about a gang robbery perpetrated upon his son. I emphasise that this is a typical, not an unusual, complaint. The letter states -

Leigh rang his mother and myself after the robbery in a very distressed state to advise us of the incident.

He had been into Perth after leaving school at Hollywood Senior High, drawn \$50.00 from his ATM account and proceeded to Joondalup where he was to be picked up by his father. Whilst leaving the platform he was accosted by, as Leigh described them, a group of boguns, who with foul and threatening language wielded a steel pipe and demanded his wallet. To his great credit Leigh did not resist, handed over his wallet, and tried to get as good a description as possible as the group made a fairly hasty escape.

The incident was apparently witnessed, at least in part by another group of school students and immediately afterwards a girl rushed up to him asking "Are you alright mate?"

A few minutes later someone notified Westrail police who were positioned on the platform but by the time the police could take any action the gang had decamped from the train station platform and the precincts of the train station. That, of itself, is one problem that can be addressed when reviewing the powers of train police under the Government Railways Act 1904. I believe that jurisdiction in these matters ceases once the persons concerned have left the train station precincts altogether. Thereafter it is a matter of the Westrail police liaising with the local police and because time is of the essence invariably the police cannot arrive in time to apprehend these young louts.

In another case a young man was bashed senseless by a gang on the train station platform. As a result of this bashing, he has a fractured skull and, I believe, permanently impaired hearing. There was yet another case two weeks ago involving my own daughter, who was followed by a gang from the train station platform, up the escalator, onto the train station concourse and through the car park. She managed to avoid an incident with this gang only because she hopped into a car occupied by an adult. Had it not been for that, I am sure that something untoward would have happened to her. The minister may be aware that I have raised this specific complaint with the Minister for Transport.

The time has arrived for direct, immediate and firm action to be taken to remove these gangs from the area. It is clear to me that in many cases these gangs are well aware of the movements of Westrail train police, who occasionally police the station, and they seem to have no fear of detection, no fear of arrest and no fear of prosecution. It is also clear that these gangs are responsible for much of the graffiti and criminal damage to the public infrastructure and commercial buildings situated in the Joondalup CBD; damage of that kind is occurring on almost a daily basis. Put simply, minister, these young gangs have no lawful business to conduct in the Joondalup CBD area and appear to be acting outside the law.

In view of these concerns, I advocate several measures aimed at removing these gangs from the Joondalup CBD and at their due prosecution for a variety of offences ranging from criminal damage to assault and robbery. I will summarise these measures briefly. First, there is an urgent need for the installation of a video surveillance system throughout the precincts of the train station. The minister is well aware that such a system is already in place at the Perth train station which can assist in identifying the culprits so that even if they decamp from the area after committing assaults etc, they can be arrested in due course and prosecuted. Next I advocate the introduction of what is commonly known as a policy of zero tolerance or harassment by train police against those gangs to shift them out of the Joondalup regional area back to, for example, Northbridge from whence they came. I accept that a zero tolerance policy per se does not necessarily stop people from committing offences. However, all members will agree that it has the effect of shifting the problem to another area.

Ms MacTiernan: What is the point of that? That is a stupid idea.

Mr BAKER: Not at all. I seek to remove them from the area and send them back to Armadale where I am sure many of them originate.

Ms MacTiernan: You are a disgrace.

Mr BAKER: Not at all. It is also important for there to be an increased presence of train police at the station who can implement the zero tolerance policy. I also advocate the formulation of dossiers on those young gangs, including not only the expected information but also photographs. These photographs should be displayed on trains and at train stations on the northern suburbs rail line. There also needs to be a closer liaison between Westrail police and police officers in the Joondalup district to ensure that when those young hoods decamp from train stations and avoid the jurisdiction of the train police, the WA Police Service members can intervene and arrest them. Minister, this is becoming an urgent matter. I would hate to see Joondalup become another Northbridge.

**MR OMODEI** (Warren-Blackwood - Minister for Local Government) [9.28 am]: I am alarmed to hear that this type of behaviour seems to be getting out of control. There has been a problem with unlawful behaviour on our urban railway system. There are obviously problems, as the member for Joondalup mentioned, when people with antisocial attitudes use the train service and move from place to place. There is no doubt that the Joondalup CBD is booming. This is a community problem as much as a Westrail problem. I am also concerned about the 10 complaints about well-organised gangs. Having

just listened very carefully to the member's comments, I will raise this issue with the Minister for Transport as a matter of urgency.

The issue of special constables and their jurisdiction will also be brought to the minister's attention. I can understand the member's concern, particularly when his daughter has had to bear the brunt of this irresponsible behaviour. The issue of no fear of detection and whether we should have a zero-tolerance policy is real and perhaps we can increase the number of officers in that area.

The notes provided to me by the Department of Transport state that we already have over 100 special constables in the system. Selected daytime trains and all trains running after 7.00 pm are policed. In addition, officers are patrolling the suburban lines in radio-equipped vehicles and are able to respond promptly to calls for assistance.

Very close liaison with the police is the cornerstone of Westrail's security strategy. Westrail's special constables receive aspects of their training from police instructors and have the same powers as police officers to deal with offences committed on the railway line. That question of jurisdiction must be addressed. The relationship between the Police Service and Westrail security includes Westrail access to police communications, involvement of police in random checks of railway stations and car parks and joint operations to apprehend offenders. That liaison will continue. It has been successful to date, although obviously not completely successful according to the member for Joondalup.

A number of young Aboriginal people have been involved in antisocial behaviour on trains and at stations. Westrail has engaged four members of the Aboriginal community to liaise with young Aborigines in an effort to curb that behaviour. The initiative is aimed at encouraging young Aboriginal people who are likely to offend to respect the rights of other passengers using the public transport system. Westrail is also providing video cameras at some of the major stations to assist in identifying offenders.

Ms MacTiernan: At which stations?

Mr OMODEI: I do not have that information with me. However, I will refer in a moment to a timetable for ongoing and implemented security and customer service initiatives on the railway through to 2002, which includes the installation of cameras at all stations and a central control communications area. If these instances of bad behaviour continue, perhaps that program will need to be brought forward.

Ms MacTiernan: Will you table that?

Mr OMODEI: I will; I have already said that I will take up this issue as a matter of urgency with the Minister for Transport.

That liaison with the Aboriginal community and the appointment of four liaison people have resulted in three arrests, two summonses, five cautions and three inquiries are continuing. The offenders have been identified, there have been two "no-result" cases, and five infringement notices have been issued. The clearance rate is relatively high, and that is to be expected as most of the offences have been committed "on view" or the offenders have been identified through video cameras once they have boarded a service.

The major difficulty with the situation at Joondalup is that the victims are very reluctant to report matters and prefer to deal with them in their own way. That is to be expected as the persons responsible for the offences have made threats of retribution should they be questioned. That is another issue.

In response to the concerns that have been expressed, a high-visibility "zero tolerance" operation was mounted at Joondalup on 5, 6 and 7 May, which resulted in 21 infringement notices being issued for offences of spitting, loitering, offensive behaviour, graffiti and fare evasion. The security officers were tasked with preventing groups from loitering around the railway station area, and were constantly moving juveniles on if they had no legitimate reason to be there. Unfortunately, the groups regathered outside the boundaries of the station, which is beyond Westrail's jurisdiction. That jurisdiction issue is very valid.

Such high-visibility operations are difficult to sustain. While some short-term benefits have been achieved at Joondalup, the problem was predominantly displaced to the shopping centre precinct. The liaison between the police and the special constables must be maintained, if not enhanced. It is proposed that video surveillance equipment will be installed at Joondalup station in July 1999. An emergency help telephone will be installed on the platform at the Joondalup station next week on a trial basis.

I table a timetable for ongoing and implemented security and customer service initiatives on the suburban railway line and a list of security and customer services initiatives already implemented. I will raise these issues as a matter of urgency.

[See paper No. 957.]

## POOLED MORTGAGE INVESTMENT SCHEMES

### *Grievance*

**MS MacTIERNAN** (Armadale) [9.35 am]: I present this grievance on behalf of the hundreds, if not thousands, of mostly elderly investors who have lost of much of their life savings at the hands of the finance brokers running out of control pooled mortgage investment schemes. The purpose of this grievance is to attempt to make the Minister for Fair Trading understand that he and his Government must accept some responsibility for the horrific situation in which many of these investors, particularly the self-funded retirees, now find themselves and to have him accept that he has both the obligation and the power to take immediate action to assist them.

Currently two finance brokers are the subject of a winding up of sorts: John Margaria's Global Finance and Graeme Grubb's Grubb Finance. The investors in three other broking firms are reporting repeated failures to make interest payments or capital repayments. These companies, which appear to be in considerable difficulty, are Blackburne and Dixon, First Charter and Peter Fermanis' Trust Group. Between these five broking firms, probably about \$500m of funds is at risk and possibly 5 000 investors will be victims.

The arrangements that have been put in place in relation to Global Finance and Grubb Finance are completely inadequate; they are in fact nothing short of a disaster. They are doing nothing to protect or advance the interests of the investors. The administrators of Global Finance have found that there is no money in the kitty to have an effect on the liquidation. They have impounded the trust funds and seized certificates. They have told the investors and the minister that unless they can get some money, there will be a stalemate. They are not prepared to take further action or to release the trust funds or title deeds.

The Grubb Finance victims are, if anything, in an even worse position. We know that the minister has relied on the Australian Securities and Investment Commission, which wanted to approve a provisional liquidator. However, it could not do that because there was no money to pay for the liquidation. It therefore accepted a mickey mouse undertaking from Grubb Finance that it would not take any new investments and that it would make up the deficiencies of moneys from the trust fund. This arrangement has put the fox in charge of the henhouse. Far from winding up the business as promised to the ASIC, Mr Grubb and his son have been vigorously campaigning. I have a series of letters in which they have told investors not to worry and not to believe what they hear and see in the media; they are here to stay - they are renovating their building and expanding their business! They have approached concerned investors seeking to have them reinvest in yet further pooled mortgage investment schemes. The undertakings given have meant nothing and the Grubb Finance victims are very confused; in fact, they are worried sick. Again the problem is that there is no money for a proper liquidation.

These schemes have relied on new investors to feed the system and keep the payments going. Once that stops, as happened with both of these companies, their deficiencies become apparent very rapidly and the problem crystallises. It is absolutely vital at that point that a liquidator be appointed.

We know that the Ministry of Fair Trading and the Finance Brokers Supervisory Board were receiving complaints as early as 1996 about these pooled mortgage investment schemes - we have tabled letters in this place before today. They persistently said that they could do nothing, even though section 83 of the Finance Brokers Control Act makes it abundantly clear that they have the power and the responsibility to act. They have relied on a claim that the code of conduct does not cover the untoward conduct of brokers towards investors or borrowers. However, even if that were true, which it is not, they also at the same time two years ago received advice that they could deal with that matter very simply by making a change to the code of conduct. It did not require any parliamentary approval; it could simply have been done by their own fiat.

The ministry and the board have responsibility in this State to supervise finance brokers to protect investors. It is not the fundamental responsibility of the Australian Securities and Investments Commission; it is the responsibility of this agency and this minister. However, they have not so much as issued a consumer warning; they have not increased by one the staff who are responsible to the finance brokers unit to investigate these claims; they have done absolutely nothing.

Now the minister and the board have been asked to exercise their powers to apply to the District Court to have a supervisor appointed basically to liquidate the trust funds. Once a supervisor is appointed, he or she can apply under the Act to the Treasurer, who has the authority to pay the supervisor's costs. We now learn from a letter that was sent by the member for Bunbury to a constituent who asked whether the Government was prepared to act on that, that the Minister for Fair Trading has said, "No, we will not act on these powers, because to do so would constitute a precedent." What is this precedent phobia? On the basis that the minister is not prepared to use powers because it would set a precedent, it would mean that we would never enforce any legislation in this State. It may well be that it sets a precedent, but that is what the Act is there for. The minister, and his board's negligence, has allowed these appalling schemes to proliferate. It is time the minister was prepared to put up the money to protect these people.

**MR SHAVE** (Alfred Cove - Minister for Fair Trading) [9.42 am]: What we have heard this morning is the member for Armadale undertaking her usual attack on the Government and on the Finance Brokers Supervisory Board. Nothing that she has said is different from the attacks she has made during question time. However, we need to get a couple of things clearly on the record. The first is that what the member for Armadale is trying to do is to suggest that the Government is responsible for the personal activities of Mr Grubb and Mr Margaria. If Mr Margaria or Mr Grubb are acting as finance brokers, the Government is required and has a responsibility under the Act to investigate complaints against them, which it has done and about which this Parliament has been told in detail. When the member for Armadale has raised specific issues, I have gone to the department and obtained the detail of the investigations that have taken place.

Ms MacTiernan interjected.

Mr SHAVE: If the member for Armadale wants me to respond to her grievance, she should be quiet. If she will not allow me to respond, I will not respond. I have five minutes, and I will respond in those five minutes.

All the complaints going back to 1996 have been satisfactorily dealt with. What happened was that a large number of transactions inside these organisations were taking place which the investors did not know were taking place or they would not have kept investing with those people. The Government did not know they were taking place because it was never advised. One or two complaints a year were investigated regarding these people. That has applied to about another 20 or 30 finance brokers.

Ms MacTiernan interjected.

Mr SHAVE: I will not take interjections. I will answer the member's allegations. With respect to the advice that the member for Bunbury gave his constituent, what my policy staff told him was that if these companies appear to be in default, ASIC has a responsibility under its legislation to appoint a liquidator and it has a responsibility to investigate those issues. That is not in question. I think even the member for Armadale would accept that.

As to appointing a supervisor, the Government's position has been that the Finance Brokers Supervisory Board has the responsibility to make that decision - not the Government - and that position has been put to the board. The board will make that decision, not the Government. As soon as I start appointing supervisors and running the board, I am acting out of my area of responsibility. I can have my staff put that suggestion and discuss it with the board, but ultimately the board has the responsibility to make the decision. If the member for Armadale is suggesting I sack the board, I will make that decision if I believe it is acting inappropriately. I believe the board is discharging its functions at this time, and I have no reason to take that action against it.

What the member for Armadale will do with her ranting and raving and her public posturing is create a lot of pain and problems for many elderly people. She is an expert after the event - everyone is. It is like legal practitioners, of whom she is very aware. The Legal Practitioners Complaints Committee has the right to cause legal practitioners not to operate. The Finance Brokers Supervisory Board also has that right with brokers. However, the Legal Practitioners Complaints Committee cannot be held responsible if some crooked lawyer gets his hand in the till, robs a trust account and someone finds out about it afterwards. When that happens, that committee has the responsibility to investigate, to take action, to suspend, to fine. That is also the sort of responsibility of the Finance Brokers Supervisory Board.

Ms MacTiernan: There have been complaints from the public for 30 months.

Mr SHAVE: The member for Armadale talks about 30 months of complaints. The Finance Brokers Supervisory Board has had complaints forever, even when her team was in power, and it investigates them. The investigation of those specific complaints has been attended to. The board has behaved in a proper manner. The member for Armadale is saying that she has found out after the event that there is a specific problem within these companies. Everyone knows that from time to time complaints are made against finance brokers. The member for Armadale should allow the Finance Brokers Supervisory Board to do its job and not become a Johnny-come-lately -

Ms MacTiernan: There are 5 000 investors who have lost their money.

Mr SHAVE: Those 5 000 investors may lose their money because they put their money with a person they trusted who has deceived them - not the head of the Finance Brokers Supervisory Board. The board has been doing its job, and doing it very well.

## TRIGG BUSHLAND, SEWER LINE AND PUMP STATION

### *Grievance*

**MRS HODSON-THOMAS** (Carine) [9.50 am]: My grievance is directed to the Minister for Water Resources, and before I detail the concerns of the residents in my electorate, I commend the Minister for Water Resources for the ongoing infill sewerage program, from which many Western Australians have benefited, and which is a positive environmental initiative. However, I wish to raise the concerns of many of the people who reside in and around Trigg bushland, as well as the concerns of the Friends of Trigg Bushland, a voluntary community group which works in conjunction with the City of Stirling under a management plan adopted in 1991 to maintain and rehabilitate the existing native vegetation, care for the wildlife and remove introduced weeds, etc. These people have expressed concern about the proposal to locate a sewer line through the reserve and, furthermore, a pump station on this unique piece of bush.

For the information of members of this place and the minister, Trigg bushland is an A class reserve of 122 hectares in the metropolitan area. The brochure put out by the Friends of Trigg Bushland states -

Trigg Bushland is one of the few larger bushland reserves . . . It preserves a range of vegetation typical of the coastal strip, and exhibits a progression of soil and vegetation types found in no other metropolitan reserve. Trigg Bushland is an important habitat for resident wildlife and provides a sanctuary for birds moving from one bushland area to another.

It states also that it is -

an important breeding and feeding area for a variety of birds, reptiles, insects and spiders. . . . Sixty-five species of birds have been recorded. . . . The area is rich in reptiles, which include snakes, skinks, legless lizards, geckoes and dragon lizards.

The bushland to which I refer is bounded by Lynn Street to the north, Duart Road to the east, Karrinyup Road to the south and Arnott Street to the west. The concerns of the residents have been raised by what appear to be in the first instance only preliminary discussions about the location of a sewer line to connect to a pump station on the western side of the reserve at what is said to be the lowest-lying level. As the group states in its recent correspondence to me -

. . . the proposed gravity sewer alignment through the section of the reserve . . . would require excavation up to 6 metres. Should this occur, tree and shrub roots would be damaged and weakened, making them susceptible to disease and drought. Furthermore, we are concerned that in excavating this trench, vegetation would be destroyed and damaged and that the Council may then require branches and trees to be removed in the interest of public safety along this popular walking track.

More particularly, the concern of both the Friends of Trigg Bushland and the local community is that the proposed storage provision of the pump station will provide only a three-hour period of grace. As I am sure the minister can appreciate, the protection of vegetation given the pump station's location is critical, and I would appreciate the minister's assurances that it will have no detrimental impact on the integrity of the reserve. I understand from the information I have received from the minister that the site for the pump station adjacent to Arnott Street to the west, and on a section of the reserve which consists of mowed grass only, was considered after several other options had been looked at, and that it was considered the most feasible because it was at the lowest point. I ask the minister if consideration was given to locating the pump station to the south of the reserve on Karrinyup Road and along the northern perimeter of that road. While that may not be as low-lying as the former location I have mentioned, I seek the minister's counsel in the hope of considering the feasibility of excavating that stretch of road to locate, firstly, the sewer line and, secondly, the pump station. I trust the minister can provide me with assurances that once the decision has been made on this matter, all affected residents and other interested parties will be provided with all of the relevant information, and I ask whether the minister would be prepared to meet with the Friends of Trigg Bushland.

I am extremely mindful that the community has long awaited the connection to infill sewerage, and I assure the minister that it is certainly not my intention to delay the project, but I am concerned that the sewer line and pump station will blemish this unique bushland, and I sense that there will be resistance from the community. Can the minister advise me how large the site will be for the pump station; how much land will be required for it; and what is the likelihood of odours emanating from the station?

In summary, the areas of concern are-

Is an alternative site for both the sewer line and the pump station available; namely Karrinyup Road?

What will be the impact on the bushland reserve of the excavation of the sewer line and the location of the pump station?

How much land will be required for the pump station, and will any odours emanate from the station?

If there were a power failure, what would happen to the overflow after three hours - namely hours four, five, six, seven, etc - because our area is often plagued by extended power failures?

Is the minister prepared to meet with the Friends of Trigg Bushland?

**DR HAMES** (Yokine - Minister for Water Resources) [9.56 am]: I thank the member for Carine for taking such an interest in this issue. Obviously this issue is causing the local residents some degree of concern. I have already met the member for Carine to discuss this issue; and just yesterday I agreed to meet with the Friends of Trigg Bushland to try to address some of its concerns. The Water Cooperation needs to go through a range of processes before it can put infill sewerage into a particular area. The first is the preliminary design stage, where it makes known to the local residents what is being proposed. The proposal must then go through the local council and receive council support, and it must also receive support from the Department of Environmental Protection. Wide ranging public consultation must take place before the Water Corporation proceeds to that stage. It has not even reached the public consultation phase yet. It is at the very early stage where the Water Corporation lets people know what is being proposed.

As the member for Carine has said, this matter is causing some concern, and I gather it was a significant point in the recent local government elections. I have looked at the proposal in some detail to see what is the proposed route and the plan for the pump station. The proposed route through the bushland is designed to follow a limestone track. The depth of the sewer through that bushland will range from 1.5 metres to 2.7 m, so it will not be very deep. The limestone track was chosen because it already goes through the bushland, and the Water Corporation does not want to have to put the sewer line through any other area of that bushland that has not been disturbed in any way. The Water Corporation has told me it can virtually keep to the limestone track, given that it is about 1.5 m wide and there is a bit of clear bush in most places on either side of that track. It has said also that it is prepared to erect a fence one metre either side of that track to prevent workers and equipment from going into that adjacent bushland. The Water Corporation will just lift the path and place the sewer line underneath it, and then replace the path as it was so there is no evidence of that sewer line going through that bushland. In areas where the bushland comes right up to the path, or where there are significant trees that may be damaged, it is prepared to do micro-tunnelling underneath the path so that the path and those trees are not disturbed in any way.

I believe that is the best way to do it and the best site for it. One of the problems is the topography of the land. The member for Carine will know that that site has been designated for the pump station because it is on the lowest-lying land, and the station must operate through gravity feeding. Therefore, the pump station cannot be placed at the Karrinyup Road end, because the lie of the land rises again in that location. The Water Corporation is happy to look at all the options, and whatever the residents put up will be considered in some detail. As the member said, the proposed site of the pump station is an area of mowed grass and is not in the bushland at all, which is why it was chosen. I know the member has seen some pictures of other places where pump stations are located, particularly in the Yokine reserve, where all that can be seen is a small metal box and everything else is under lawn and totally invisible. That is the best site for it, and that is the proposal.

The reason for this proposal for a sewer line and pump station is that two areas of housing on each side of the Trigg bushland do not have infill sewerage, and those residents are very keen to have it. As the member knows, there are two reasons for putting in infill sewerage. One reason is the leaching from septic tanks into the underground water supply, which in itself may affect the bushland. The other reason is that the septic tanks need to be cleaned and people are spending a lot of money to get their septic tanks pumped out. We are prepared to delay this project - I know that may not be what some of the residents want - and to hang in and consult and discuss and wait until we have agreement not just from the local residents

but also from the council. I gather that one councillor made a stand on this issue to get into the council. We will ensure that we consult thoroughly on this matter, and not proceed with the infill sewerage until all of those issues have been adequately resolved. I apologise to the residents if it causes some delay. We will bend over backwards to try to comply with their wishes and not cause delay. It is a matter of practicality as to where it can go and what can be done.

Three hours' backup is the standard for all metropolitan pumping stations. If we have a power blackout for longer than three hours, contingencies can be applied by the Water Corporation and the backup period can be extended through alternatives. Indeed, it may be required by the Department of Environmental Protection to extend the backup as the station is located next to bushland. We have emergency pumping procedures and cutting procedures to protect the residents. These are part of the DEP assessment and consultation process. We cannot have enormous amounts of backup for all the sewerage in Western Australia as insufficient space is available for that purpose. We put in particularly stringent proposals along the river which address our concerns regarding past sewerage spills into the river. We are doing the same in other sensitive areas. This area is next to bushland, and we can look at applying some similar procedures.

I have covered the issues raised by the member for Carine. I am prepared to meet the people, and a meeting has already been arranged. The Government is keen to progress the infill sewerage program in Western Australia, but it will never be done by overriding concerns of local residents. A fair amount of infill work has been done in my electorate - prior to my appointment as minister, I add - as it was previously one of the worst areas in this regard. I have had no complaints from residents about the standard of management by the Water Corporation. It does an excellent job, and I will make sure it continues to do so.

The SPEAKER: Grievances noted.

### STANDING ORDERS AND PROCEDURE COMMITTEE

#### *Report on the Modernisation of the Standing Orders, Volumes 1 and 2*

**THE SPEAKER** (Mr Strickland): I table the report of the Joint Standing Orders and Procedure Committee, Volume 1 - the report - and Volume 2, which contains the existing standing orders, the proposed standing orders and the notes.

[See papers Nos 955A and 955B.]

The SPEAKER: I move -

That the reports be printed.

With the indulgence of the House, I will say a few words. I start with a word about the problem: This is the first complete rewrite of the standing orders of the Legislative Assembly in 100 years. The current standing orders are serviceable but do not reflect the procedures of this Chamber. It is necessary to refer to not only our standing orders, but also a range of past rulings and practices to understand the rules under which the Assembly operates. Many of our standing orders have become obsolete.

What are we doing about it? The recommended modernisation principles involve the use of plain English; a reformat of the orders to improve readability and flow; the streamlining of procedures; the retention of members' rights and the protection of the minority, which is very important; the deletion of obsolete standing orders; the rationalisation of the priority of business; and, most importantly, the incorporation of the current practices of the House.

What does all that add up to? When we have been through this extensive process, 25 per cent fewer standing orders remain. They are logically ordered and have a comprehensive index to allow members to find these things more easily.

The report provides four recommendations and a plan of attack. In such a process, which does not happen very often, the committee proposes a trial, feedback, adjustments and adoption of the standing orders. We recommend a trial for the new standing orders as a package in the second half of the year. We will call for a feedback opportunity for members so that the Standing Orders and Procedure Committee can consider the changes and make recommendations towards the end of the year. If the trial proceeds, it will be necessary to seek Legislative Council approval to allow Council committees to have general leave to communicate with Assembly committees. As members know, that communication is not easy at the moment, and we recommend that the situation be freed up.

As a committee, we have reflected in depth and worked for more than a year on the changes. We have looked at the perspective of both the Government and the Opposition. Care has been taken to ensure that the fairness of current practice is preserved. The committee has also taken the opportunity to provide some procedural reform to enhance the operations of the House. The Standing Orders and Procedure Committee has an ongoing brief to constantly ensure we have efficient and effective use of the time of the House. That is why some changes to procedures are recommended. I will not speak at length about the changes. Other members from the committee may want to do so. I will mention only a couple of these matters.

For instance, the committee recommends eliminating the need for leave to introduce a Bill. A copy of the Bill will be required at the first reading stage, and will require some explanatory notes.

Some members may wish to take their seats. They are being very attentive to standing orders and are standing quietly while I speak.

Mr Barnett: It is the power of the presentation.

The SPEAKER: A presentation from the Chair has not occurred since 1967, but a precedent exists.

The committee recommends the requirement of explanatory notes on Bills. I note that ministers are starting to bring in explanatory notes to aid debate on Bills. The committee recommends a standard three-week delay before the second reading debate is resumed following the second reading speech. That pretty well is current practice. If the Government deems a Bill to be urgent, as occurs from time to time, the Bill can proceed with urgency.

The standing orders are never set in concrete. A gradual evolution process has occurred over 100 years, and things are presently a little out of sync. Personally, I am confident that the Legislative Assembly in Western Australia is at the cutting edge of parliamentary reform. I have met many people from different Parliaments at many meetings in recent years. Members of the committee are constantly on the lookout for new ideas and practices to improve things.

Also, the committee recommends that we do away with private Bills. Members should not be confused - I do not refer to private members' Bills. Years ago, before we had the infrastructure of the current general legislation, if one wanted a divorce, one had to petition Parliament utilising the special process of a private Bill. Some of the early railways were established through such Bills. However, we have not printed the procedure for private Bills in the standing orders since 1968 as all Bills are now dealt with as public Bills. That is an example of an obsolete procedure.

I would also like to commend the members of the committee for the time they have given, because we have had a lot of meetings which have lasted quite a while. I just note that we have a reasonable degree of experience on the committee: The member for Geraldton, who is our deputy speaker; the member for Hillarys, who is Parliamentary Secretary to the Cabinet; the member for Belmont, who is the Deputy Leader of the Opposition; and the member for Midland, who handles the Opposition's House business. There is quite a degree of expertise. The committee has rarely been in conflict because its members carefully rationalise things and if they disagree, they put them aside to reflect on them. We truly believe that we have stood by the practices of the House and looked after everyone's interest.

I also commend the enormous amount of work done behind the scenes by the Clerks at the Table, Mr McHugh, Mr Carpenter and Mr Mandy, because they have diligently put together, reassembled and rearranged the standing orders and carried out all the cross-checking and got them to a stage at which the committee could consider them carefully. I commend their work; it is work that may not be done again for many, many years.

To summarise and conclude, the first volume will be available today. We intend to send a copy to every member's office. The first volume merely describes the proposed changes that we are making. The second volume is one of detail, which will come in a booklet form. On the left-hand page will be the existing standing orders and on the right-hand page the proposed standing orders and notes which explain the reasons for any changes. Members will see a lot of blanks on the right-hand page. Sometimes that is because some standing orders are obsolete and sometimes because we have rearranged the standing orders so that when members want to look something up, it is much easier to find it. The changes will affect every member in the House because they all look at standing orders, I am sure, from time to time. We believe the changes will enhance members' understanding and our understanding and it is simply time that standing orders were modernised. We can get the proposed standing orders through the House at the end of the year. If there are changes, that is fine, but I believe that the changes would be a good thing to do for the new millennium.

**MR BLOFFWITCH** (Geraldton) [10.14 am]: Mr Speaker, you have summed up the position very well. I would like to compliment you for driving us towards this goal. One of the major changes posed in the report by the Standing Orders and Procedure Committee is to the present committee system. Under the proposed system, Mr Speaker, you will be able to stay in the Chair, we will not move the Mace from one spot to another, and we will simply go into a Committee of the Whole. The Chamber will still go through the same procedures in committee, but instead of having to report back, it will simply resume business as normal. That is a progressive step. I am sure that hundreds of years ago there was a reason for Parliament going into the committee stage as it does. However, as we approach the millennium, I do not know whether we must continue in that way. The standing orders will be much clearer and easier to understand. They have been significantly condensed. Members will not have to learn as many of them under the proposed standing orders.

I am very pleased with the report. I ask members to read volume 1. It gives a fairly clear picture of where the changes come from, what we are doing and why we are doing it. Members will notice that none of the time limits for speeches has been altered. However, they have been reinforced - that is, the time limits will remain at 20 minutes and 10 minutes in a normal second reading debate and 45 minutes in a budget debate. I admit there was a talk about reducing the last time limit. I am sure that we will visit that on another day when we go through the standing orders again. All in all, I am very pleased to have been part of the change, which will make how the Chamber works simpler and clearer. I hope all members will find it easier to operate under the proposed standing orders.

We are also proposing changes to the presentation of petitions, by dropping the reference to the petitioner praying. The committee would be pleased to get some feedback on what members think of the proposed format. The proposed changes will make it easier for members to present petitions to the Parliament. The changes to the standing orders are an attempt to make the rules of the House easier to comply with and to make members feel more comfortable about them. If that is achieved, the Chamber will operate a lot better. I commend the report and ask members to look at it.

**MR RIPPER** (Belmont - Deputy Leader of the Opposition) [10.17 am]: I support the report of the Standing Orders and Procedure Committee. I hope the House will adopt it as a package and support the trial of the package which has been recommended.

Mr Osborne interjected.

Mr RIPPER: I doubt whether the state conference of the Australian Labor Party would take a close interest in the standing orders of the Legislative Assembly.

I assure the House that the report is not radical. It continues the pattern of modest reform in our standing orders which has been apparent in recent years. The committee members on both sides of politics have served in government and in opposition. They have taken care to incorporate the perspectives that government and opposition modes impose on our attitudes to standing orders. Although we have had modest reform in recent years, which I support and appreciate, it would be wrong to say that we have not in the past also had reform. Next week we will be embarking on the estimates committee process. That reform came about when Labor was in office. Before most question times we have brief ministerial statements. If my memory serves me correctly, brief ministerial statements also began during the Labor period in power. We have had good reform, albeit modest, in recent years. It would not be correct to conclude that there was no reform before that.

Although the committee has put forward a package of reforms, the committee cannot by itself achieve all of the required reforms. The Leader of the House has agreed that we should be considering a system of standing committees in this Chamber to replace the present ad hoc system of committees.

Mr Barnett: There is some differing of opinion on this side of the House. I support a standing committee system.

Mr Bloffwitch: So do I.

Mr RIPPER: It will be interesting to see how those differing opinions are resolved. The committee has recommended that the Leader of the House initiate a debate in the House on the question of a standing committee system. The proposed standing orders make allowance for the establishment of a set of standing committees. However, it has not proceeded to recommend a precise arrangement for standing committees. It has said there should be a debate in the House on the recommendations from numerous reports that we should have a standing committee system. The Leader of the House will probably note that it is the committee's recommendation that it should be his responsibility to initiate that debate.

Mr Barnett: I make an observation; it is not a crass political one. To set up a standing committee in an election year is not the ideal time if it is to succeed. That is the dilemma, because all of us would be focused on an election. If we were to pick an inappropriate time for a trial, it would be an election year. Nevertheless, I support it.

Mr RIPPER: I begin to understand some of the debates that are taking place on the government side of politics.

Mr Barnett: With respect, it will be more likely that opposition members will not want to be on standing committees in an election run-up. Any member in a marginal seat will be more interested in campaigning than sitting on standing committees.

Mr RIPPER: Our current system of select committees is an inefficient use of members' time and we would get better value for members' time and the resources of the House if we had a system of standing committees. The committee recommends this issue should be debated by the House. Knowing the concern that exists about some of the issues, we have not been so bold as to recommend a precise system of standing committees. There are plenty of recommendations before the House from previous reports. We have said that those recommendations should be responded to by way of debate in the House.

I express my appreciation of the cooperation that has existed within this committee between all members. It has been a productive and pleasant committee with which to work. Members have approached the issues raised with goodwill and great attention to the proposition that we are dealing with matters of long-term concern not short-term political advantage based on the positions that we currently occupy within the House. I also praise the work of the staff who have supported the committee. A great deal of work has gone into the report by the staff. I thank Peter McHugh, Doug Carpenter and John Mandy in particular for the work they have done. Their advice has been invaluable in the final result that is now before the House. I hope the House will accept the package that the committee has put forward. It is hard to tinker with the package because so much of it is interrelated. The best process for the House would be to accept a trial of the package. After the trial we could make any adjustments we need to make. If the House were to accept one part of the package and not another part, it would get into some trouble because of interrelationships that might arise.

I conclude by reminding the member for Hillarys that despite the fact I have a time limit of 10 minutes I have managed to complete my remarks within six minutes. Perhaps his advocacy within the committee is beginning to have the effect that he desires.

**MR JOHNSON** (Hillarys) [10.23 am]: It has been privilege to serve on this committee under the chairmanship of the Speaker. I had that privilege prior to this committee under the Standing Orders and Procedure Committee in the last term of the Government. Some of the work of this committee came from that committee. The Speaker has done an excellent job in chairing the meetings and guiding us through some difficult times.

I also compliment my fellow committee members, the member for Geraldton, the member for Belmont and the member for Midland, and I agree with the comments made so far that it has been a wonderful committee. We have all worked towards the one goal, which is to try to make the standing orders and procedures of this House come in line with the twenty-first century.

Many of the present standing orders have been in existence for 100 years. That is not to say they are wrong. I am a great believer in tradition and traditional values, and the recommendations in our report enhance those. It is proper that we should start using modern-day language not only in the Chamber but also in petitions that are presented to this House, so that the general public can understand them better. The deletion of the prayer at the end of a petition does not mean the wording is un-Christian. That change will bring the petition more in line with today's way of speaking.

The committee reflected in depth on both the impact of the proposed changes to standing orders with respect to both Government and Opposition, as has been said by previous colleagues. As the previous speaker said, we do not always agree

on everything but we disagree amicably. I could not get my way and convince members of the committee that we should streamline our procedures even more by reducing some speech times. By that I do not mean the number of times members can speak but the length of time they speak. A classic example is the budget debate. At the moment budget speeches can go for 45 minutes, whereas 30 minutes would be a more appropriate time. If a member cannot deliver a budget speech in 30 minutes he or she should not be in this Chamber.

Mrs Roberts: There are so many problems with the delivery of government services we could speak for three hours.

Mr JOHNSON: A lot of the budget speeches I have heard so far have not been about the budget, but other issues in members' electorates. It is a general debate.

Mrs Roberts: You have not heard my speech.

Mr JOHNSON: No, I have not, and I am waiting with bated breath.

Mr Thomas: I will send you the *Hansard* of my speech.

Mr JOHNSON: Please, do not; I want to sleep at night.

I will be brief because I like to practice what I preach. The general principle is the streamlining of the procedure. However, we will still retain the right of all members to contribute to the House and to protect the minority. The committee also believes in the rationalisation in the priority of the business of the House, and in the incorporation of current practices into standing orders. It believes in the elimination of obsolete standing orders which have not been used for many years, and in the use of plain English. That is most important.

I promised that I would not be long, and I will conclude by also thanking the staff members on the committee, not only Peter McHugh, Doug Carpenter and John Mandy but also Corinne Briant, who has assisted the clerks and did a tremendous job in working her fingers overtime on the computer. We have received some fantastic draft reports. I also thank Tamara Fischer, who is no longer with us, and Keith Kendrick for their assistance. A tremendous amount of the written work was done by Corinne and she should receive recognition for that. I will keep my word; I have spent half the time I was allotted.

**MRS ROBERTS** (Midland) [10.30 am]: I endorse the comments of other members in the House on the tabling of this report by the Standing Orders and Procedure Committee on the modernisation of standing orders. I join with my fellow committee members in thanking other members of the committee and the Speaker for the very productive time spent updating the standing orders. It has involved many hours and days of work, and potentially many more hours and days of work for those who contributed to the rewriting of the standing orders. I particularly thank the Clerk of the Legislative Assembly, Mr Peter McHugh; the Deputy Clerk, Mr Doug Carpenter; and the Clerk Assistant, Mr John Mandy for their support and cooperation. I also thank other staff who have put long hours into this rewrite.

It is highly appropriate as we approach the new millennium to update the standing orders, many of which are 100 years old. Of course, it may have been appropriate to do it before now, but it has been a mammoth task to bring the standing orders to modern practice and currency, using plain English and non-gender specific language. The task has been handled extremely well by the committee and the staff who advised it. I commend members to attempt to embrace the trial. Perhaps it has not gone as far as it could have in modernising the practices of this place, but it goes a very long way towards that.

It is often said that the process of change is slow; however, this report represents the biggest leap taken this century in changing the standing orders of this House. The new format of the standing orders will provide a much better framework, and that will assist new members to locate and understand the standing orders. It will also make future updates much easier within the framework that has been established. I again thank fellow members of the committee and the staff for their cooperation, and I commend this report to members of the House.

Question put and passed.

#### **STANDING ORDERS AND PROCEDURE COMMITTEE - GRLJUSICH, MR JOHN**

##### *Response to Report of Inquiry into the City of Cockburn*

**MR BLOFFWITCH** (Geraldton) [10.32 am]: I have a report under Standing Order No 165A from Mr John Grljusich, who wishes to have his statement incorporated in *Hansard*. The committee has considered the report and recommends that this be done. Therefore, I move -

That the report be adopted.

Question put and passed.

Mr BLOFFWITCH: The response is as follows -

**Response from John Grljusich in response to statements in the report of enquiry into the City of Cockburn, tabled in the Legislative Assembly by the Hon P.D. Omodei MLA, Minister for Local Government, on 20 April 1999**

#### **BACKGROUND FACTS**

- 1 I was initially elected to Cockburn City Council in 1983.
- 2 I have served as a Councillor at the City of Cockburn for nearly 16 years.

- 3 I was elected Mayor in May 1997.
- 4 During my period as a Councillor and a Mayor I believe that I have faithfully served the people of Cockburn.
- 5 At no stage during my term as a Councillor or Mayor have I ever sought to obtain an advantage for myself or any entity related to me by improper use of my position as a Councillor.
- 6 I deny having acted in a manner that has placed me in a situation where I have a conflict of interest and I deny any impropriety on my part whatsoever.

**FULL DISCLOSURE**

- 7 The Report of the Inquiry into the City of Cockburn prepared by Gary Martin and Laurie Vicary and dated 29 March 1999 ("the Report") alleges, amongst other things, that I "took no steps to avoid the perception (I) was using (my) office in respect of 'the property' ". The Report also states that "my dealings in relation to the property were inappropriate".
- 8 At all times I:
- (i)disclosed my interest in Peremate Holdings Pty Ltd (ACN 076 655 055) ("Peremate") which is the owner of the property known as Lot 17 Hamilton Road, Spearwood ("the Property");
  - (ii)did not vote on any Council business concerning the Property;
  - (iii)arranged for the secretary of Peremate Holdings Pty Ltd (ACN 076 655 055) ("Peremate") to correspond with the City of Cockburn ("the City") in relation to the Property. At no stage did I personally correspond on behalf of Peremate with the City in relation to the Property; and
  - (iv)ensured that Peremate followed the appropriate legal procedures in relation to all dealings with the City, the Western Australian Planning Commission ("WAPC") and all other parties in relation to the Property.
- 8.1 Neither Peremate nor myself have obtained any direct or indirect financial advantage from any of my actions or the actions of the City.
- 8.2 At all material times I have been extremely frank in relation to Peremate's interest in the Property.
- 8.3 All aspects of the process concerning Peremate's submissions and correspondence with the City in relation to the Property have been the subject of intense scrutiny. In particular I note that:
- (i)Councillor Ostojich made several inquiries and received several lengthy letters from the City concerning the Property and the Packham development area ("PDA");
  - (ii)the City obtained detailed legal advice from its solicitors McLeod & Co. At one meeting of the Council held on 22 June 1998 concerning the Property, Council's solicitor Denis McLeod was present;
  - (iii)several ratepayers, including Maria Anna Mastaglia and Virginia Panizza (who were represented by solicitors) and Claude Della Bona, queried the process adopted by the City in relation to compensation for public open space and drainage ("POS"); and
  - (iv)Peremate appealed to the WAPC in relation to the WAPC's conditions concerning the POS.
- 8.4 The Report notes that Council requested the Chief Executive Officer Mr Rod Brown and the Director of Planning and Development Services Mr Steve Hiller to meet with the Minister for Local Government on 17 June 1998.
- 8.5 I in fact met the Minister with Cr Pecotic at 1.00pm on 18 June 1998 not 17 June 1998. The Minister's statement which accompanied the Report is incorrect in this regard.
- 8.6 I in fact met the Minister at 1.00 pm on 18 June 1998.
- 8.7 The entire transaction relating to the Property has been the subject of extensive discussion and scrutiny involving:
- (i)the Council administration;
  - (ii)the WAPC;
  - (iii)Members of Parliament including Simon O'Brien MLC and the Hon. Graham Kierath MLA;
  - (iv)all Councillors of the City;
  - (v)the City's solicitors, McLeod & Co; and
  - (vi)the Minister for Local Government, the Hon. P Omodei.

**BREACH OF SECTION 20C OF TOWN PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT ACT 1928**

- 8.8 It is apparent from the advice of the City's solicitors, McLeod & Co, that the City's officers have not complied with section 20C of the Town Planning and Development Act 1928 ("the Act") in relation to the application of funds paid as cash in lieu for public open space ("POS").
- 8.9 It was the responsibility of the City to collect and hold in trust funds paid as cash in lieu for POS. This did not occur in relation to the monies collected by Urban Focus. I sought to draw this to the attention of the Minister for Local Government during the course of my meeting with the Minister on 18 June 1998. In my capacity as Mayor I requested the Minister to inquire into this matter.
- 8.10 It was my view that the City was obliged to hold in trust funds paid as cash in lieu for POS by reason of the City of Cockburn's District Zoning Scheme No. 1 Amendment No. 240 and previous WAPC approvals for subdivision. I refer in particular to clause 7 of Amendment No. 240.
- 8.11 My view that it was the City's responsibility to hold in trust funds paid as cash in lieu for POS was reinforced by the view of CMS Urban Consultants (now known as Urban Focus). I refer to CMS Urban Consultants' letter to the City dated 25 November 1989.
- 8.12 At a meeting of the City's Planning and Building Committee held on Tuesday 30 May 1989 the City resolved to hold in trust any monies collected in respect of cash in lieu for POS in the Packham Development Area and to use those funds in the acquisition, development and management of land for those purposes. The resolution of the Committee was ratified by Full Council at its June 1989 meeting.
- 8.13 The real issue is the City's failure to:
- (1) collect and hold in trust monies paid as cash in lieu for POS as prescribed by Amendment 240, in accordance with previous WAPC approvals for subdivision in the Packham Urban Development area and the City itself;
  - (2) properly apply funds in the sum of \$222,934.00 in accordance with section 20C of the Act; and
  - (3) properly report the transaction relating to the payment of \$222,934.00 to the Council.

**THE REPORT**

## Term of Reference 6.1

- 9.1 I have always exercised my judgement independently.
- 9.2 I do not belong to any faction on Council.

## Term of Reference 6.2

- 9.3 I agree with the Report's statement that most of the Councillors and staff believe that the working relationship between the elected members was generally satisfactory.

## Term of Reference 6.3

- 9.4 The allegation that some of the elected members have adopted a forceful debating style and this is seen to the other members to be intimidating is nonsense.
- 9.5 There has been no poor chairmanship on my behalf.
- 9.6 There is no evidence to support the allegation that council meetings are sometimes unruly.
- 9.7 In relation to the alleged "conflict" between Councillor Ostojich and myself I note that the authors of the Report do not dispute my response.
- 9.8 I now turn to the Report's recommendations on pages 89 and 90. I state as follows:
- (a) I have always abided by the Council Code of Conduct. Consequently I do not see why I should provide a separate undertaking to the Minister of Local Government that I will abide by the Code.
  - (b) I am not prepared to acknowledge that I have not properly fulfilled my role as Mayor.
  - (c) I am not prepared to issue a public apology. I have always disclosed my interest in the property known as Lot 17 Hamilton Road, Spearwood ("the Property").

**JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON THE ANTI-CORRUPTION COMMISSION***First Annual Report*

**MR THOMAS** (Cockburn) [10.33 am]: I present for tabling the first annual report of the Joint Standing Committee on the Anti-Corruption Commission, and I move -

That the report be printed.

[See paper No 954.]

Mr THOMAS: This is the first annual report of the Joint Standing Committee on the Anti-Corruption Commission. Obviously, as its title implies, it is the intention of the committee that this be an annual event, that each year the standing committee will present a report to the Parliament on its activities and review the situation within its terms of reference.

The committee has detailed terms of reference which are enumerated in the report, but broadly they are to oversee the Anti-Corruption Commission, and a general wide-ranging brief on matters of official corruption and serious improper conduct within the public sector. This is a very important committee and a very important function for three reasons. First, the ACC reports directly to the Parliament rather than the Government. Of course it is not practical for the Parliament as a whole to oversee this body and that responsibility must be delegated to a group of members. The committee system is obviously the way to do that. Secondly, the Joint Standing Committee on the Anti-Corruption Commission is important, not only because of the functional aspect of reporting directly to the Parliament but also because of the subject matter. Most members will agree that few matters are more important than ensuring that the public sector in this State - which employs many thousands of people - is free from official corruption and serious improper conduct. Its subject matter is very important. The third reason it is important that a committee such as this should exist is that, because of the importance of the subject matter and the potential covert nature of the activities it seeks to eliminate, the ACC has extraordinary powers. Those powers can impact on the rights of citizens, and it is important that there be a body within the Parliament to ensure that the ACC does not overstep its mark. Although its mission and functions are very important, so too are the rights of citizens. Parliament should ensure that it discharges its obligation to protect the rights of the citizens of this State.

For those reasons the Joint Standing Committee on the Anti-Corruption Commission is an important committee, and it should report regularly to the Parliament. Since the committee was established two years ago it has published seven reports, a number of them on specific matters. Some of those matters have been raised with the committee and some it inquired into of its own motion and are of a more general nature. I will canvas one or two of them later. The committee has made recommendations on improving a number of matters, including the legislation under which the Anti-Corruption Commission operates and by the creation of a new office. It seems the Government is not inclined to accept the latter recommendation and I hope to enumerate the reasons that the committee believes it is important that the recommendation be accepted, notwithstanding that the Government appears chary of accepting it.

An important part of the role of the Joint Standing Committee on the Anti-Corruption Commission is ensuring that the ACC is effective. To do that, the committee must have information about the activities of the ACC. However, it is necessarily the case that the committee cannot have access to detailed operational information. Access to that information is prohibited by the committee's terms of reference, unless the ACC wants to make the information available to the committee. Therefore, it is difficult for the committee to know what the ACC is doing other than in a general sense. The ACC has been operating for only two years, and the relationship between it and the committee has been evolving, and formats for reports have been devised.

Pages 4 and 5 of the first annual report contain some statistics, including statistics from the quarterly reports received from the ACC. These statistics indicate the nature of matters raised with the ACC, the areas of government to which they relate and the actions that have been taken. The report also contains information on the ACC's activities and how effective it has been. Table 3 at page 5 sets out some information. These statistics are also included in the reports of the ACC. In the two years to 31 October 1998, 605 matters have been raised with the ACC, which is approximately six a week or one a day. A significant number of matters have been raised with the ACC. Only 36 of those 600-odd matters led to criminal action, and 150 were dismissed as being unsubstantiated, or been found to be inconclusive or dealt with in disciplinary ways. There is a tendency for not only those looking at bodies like the Anti-Corruption Commission, but also the commissions themselves, to use as a performance measure the number of scalps captured; that is, the number people successfully prosecuted for criminal matters. This is an unfortunate way of looking at things, and is not a proper performance indicator. If the Anti-Corruption Commission were to report that it had received X complaints and they were all unsubstantiated, we should all be very glad about that because it would mean the level of criminal conduct, serious improper conduct or official corruption within the public sector is very low or non-existent. We should not use as a measure of the success of these organisations the number of scalps they take. It may well be that there is not a lot of corruption in the public sector; I believe that is the case. If there is a low level of prosecution, that may be all for the good because it means not many offences are committed to warrant such prosecution.

The question of access to information arose in a report by this committee tabled last year in relation to Detective Sergeant Coombs who had made complaints about the Anti-Corruption Commission. To deal with those complaints we needed access to information. The Anti-Corruption Commission was prepared to make it available to us. It was at its discretion; it could have chosen not to. The committee was able to investigate the matter and came up with the conclusions contained in the report tabled in the House last year. Had the ACC not been of a mind to provide that information, we could not have investigated the matter and the complaint of Detective Sergeant Coombs would not have been dealt with. There is a need for some means to deal with complaints against the Anti-Corruption Commission. The committee recommended the creation of an office of parliamentary inspector, comprising a person with the appropriate powers, who could go to the ACC, gain access to all its operational information and documents, and answer to the committee, but who would not make that information available to us. This officer would act as an ombudsman who could deal with the complaints and talk to the committee about them. The committee would have the confidence that a person, apart from someone in the ACC, could access the information and deal with the complaints.

It is important that that recommendation be accepted. As I understand it, the Government has indicated that it is up to this committee to oversee the Anti-Corruption Commission, and that the committee takes that responsibility, but it cannot do that successfully without information. I might add, the committee does not want access to detailed documentation. It would be inappropriate for a parliamentary committee to have access to detailed operational information. When it investigated matters

raised by Detective Sergeant Coombs, it was given information - the identity of informants and those sorts of things - which it was told could conceivably put the lives of people at risk. I do not want the burden of possessing information like that; I prefer not to have it. I do not want it and it is not appropriate that parliamentary committees should have that sort of information. I am very disappointed that the Government has indicated it is not prepared to accept that recommendation. I hope it reconsiders that position. It need not be expensive or a big deal, but it is most important.

One of the committee's important roles is to protect citizens against the Anti-Corruption Commission. The ACC has quite significant powers. In some circumstances it has the power to compel evidence. Neither the Police Force nor most law enforcement bodies has that power. It makes it possible for the rights of individuals to be infringed. There have been instances where those powers have been exercised by special investigators. Members of this committee have seen transcripts of public officers being questioned by a special investigator where the questions asked were the most personal questions imaginable about their lives. Normally when citizens are asked those questions by the police, they can say that they do not want to give the answer because it is their business. Citizens have the right not to give information. In this case the person being questioned is forced to answer.

We have created a body that has quite extraordinary powers. There is scope, at the very least, for that to lead to not only breaches of privacy but also to abuse, although I am not suggesting it happened in this case of the ACC. We regard it as our role as a committee not only to protect citizens generally by combatting corruption, but also, concurrently, to protect citizens against the Anti-Corruption Commission. In my view in at least one instance in this State a public officer has been rendered an injustice by the ACC. This matter is on the public record and involved a police officer who was charged with failing to answer a question correctly, or with giving misleading information, to an Anti-Corruption Commission special investigator about a very personal and salacious aspect of his life. He was charged - he went through the public embarrassment of being charged - and then the charges were withdrawn. In this case the injustice was that the Anti-Corruption Commission - incidentally it does not accept this was an injustice, but I do - did not ensure there was congruence between the laying of the charges and the taking of action in the courts.

Normally a final decision about whether a prosecution proceeds is a matter determined by the Director of Public Prosecutions. In this case the Anti-Corruption Commission arrested a man - he went through the public process of being charged and having the nature of the charge placed on the record for his family and everyone else to see what was implied by the fact that such a charge was preferred against him - and then the charge was withdrawn. If the evidence was not there for the matter to proceed in the first instance, he should never have been charged. When it comes to sensitive matters, where the preferring of the charge, in itself - apart from the finding of guilt - will cause a great deal of discomfort and stress to a person, it seems to me that an authority, be it the Police Force or the Anti-Corruption Commission or any other body, should not proceed with the arrest until it is accepted that the responsible prosecuting authority will proceed with the matter. So far as I am aware that is the grossest injustice that the ACC has perpetrated on any citizen in Western Australia. It is necessary to have watch dogs to ensure it does not misuse its powers.

Towards the end of the report, the committee deals with other recommendations and refers to matters to be considered during this year. One of them is the general view of monitoring the overall extent of official corruption in Western Australia. We must understand that an anti-corruption industry now exists in this State; the professional standards portfolio of the Police Force comprises the internal affairs unit, the internal investigations unit, the public sector investigations unit, and now the Anti-Corruption Commission comprising 30 detectives. It is the job of 87 detectives and 64 support staff to prevent and detect official corruption and serious improper conduct in the public sector, and of course there is the Public Sector Standards Commission. Our committee wants to ensure that all of those resources are being used properly because an almost exponential increase has occurred in the number of people doing this, and I wonder if the extent of corruption in the public sector in Western Australia justifies that.

The activities to be considered in 1999 include a recommendation that a review clause should be placed in the Anti-Corruption Commission Act. A body has been created with unprecedented powers in the state jurisdiction of Western Australia which is treading in new fields not only in terms of its powers, but also in terms of its subject matter. The review should determine, or at least recommend, whether the jurisdiction of the body should be expanded or diminished, and how it is operating, and whether that body should continue to operate, both in terms of the resources that are allocated to it and whether the powers that it has are justified. I think that is most appropriate. A view is held that all public bodies should have some sort of sunset clause; in this case particularly it is justified. We are proposing that the legislation should be inserted in the ACC Act by amendment during the life of this Parliament, but that the review should take place five years after the ACC was created. Assuming that the next election occurs in late 2000 or early 2001, it would mean that that review would take place after the next election, but not long after it. That is the time when a dispassionate review could be done of a body such as this. It can be politically controversial, but the rights of people in Western Australia have fundamental principles, and fundamental questions go to the integrity of our public sector. It would be most appropriate if a systematic review of this legislation and the operations of the ACC were undertaken. The committee is making the sort of recommendation that should take place early in the life of the next Parliament, so it could be considered dispassionately and not in the lead up to an election in circumstances in which people might want to make political capital. That recommendation is before the Parliament as well. I thank the staff of the committee, the research officer Alphonse de Kluwyer, the secretary Peter Frantom, and the other members who have served us so well.

**MR BLOFFWITCH** (Geraldton) [10.53 am]: As this is an annual report, this is the right time to address my many concerns about this committee. I am concerned that as a committee of the Parliament, it cannot do the job that is expected of it. It cannot evaluate whether the ACC is doing its job effectively in the pursuit of corruption in this State. The committee is being held back because it cannot interfere in any of the operational matters. Whenever it asks for information, all matters are deemed operational. That is the reason that other States have established positions for people called inspectors general

and inspectors - people who liaise between the committee and their anti-corruption committees. For example, the committee could tell an inspector general that it is worried about a procedure that was adopted or the way the police have gone about an inquiry and ask him to investigate. He would have the power to investigate those matters and advise the committee whether he is satisfied with the way the procedure was adopted or the inquiry was carried out. I believe that members of that committee waste their time being on that committee. It receives complaints from people that the ACC has not dealt with them correctly. How can the committee evaluate those complaints? It cannot demand that the ACC tell it how it handled a procedure; it cannot do a thing. I believe that the manner in which the ACC was set up has caused much confusion. I am not even sure whether the three temporary commissioners are sure whether they are investigators, whether they are the commission, or whether - to use the example of Mr Miller - they are the special investigators. I can understand why they believe they are special investigators, because we gave them the powers to which the member for Cockburn referred, particularly the power to compel people to talk only at the investigative stage. They do not have that power at the general inquiry stage. I have been told by other anti-corruption committees that if we were half fair dinkum about what the committee was doing, we would give the commissioners that power. They have not been given that power. Each of them has been isolated from the other. I still shake my head and wonder why that was ever thought necessary. There are many problems with the perception that this committee can do its job overseeing the ACC. I ask the Government to re-consider the terms of reference of the committee and to appoint an inspector general if it wants any sort of quality reports to be made to this House.

Question put and passed.

**JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON UNIFORM LEGISLATION AND INTERGOVERNMENTAL AGREEMENTS REPORT ON FINANCIAL SYSTEM REFORM**

*Report*

**MR MINSON** (Greenough) [10.57 am]: I present for tabling the twenty-third report of the Standing Committee on Uniform Legislation and Intergovernmental Agreements entitled "Report on Financial System Reform". I move -

That the report be printed.

[See paper No 955.]

Mr MINSON: The committee was pleased to be contacted by the Treasury Department to give advice on this matter. I thank Treasury and the Treasurer for that courtesy. This committee, like all committees of the Parliament, has much to offer, but often it gets to offer it after the event. On this occasion, the Treasury is to be congratulated for referring this matter to the committee. It gives the Parliament the opportunity to have an informed say. Indeed, it is a courtesy not only to the committee but also to Parliament so that Parliament can be properly informed when the proposed legislation is tabled.

As I have said, it is the twenty-third report and it considers financial system reform and the proposed intergovernmental agreement on the transfer of regulatory responsibility for credit unions. Building societies and friendly societies from the States and Territories to the Commonwealth. It is interesting that from time to time, particularly in far-flung States such as Western Australia, Queensland and, to a certain extent, South Australia, we try to resist the flow of power and, therefore, control from our own jurisdiction to that of the federal sphere, but it is our responsibility to ensure that decisions are made responsibly and in the best interests of the citizens of the State. I always approach such matters not from the point of view of what is constitutionally our power or the Commonwealth's power, but rather what is good management in the best interests of the people of this State. Although it might seem a little strange, Parliament should support the legislation. There has been agreement at national ministerial and Premier levels; proceeding with agreement rather than by unilateral takeover, is the appropriate way to harmonise legislation and transfer power from the States to the Commonwealth.

The report is a response to the notification to the standing committee of the Treasurer of Western Australia of an intergovernmental agreement between the Commonwealth, States and Territories to transfer supervisory and regulatory responsibility for credit unions, building societies and friendly societies from the States and Territories to the Commonwealth. Giving effect to the agreement will require some legislative amendments which are expected to be introduced into Parliament fairly shortly. The purpose of the agreement and the proposed legislative amendment is part of the required legislative process to provide national uniform regulation of the financial sector and to bring credit unions, building societies and friendly societies within the national regulatory framework.

The current proposed reforms and agreements build on changes that have occurred in the non-bank financial institution sector and culminated in the review of the whole financial sector in the financial system inquiry of 1997 - commonly known as the Wallis inquiry - which recommended changes to regulatory reform of the Australian financial system. A national prudential regulatory system for all financial institutions was agreed to by all Australian Governments, and the implementation of the arrangements requires legislative amendment by the Commonwealth, States and Territories. The report examines the background to changes to the Australian financial system and the need for harmonisation of prudential standards and uniformity in regulatory requirements in the financial industry.

I take this opportunity to thank my fellow committee members. Our deputy chairman is about to speak on the matter. I also thank our legal and research officer, Melina Newnan, the clerk of the committee, Peter Frantom, and our secretary-stenographer, Pat Roach, for all the hard work that they put into the matter.

Our recommendation is that appropriate legislative amendments be enacted for the purposes of achieving the arrangements for the transfer of regulatory responsibility for certain financial institutions from Western Australia to the Commonwealth. I hope that, in doing that, we have good, appropriate legislation in place at the national level. I am reminded that some years

ago control of part of the financial system in the companies and securities sphere was transferred reluctantly from the State to the Commonwealth; building societies and so on collapsed through the 1980s and there was a perceived need, for some reason, to transfer that matter to Canberra. For some strange reason it was assumed that Canberra would manage it better. I am particularly disappointed that the system has not improved very much; we still see the collapse of certain institutions in which people have invested money. We have seen several recent examples of that in Western Australia.

It behoves the national Parliament to put in place a system that works to protect particularly the aged who wish to invest their hard-earned savings with some security. Now we have the opportunity to transfer completely the control of financial institutions to central government. It behoves it to look at the way in which the system operates and to make sure that people who invest in such institutions can do so with confidence. It should be a hallmark of Australia that people are able to deposit their moneys with confidence, that the rules and regulations surrounding those institutions - and they are given considerable privileges - are applied, and that people can draw out their money in the future and, therefore, rest easy in respect of that matter. I commend the report to the House.

**MR RIEBELING** (Burrup) [11.05 am]: The twenty-third report of the Standing Committee on Uniform Legislation and Intergovernmental Agreements is ironic. The actions of the previous Lawrence Government in respect of non-bank financial institutions legislation gave birth to the committee. In fact the Minister for the Environment chaired the committee. Seven years later, we find that the imperative to have a financial structure in which the Commonwealth deliberately was not involved is now about to change absolutely and that powers are to be given to the Commonwealth. It is ironic also that the reason for the committee is now being changed dramatically. That process was an example of how to achieve uniformity without involving the Commonwealth. There was a genuine desire on the part of all States to avoid the Commonwealth taking control of non-bank financial institutions, but now we find that all States agreed - I think it was in 1997 - that the Commonwealth should take control of those authorities and should have regulations governing banks and institutions along the same lines.

From what I have been led to believe, the uniform legislation did not involve the Commonwealth actually achieving uniformity within the industry in which it sought to achieve it. The process was not flawed in that regard; it was just thought that the rules under which the banks operated should extend to other institutions as well so that we would gain some uniformity throughout the entire industry rather than have banks separate from other financial institutions.

The report is simple; it does not go to hundreds of pages. There is only one recommendation, and it is that the Western Australian Parliament should allow the process to occur. It probably should have occurred in 1992, and that would have guaranteed uniformity throughout the entire industry rather than allow sections of it to operate differently under state rather than federal controls. We welcome the Treasurer's giving the committee some forewarning of the introduction of the legislation. That was sensible. If other ministers who are considering other uniform legislation take that appropriate action, they too will receive a report as quickly as our report was produced. We completed the report in a couple of months. It is not one which requires the House to think long and hard. It gives a quick summary of the history, background and reasons, and there is only one recommendation.

I would also like to thank my fellow committee members and the chairman. The member for Girrawheen has elected not to speak on this motion and I am speaking for both of us to speed up the work of this House. I thank Melina Newnan for her research on this matter; once again we have been served extremely well by Melina's efforts. I thank Peter Frantom for his work with the committee, especially for the improvement in the breakfasts we have had over the past six months or so.

Mr Cunningham: They have done an excellent job, haven't they?

Mr RIEBELING: An exceptional job. I also thank Pat Roach, a person who people never see in this place but who always produces outstanding work. She works to a very high standard for a number of committees. In closing, I once again recommend that members read the report. It is historical and I am sure the Minister for the Environment will vividly remember the original committee; I am the only member of that committee serving on this one.

Dr Constable: A great survivor.

Mr RIEBELING: I am on this committee only until I become a minister in about 18 months. Someone else will need to take over then.

Mr Prince: In the year 2020 and not before.

Mr RIEBELING: In 18 months. I recommend that members support the motion.

Question put and passed.

## STATE FORESTS - REVOCATION OF DEDICATION

### *Motion*

**MRS EDWARDES** (Kingsley - Minister for the Environment) [11.11 am]: I move -

That the proposal for the revocation of State Forest No 69 laid on the Table of the Legislative Assembly on the 6 May 1999 by command of His Excellency the Governor be carried out, and that the Legislative Council be requested to agree to a similar resolution.

The Government proposes to revoke the dedication of state forest No 69 so that the land involved - about 12.3 hectares - can be sold. Although pine trees in the area were once an important source of *pinus pinaster* seed, they are no longer

required for that purpose. The Government has made a commitment to establish a state-of-the-art police academy next to the Edith Cowan University and the West Coast College of TAFE in Joondalup. About 3 ha at the northern end of state forest No 69 have been earmarked for inclusion in the police academy. The balance of the forest is located in the middle of the Edith Cowan University campus and already contains some campus facilities. It is currently leased to the university to allow the progressive development of more facilities. The university would like to acquire the area and negotiations to that end are continuing. Notwithstanding future development, many of the existing pine trees on state forest No 69 are likely to be retained. The Department of Conservation and Land Management will ensure that it can continue to access genetic material from these trees as a backup for other seed orchards.

The revocation proposal was referred to the Department of Land Administration, the Department of Minerals and Energy, the Ministry for Planning and the City of Joondalup for comment and no objections were made by these instrumentalities. The Department of Land Administration is in the process of assessing the native title implications. It has also prepared a draft notice of intention to take the area required for the police academy for the purpose of a public work. This notice includes a statement to the effect that the taking of the land will proceed only if the revocation of state forest No 69 takes place. The proposed revocation has been endorsed by the Lands and Forest Commission, the vesting body for state forests, which must be consulted about any plans to alter the forest estate by revocation. I recommend the motion to the House and ask members to support it.

Question put and passed and a message accordingly transmitted to the Council.

### **SELECT COMMITTEE ON CRIME PREVENTION**

*Leave to Sit*

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

That leave be granted for the Select Committee on Crime Prevention to meet during meetings of the Estimates Committees and when the House is sitting during the week commencing 1 June 1999.

### **WATER SERVICES COORDINATION AMENDMENT BILL 1999**

*Second Reading*

**DR HAMES** (Yokine - Minister for Water Resources) [11.14 am]: I move -

That the Bill be now read a second time.

The Water Services Coordination Amendment Bill 1999 provides for the establishment of the Plumber Licensing Board and the shifting of responsibility for the licensing of plumbers from the Water Corporation to a board with licensing, inspectorial, customer complaint and advisory responsibilities. The proposed board will be responsible for all occupational licensing decisions for plumbers operating in Western Australia, including interstate and internationally trained plumbers seeking registration and licensing in order to operate in this State.

In 1995 the water industry in Western Australia was restructured in response to the national competition policy which required that service provision and the regulatory functions of Government be separated. Previously all aspects of water service provision and regulation were administered by the old Water Authority. The restructure of the water industry resulted in the separation of the Water Authority into two entities - the Water Corporation and the Water and Rivers Commission - and the establishment of a new entity, the Office of Water Regulation under the Water Services Coordination Act 1995.

The Water Services Coordination Amendment Bill 1999 proposes the establishment of a board with functions related to the licensing of plumbers and with regulation making powers in respect of performance of plumbing work. To ensure the board remains publicly accountable, the Minister for Water Resources will have the power to give directions to the board and to access information in possession of the board. Furthermore, the activities of the board will be regarded as services under the control of the Office of Water Regulation in relation to the application of the Financial Administration and Audit Act 1985. The main role of the board will be to administer and approve applications for licensing and registration of journeymen and licensed plumbers and drainers. The board will make recommendations to the minister on standards of plumbing work, competency requirements and any changes required to those standards or requirements. The board will also have a role in investigating complaints from licensed service providers and customers/purchasers of plumbing services. By way of regulatory powers, the board will have the ability to undertake disciplinary hearings, impose fines and suspend or cancel licences in the event of noncompliance with by-laws or regulatory requirements. Although not a primary role, it is expected that the board will, when possible, undertake a community education role to publicly promote the benefits of employing suitably qualified plumbers.

The minister will appoint all members of the board from nominations by sectorial groups and public advertising. The board will be made up of nine members and the chairperson will be appointed by the Minister for Water Resources from the membership. It is anticipated that the board will meet monthly and will be paid sitting fees in accordance with the reimbursement levels recommended by the Department of Premier and Cabinet. The proposed board members are as follows -

Two licensed plumbers nominated by the Master Plumbers and Mechanical Services Association to represent their country and metropolitan members.

Two licensed plumbers nominated by the Minister for Water Resources to represent independent (non-MPMSA or non-union) country and metropolitan plumbers. One of these will be a country plumber.

One licensed or registered plumber nominated by the Communications, Electrical and Plumbing Union, Plumbing Division.

One member nominated by the Minister for Training to represent training interests.

One member nominated by the Minister for Fair Trading to represent consumer interests.

One licensed drainer nominated by the WA Drainers Association.

One representative of the Office of Water Regulation, nominated by the Coordinator of Water Services.

It is intended that the board will be funded by the industry with no net cost to Government. A small office of approximately five staff will be required to perform the board's role and it is estimated that a budget of \$590 000 will be required in year one - 1999-2000.

It is estimated that revenue of \$600 000 per annum will be raised from the plumbing industry through charging a \$200 fee to licensed plumbers, a \$75 fee to registered plumbers and a \$150 fee to restricted licensed plumbers. Currently, licensed plumbers and plumbers with restricted licenses pay \$103 per annum and there is no charge for registered plumbers.

Despite a general trend to deregulation across a number of industries, it is generally agreed that the plumbing industry should remain subject to registration and licensing requirements.

Plumber registration and licensing is recognised as one of the elements necessary to ensure the protection of public health and safety of the community in the delivery of essential waste disposal and water service requirements. Without appropriate regulation of the use of suitably qualified plumbers, there is a recognised risk of poor installation of sanitary and drainage systems with the associated risk of contamination of country water supplies and ineffective sewerage waste disposal. Licensing and regulation regimes acknowledge the specialised knowledge required in installing sanitary and plumbing systems, which are not only appropriate for the needs of the consumer, but also protect the infrastructure upon which the water industry is based. In Western Australia, the value of these infrastructure assets is very significant and is estimated to be approximately \$8b in value. Establishing an independent Plumber Licensing Board will ensure that plumbers will have a very real opportunity to participate in matters affecting their industry, including the development of training courses and recognition of qualifications.

Customers will be able to contact the board directly to ascertain that the plumber they propose to contract is appropriately qualified and currently licensed. Consumers who are dissatisfied will be able to register a complaint with the board and the board will ensure that all complaints are investigated and appropriate disciplinary action is taken where necessary. It is important to point out, however, that the board will not become involved in contractual disputes between customers and contractors. Plumber licensing will be undertaken by a board largely made up of members or stakeholders of the industry. The collective knowledge of the board will ensure that high standards of plumbing work are maintained within the industry.

As part of the development of this Bill, an extensive program of public and industry consultation was undertaken by the Office of Water Regulation. Copies of the discussion paper previously tabled in Parliament, titled "Proposal to Establish an Independent Plumber Licensing Board" were distributed to all licensed plumbers, the Communications Electrical and Plumbers Union, local governments, relevant government agencies, industry associations and others. In addition, five public forums were held in the metropolitan area and major regional centres.

Overall there was strong support for the establishment of the Plumber Licensing Board from plumbers and consumers who provided comment. There are also very sound public benefit arguments for the establishment of the board in order to protect not only the infrastructure within the State, but also the industry and consumers. I therefore commend that the Water Services Coordination Amendment Bill 1999 to the House.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr Cunningham.

### **APPROPRIATION (CONSOLIDATED FUND) BILL (No 1) 1999**

#### *Second Reading*

Resumed from 12 May.

**MR RIEBELING** (Burrup) [11.25 am]: I continue my contribution to this second reading debate which I believe is in its last day before we head into the Estimates Committees in two weeks.

In looking at the budget brought down by the Government, I too was keen to read about the social dividend promised by the Government, specifically as it refers to my electorate. I shall go through a number of areas of the budget which people in my area have found disappointing. Some of the increases in taxes and charges such as in public transport for once have not impacted in my area as this Government has decided in its lack of wisdom - and previous Labor Governments also in their lack of wisdom - that public transport does not exist in the Pilbara region; therefore, the increases in bus charges and so on do not impact in my area. However, the increase in stamp duty announced by the Government does impact in my area which equates to \$2 per \$100 for vehicles over a certain value. The interesting thing about that decision is that in the Pilbara region about 60 per cent of all families either have a four-wheel drive vehicle that they call a family vehicle or aspire to acquiring one. This one stamp duty increase has meant that the cost of a middle of the range - not a luxury Landcruiser - four-wheel drive vehicle of between \$40 000 and \$50 000, will increase by about \$2 500. The people in the Pilbara will react to that increase in a big way.

I remember during the federal election campaign when it was announced that the Federal Government would implement an

extra sales tax component on the price of four-wheel drive vehicles which would mean an increase of about \$6 000, there was a huge backlash in the Pilbara region announced by the federal Labor Opposition against that move. Similarly, the announcement of a major increase in the cost of what is really a family vehicle in the Pilbara will have a similar strong reaction.

Where are the positives in this budget? The people in the Pilbara were hoping for an improvement in services in a number of areas, especially in education. I have made a couple of speeches recently about the provision of a gymnasium for Tom Price High School and the fact that it is the only senior high school in regional Western Australia, apart from Margaret River, that does not have a gymnasium. The minister defended his Government by saying that all areas are treated equally under this Government and that it does not single out Labor electorates for poorer treatment than it does other electorates. Plainly, we were hoping in this budget for improvements to educational facilities. We had a quick look at the capital works program to try to ascertain whether the minister, in responding to the grievance I raised, was fair dinkum about ensuring that kids in the seat of Burrup were actually treated fairly. We looked for the Tom Price High School gymnasium and the North Tom Price Primary School verandah area in the capital works program. That verandah is still just nailed-up boards so that when it rains, anything underneath the verandah gets completely soaked. Those two areas in Tom Price have been ignored yet again in this budget. The minister who stood up in this place and said that under his leadership as a minister, all schools would be treated equally when these matters are assessed should have another look at the decision-making process which did not put money into those two schools in Tom Price.

The third area, which the minister knows about, relates to a car parking area in a school called the Tambrey Primary School. The minister promised that he would accompany me to the school to inspect the problem and all would be well. Numerous calls to the minister's office have resulted in no visit by him to the school. He fooled us at one stage by sending a fellow by the name of Barnett to the school. We heard the news that Barnett would arrive at the primary school on a certain date. We all got very excited about that and went down to greet the minister. However, he turned out to be a different Barnett. He was from the Education Department, but he was not the actual minister. However, this chap - his Christian name escapes me but his surname is Barnett - is in charge of the provision of infrastructure, such as car parks, for primary schools. The Barnett who arrived was the correct Barnett, but he was not the one we were expecting. An officer from the shire rang me and told me that the minister was arriving on that day, so the people from the shire thought it was the Minister for Education.

After a lengthy discussion between the man from the ministry by the name of Barnett, the shire council and the parents and citizens association, it was agreed that the parking area situation should be resolved. The shire promised that it would put the Government's share of this project into its capital works program so that the project could proceed forthwith, and that the Education Department would in effect receive a loan from the council until such time as funds were put in. Everyone was happy about that. In this budget, there was supposed to be an allocation of half the capital cost to the State, which would be a quarter of the project, so that the State's contribution over a two-year budget would be half the cost of the car park. The shire would put in half the cost as well, but it would advance half of the State's contribution. Therefore, we were looking for an allocation of 25 per cent of the project in the budget for the Tambrey Primary School. Although I looked, I could not find the allocation in the budget.

My office rang the Education Department and spoke to Mr Barnett - not the minister but the other person. My office was advised that the allocation of funds in the budget to those sorts of projects had been made, but the decision on whether the department would meet its commitment to complete the project at the Tambrey Primary School had not been made. Therefore, we are now left in a situation in which promises were made that the minister would visit the school to look at the situation but that has not happened. In fact, as I said, numerous calls to his office have resulted in no reply about when he is likely to visit the area. Government officials have come to the school and told us that it would be fixed. A great deal was made by government people and conservative councillors who were running for council in that area about getting the car park for the people of that area; yet there is no commitment to that project in the budget that I can see.

I have examined the budget and, once again, no money has been allocated to the Tom Price Senior High School gymnasium. I hope that, during the Estimates Committee hearings, the Minister for Education will be able to point to where that money has been allocated. If he does that, I will apologise to him in this place and congratulate him for putting money into a project that is so important to the area.

The poor little kids at the North Tom Price Primary School have been suffering for generations now. That school must be 25 or 30 years old. During that entire time, protection from the elements for the kids when they are not in school has been in the form of slats or boards nailed to what people would call a pergola if it were in their backyards. However, there is no shade cloth and no protection from the elements. Therefore, when it rains the water just pelts through and drenches their bags and their lunches. Anything that is not taken inside the classroom is soaked. In inclement weather, all the equipment that the kids take to school that is probably best left outside must be taken indoors. The P & C is concerned about that.

If the minister has any supplementary funds, I urge him to allocate at least that money to the re-roofing of the North Tom Price Primary School. I will endeavour to meet with the minister with respect to that project in the near future. That project would not cost a great deal. When one sees the rain pelting through and sees the results of not having any protection from the elements - I have a video that the minister can look at - one wonders why this has not been fixed. I am sure that members on the government side would agree that for the expense of probably less than \$10 000, the problem should be fixed. In the scheme of the budget for departments like the Education Department, that is drop-in-the-ocean stuff. I hope that the minister will be able to see his way clear to rectifying that problem in the near future. Maybe he has forgotten that that was a problem.

Mr Bloffwitch: Shouldn't the district office be able to allocate that sort of money?

Mr RIEBELING: It has not in the last 25 years. I hope that the minister will be able to intervene to make sure it happens. If he does that, I will congratulate him for taking a positive step to fix, for a small amount of money, what has been an ongoing problem.

Another problem which we in the bush experience is the inability to attract appropriate teachers to country areas. In the remote country towns in my electorate, such as Paraburdoo, Tom Price, Pannawonica, Wickham and Roebourne - not so much Karratha because there is a desire to go to that town - the situation is difficult. Last year the minister released a report which stated that the level of literacy is low in country areas. Time and time again when figures are produced on country kids' achievements in the Tertiary Entrance Examination, the figures indicate that country schools achieve at a lower level than schools in the metropolitan area.

One area that the minister should consider is not whether Tom Price is getting enough teachers, but whether those year 11 and year 12 mathematics teachers are actually mathematics teachers. Country Western Australia is faced with the situation that any teacher is better than no teacher. Because of the wonderful new system we have, schools are required to find their own teachers these days, and they end up getting whatever teachers they can lay their hands on. At the beginning of this year, two teachers were teaching mathematics in Tom Price, both of whom have since left. However, neither of them was a mathematics teacher. The parents of kids in years 11 and 12 were concerned about the level of education their kids were receiving, to the point at which a number of those parents were contemplating sending their kids elsewhere in order for them to have the best opportunity to obtain a reasonable score in their TEE.

If the minister is searching for reasons for kids in the country achieving at lower levels, perhaps he should be looking at the type of teachers who are teaching in specialist areas. I have some fears in this area, and I am sure that anyone who is interested in education would have the same fears. If we want people to have an equal opportunity to access education, the training of teachers should be as equal as possible. It is not acceptable that for the last four years Paraburdoo has not been able to get a manual arts teacher, yet the minister stands in this place and says we have a wonderful new incentives scheme that allows us to offer more to the teachers. The teachers do not believe it is true and the parents do not believe it is true. The only person who believes those statements is the minister, and maybe some principals around the State who have a vested interest in saying so. However, this is a real concern, and it is one that this Government should have taken on board when considering this budget. However, it has not done so. An attempt was made about six years ago to upgrade the airconditioning at Paraburdoo. As a result of the urgency of that situation, teachers and the parent body were told that it would happen over a three-budget period: One-third of the school was to be fixed one budget, one-third in the next budget and so on. Nevertheless, some six years after the first year's project, we are still waiting for the second year's work. Two-thirds of the airconditioning units at the school at Paraburdoo break down with monotonous regularity, and servicemen enter the school almost on a daily basis to repair damage to the ancient airconditioning units. Money should be allocated to that project.

I do not have a great deal of time in this debate. I move next to another area of the budget which is causing concern. The Government during the last election campaign, through its National and Liberal Party candidates, made a huge amount of noise about the fact that the Tom Price-Karratha Road was not sealed. Some of us had to endure watching the new federal member for Kalgoorlie, Barry Haase, on television say that the road to Tom Price should be fixed. He at least gave the impression that he was part of the Liberal Party, which said all through the election campaign that all promises were fully funded. The promise to fix that road in this term of Government was made 500 or 600 times.

The National Party candidate for Burrup, Mr Ausburn, who has now left the area as well, got the then Minister for Transport to guarantee on radio in Karratha that the road would be completed in four years. This is a \$100m project, approximately, and this budget contains \$500 000 for that project. We had the same generous allocation last year of \$500 000. At that rate, this road will take approximately 200 years to build. That does not allow for inflation which must be a factor over 200 years. That outlines the real commitment of this Government to the people of Tom Price and Karratha. The only time the Government remembers its commitment to those people is when an election looms. I bet London to a brick that come the next election, the road to Tom Price project, despite the current commitment of one-third to be completed by 2009, and the balance after 2009, will be brought forward for political purposes. The commitment from this side of the House is that the road will be built in the first term of a Labor Government.

Mr Bloffwitch: It is guaranteed that it will be built before you get back to government!

Mr RIEBELING: We will see. The forest debate has lopped 5 per cent off the Government's lead. The member for Geraldton will be in a marginal seat at the next election, when we may well have a new member for Geraldton.

Mr Bloffwitch: I bet you don't!

Mr RIEBELING: A nice Labor Party member.

Mr Bloffwitch: The only one of us who will lose a seat will be you. How close did you go last time, my friend? We have some good candidates.

Mr RIEBELING: I love it when conservatives waste money at elections, and they wasted a lot of money trying to win my seat.

Mr Bloffwitch: We lost by 60 votes.

Mr RIEBELING: The conservatives lost by 310 votes - they were flogged! It is great when the conservatives like coming second in politics as it means that they are the first losers - that is where they will remain.

The Government has no real commitment to providing roads in my electorate. The commitment only arrives when the writs are issued for a general election. Suddenly, this Government remembers that it was an important issue four years prior. Members opposite may think that the people in Tom Price and Paraburdoo are stupid; however, they remember the emphasis conservatives put on this issue. Someone in the Liberal Party must look at election results. The conservative campaign had the most impact in Tom Price and Paraburdoo, where the swing was evident in my electorate. This was caused by one issue - the road between Tom Price and Karratha. If the Government wants to treat people with disdain, and if it thinks that good government is ignoring people for four years, and then it still expects support in a seat, it should continue, but nothing could be further from the truth. If a real commitment is not made, people in Tom Price and Paraburdoo will know about it. The Government is committed to finish the road in 200 years' time at this rate - a fact which will be transmitted to these people for as long as possible until the Government remembers its commitment and builds the road, or when the Labor Party is in government and builds the road.

Another road equally as important as the Tom Price-Karratha road is the Wickham-Karratha road which is blocked whenever it rains heavily. Many people living in Wickham work in Karratha. A major problem is that 120 children travel from Wickham to Karratha every school day. On at least two occasions in the past 12 months, the children could not get home after school because of the floods.

Mr Bloffwitch: Those kids probably reckoned it was wonderful - it was a holiday!

Mr RIEBELING: The member is probably right, except for the kids aged five or six years who were concerned greatly about not being able to go home. It was traumatic not going home to mum and dad, who were also in a similar state. The kids were billeted out to people, and everything was fine. However, a great deal of concern arose. I am sure that parents in Geraldton, as in Wickham, would not like that situation. It has happened increasingly over the last few years. For some reason, more rain appears to be falling on my part of the Pilbara.

Mr Bloffwitch: For how long is the road flooded?

Mr RIEBELING: It is for about 14 hours at a time. The member's question is valid. Most floods in the north come and go relatively quickly. This is an extensive area. Main Roads tells us that all will be well and that provision will be made in the next budget - not the one before us - to alleviate this flooding. After raising the issue in this place and outlining why we need bridges rather than increasing the road's culvert and the like, we were told by Main Roads that an announcement would be made shortly after the budget was released to bring the project forward. Those words were not used, but the inference to be drawn was that the minister would make an announcement shortly after the budget and we would be happy with it. I do not know what the department thought would be announced, but there has not been any announcement and the budget's summary of projects for the Pilbara, which is presumably where it would be mentioned, does not mention that project. That is a great disappointment to the people of Wickham who believed this Government's promises. Many members in this place perhaps do not appreciate that when the Government makes statements about what will happen to benefit a region's local community people believe it. When it does not occur there is a great deal of concern.

The problem with this road does not occur on a daily basis. However, when it occurs it cuts off access to the Catholic primary school and to Wickham, which affects all those people who go to the school or commute daily to and from Wickham and Karratha. Interaction between the towns is becoming more frequent, especially as companies like Robe River Iron Associates are opting to employ contractors instead of staff. Contractors who work at Cape Lambert come from all over the Pilbara. Many people prefer to live in Karratha rather than Wickham, so they commute. In this day and age people in my area are amazed that for five or six days a year they cannot get to work. If that occurred on the Burrup peninsular and Woodside's \$14b plant could not operate for even one day, the Government would fix it. However, as the problem only affects children going to primary school and small contractors who work for Robe River - the majority of people who work for Robe River live in Wickham - the Government does nothing. If it closed down operations at Robe River for a week the Government would respond.

Fixing roads is an expensive exercise, but the system of building span bridges that is intended to solve the problem is overkill. An officer from Main Roads said we needed proper bridges because of the volume of water, but I think all we need to do is raise the road and build more culverts to allow the water to flow through. The price for that would be considerably less than the system Main Roads is currently proposing.

I have raised a number of issues in this place in recent months in relation to Homeswest. One of those issues was the volume of housing that currently exists. Only today I received from my office a facsimile of a letter from the Minister for Housing, Dr Hames, responding to a problem I raised about Sandra Watts who lives with her three children in a box at the back of her parents' home. It is a transportable office with one very small window and a small door.

Mr Bloffwitch: It is a wonder the council allows that.

Mr RIEBELING: I do not think it complies with council by-laws. The minister in his lack of wisdom has determined that a box the size of the Table of the House is adequate housing for a mother and three small children. They use the shower in the grandparents' house but they live in that box. The minister still says that Homeswest is able to respond to the housing needs of people in my community. No-one except the minister and a woman by the name of Doreen Blunn who sits on the appeals committee thinks that housing situation is adequate.

Mr Bloffwitch: Why do you say this is a problem for Homeswest? Did the woman ask for priority housing?

Mr RIEBELING: Yes, and her application has been rejected because Homeswest reckons her accommodation is suitable.

Mr Bloffwitch: That is a bit of a long bow to draw.

Mr RIEBELING: It is not, because if Homeswest had the ability to respond she would be put on the Homeswest priority housing list. The rule for placement on the priority housing list, as explained to me, is that if there are no houses available within a period of, say, six to eight weeks, Homeswest cannot put people on the priority list.

Mr Bloffwitch: If she is living with her parents they will not treat her as a priority case.

Mr RIEBELING: That is the argument that Homeswest uses, and it is absolutely wrong. She is not living with them; she is living in a dogbox at the back of their house. The capacity of Homeswest to respond and provide emergency accommodation has been reduced dramatically since this Government took office. Part of the minister's reasoning for not accepting this woman's application mirrors what I said in my grievance to him. It relates to running down Homeswest's housing stock in the Karratha area. The minister responded by saying that in 1992 - when we had a good Labor Government - Homeswest had 677 homes in Karratha.

Mr Osborne: What mental illness is this person suffering from?

Mr RIEBELING: It is the Minister for Housing. I do not think he suffers from a mental illness, although the member for Bunbury probably knows the minister better than I do and that may be the case. In 1992 there were 737 government housing properties in Karratha comprising 677 Homeswest properties and 60 Industrial and Commercial Employees Housing Authority houses; that figure does not include Government Employees Housing Authority properties. At the moment in Karratha there are 378 properties compared with 737 in 1992. There has been a reduction of 340 homes in the Homeswest stocks in Karratha. The minister is saying that the waiting list in 1992 was about the same as it is currently. He then goes on about the benefits of selling government homes. I agree that if people want to purchase their Homeswest homes we should make them available to be sold. We should also look at the length of time people are on the waiting list and whether Homeswest has the ability to respond to emergency and crisis situations. Homeswest cannot do that in Karratha. The staff at Homeswest have the unenviable task of telling people to go away. They develop a hardness about them, and I do not blame them. The people who work at Homeswest are lovely people who try their best to accommodate people. They get ulcers worrying about the situation. People come in and tell the staff that they are living in a caravan with four children and ask whether Homeswest can help. The staff tell these people that they can fill in an application form, but they will not get priority housing because Homeswest does not have houses available. The minister tells me we should be happy because the situation everywhere else in the State is the same. That gives me no comfort. The fact that the situation in other regions is just as bad as that in Karratha gives me greater concern that this minister has no ability to manage the stocks of Homeswest to a level where people can get relief. Every week four or five people come into my office, who are in crisis situations with which Homeswest cannot assist. Since 1992 when the Government sold 350 houses -

Ms MacTiernan: Homeswest houses?

Mr RIEBELING: Yes. Only 58 have been built since then. That means about 300 fewer houses are available.

Ms MacTiernan: In an area like Karratha with the high rental values, it must be extraordinary for people.

Mr RIEBELING: That is right. The minister continues to state - quite proudly - that when the Industrial and Commercial Employees Housing Authority decided to sell 60 properties, it offered them to Homeswest. In its wisdom, Homeswest - in reality, the minister - decided not to purchase them. That is saying we had a solution to the problem, but decided against it because things were not too bad and when compared with other parts of the world the housing situation in Karratha was the same. Other places in Western Australia must not be able to respond either.

Ms MacTiernan: We are like Bangladesh and Gabon.

Mr RIEBELING: We are not as bad as Bangladesh, but we are getting there. In relation to the building program, the minister proudly announced that 10 units will be constructed in Karratha. I thought that was good because it would provide an additional 10 houses; however, the fine print explains that these are eight one-bedroom flats which are needed. I do not deny that, but they will not respond to people's needs. Two four-bedroom houses are also to be built in Karratha in the next 12 months, and they are needed. We have three four-bedroom houses in stock in Karratha. Homeswest will have difficulty responding to the needs of people with four kids who are eligible for housing in Karratha. I have a great deal of time for the manager of Homeswest in Karratha, Mr Greg Hart. He and his staff do a great job in trying to assist people; however, he cannot respond to the needs of our community if the Government continually sells off properties and refuses to replace that stock. Fortunately for people in Karratha who need housing, this town is not going through a boom; in fact, it is going through possibly the worst slump in 15 years.

Mr Bloffwitch: Geraldton is not much different.

Mr RIEBELING: I am glad the member for Geraldton said that. Geraldton is suffering from what Karratha has suffered from: A promised project that has not happened. Karratha has suffered by not getting five promised projects. Because we do not have the huge influx of workers there, the problem with Homeswest accommodation is not as bad as it could be. Although there is a huge shortage of housing, if any major projects were to start in Karratha, Homeswest would have absolutely no capacity to respond to it. The minister knows very well the stocks are at such a level that there is no ability to respond in any meaningful way to a crisis in housing. I am sure Karratha is already suffering that crisis, but the minister fails to acknowledge that is what it is.

In the past 18 months, 2 000 people have left Karratha, which created surplus housing. It may sound ridiculous, but a large amount of housing is owned by companies and, therefore, is not in the rental housing market. There are 600 houses in the rental market in Karratha, none of which can be accessed by non-company workers. Those people must rely on what is available on the market and Homeswest. Privately-owned housing in Karratha represents less than about 35 per cent of the

total. Only a very small amount of housing is available privately. Although we have a glut of housing, we end up with rental accommodation being very expensive. The rent for a standard four-bedroom house is between \$300 and \$400 a week, which is out of the range of many people. If Karratha is fortunate to have a boom, that crisis will get worse.

I now turn to the promise this Government made not just two years ago, but about six years ago, to solve the crime problem in Western Australia. That was part of the social dividend Western Australians expected to see. Some people thought the Government might have a more enlightened view on drug reform and how crime could be tackled. We find the minister responsible for the drug task force saying that the prohibition of drugs is the way to go and that we should be locking people up for longer. He pretends that the strategies are working and suggests that we follow the example of the United States which has the worst crime rate, the highest imprisonment rate and the highest drug rate in the world. He said that we should follow the strategy in the United States in those areas because it leads the world. The Police Force tells us that since this Government took office there has been an increase in drug offences of 131 per cent, despite the fact that this Government promised to have a positive impact. Surely a positive impact on crime is a reduction, not an increase. Members of the Government proudly stand up in this place and say that crime is on the increase. The Minister for Police said that the Press and the Opposition were scaremongering and so on. He forgot to mention that drug-related offences are up 131 per cent; robberies are up 129 per cent; and assaults are up by 45 per cent. All of this has occurred since this Government came to office.

One real problem in drug offences in Western Australia is that the second-hand dealers legislation has been successful to the extent that petty crime - that used to be breaking into houses, stealing videos, and fencing them - has been reduced dramatically. To get drugs, addicts now resort to assaults, bag snatching and dragging elderly women along roads. That is all part of the social dividend which the Government promised and is delivering to the people of Western Australia. It is time for the Government to take off the blinkers and to look seriously at drug reform; at what the Opposition proposed in relation to cannabis and the heroin trials; and at an alternative to what has failed us for the past 50 years.

**MS WARNOCK** (Perth) [12.08 pm]: I will address a number of matters in this debate, mostly relating to my shadow portfolio of Women's Interests and, if time permits, to some other matters regarding the electorate of Perth. First, I will deal with King Edward Memorial Hospital, the State's only women's hospital, a major research and teaching institute, and one that has received no capital works money for about 20 years. I am not sure whether the Government realises the jewel we have in this hospital. It is a centre of excellence, and it deserves a great deal more than it has been getting, and is getting at the moment. When the leading gynaecologists and obstetricians at that hospital tell us they do not want to expand up or out, but urgently need funds to bring the hospital up to standard for the year 2000 and that the hospital needs about \$20m spent on it, we know this is a serious problem.

Small amounts of money have been spent on it over the years and lately a little money has been spent here and there on some cosmetic improvements as well as on improving the comfort of patients. However, the money is largely from Telethon and lotto and from savings within the hospital's normal budget. In addition, an appeal is being conducted by a private group of people associated with the hospital whom I applaud. I received a note when it launched the appeal which read -

Just by being here today, you have acknowledged the importance of helping improve the 14 Birth Suites at King Edward Memorial Hospital.

King Edward Memorial Hospital has seen the safe delivery of thousands upon thousands of Western Australian babies and will continue to be there for every new baby that arrives in the years to come.

We aim to raise \$1.4 million over the next four years to help upgrade our birth suites, by creating a warmer, more comforting environment for our mothers and their babies.

That is a thoroughly admirable aim and one I intend to support. I applaud this group of people for seeking to make that small but important change at King Edward Memorial Hospital. However, that does not absolve the Government of its responsibility towards the hospital. A much larger amount of money must be spent besides that \$1.4m.

I have visited friends at the hospital over the years and have toured the hospital several times including recently to form a personal view about what is needed to be done there. The fact that some very good-hearted people who have their priorities right and who, unlike the Government, are raising funds does not absolve the Government of its responsibility to spend capital funds on this place. We are talking about one of the best research and teaching hospitals in this country which thousands of Australians have reason to thank for their existence, whether they were born there or their lives were saved there. It deals with gynaecological cancers as well as general gynaecological and obstetric problems. We should give the hospital due recognition for the important place it has in today's world.

Over the years, rumours have circulated that it could be moved or attached to other hospitals or changed in other ways.

Mr Prince: That is true. You cannot rebuild it on that site because the area of land is not large enough.

Ms WARNOCK: No-one is suggesting that should occur.

Mr Prince: The information I have is that the original building is not capable of being rebuilt. We must plan probably a decade or two hence for its replacement.

Ms WARNOCK: I agree with the minister, although he is out of his seat. However, I will not support any suggestion that its facilities should be scattered around the place because of some mad decentralisation plan. The hospital is a centre of excellence that produces extraordinary results and deserves our support.

Although I am, and many other women are, aware of what work should be done at the hospital, other members of this House and other people in the community may not be aware of not only the jewel we have but also how much should be done to improve the quality of the building and facilities within it. No-one who works at the hospital wants it to be split up in any way. Anyone who knows anything about these matters will know that gynaecological and obstetric services must stay together and the department of new-born services should be in the same building. All these services are clearly connected. Important tertiary services are also provided to women from all over the State. A hospital such as this needs a critical mass of patients for its teaching and research. I do not believe any business case could support moving it to another site. People in the hospital have told me on several occasions that, although they do not believe the improvements should mean expansion of the building up or out, some improvements must be made to bring it up to standard. A serious amount of money must be spent.

As I said, I have looked around the hospital and have a clear idea of what improvements should be made. The hospital has three outpatient facilities - the Hensman Road clinic, the centenary clinic and the west wing clinic which has been refurbished recently. It houses the oncology service and the genetics, sexual health and fertility clinics. It is cheering to see that some rearrangement and refurbishment have improved not only the building but also the morale of patients and staff. As I say, most of the money used for refurbishing those areas came from Telethon and Lotteries Commission funding. The hospital constantly reminds me that no capital works money has been spent on it for a long time.

The money for a bone densitometer came from the public. That is a splendid achievement and I applaud the members of the public for it. However, it is absurd that an institution like this must rely on what some would consider to be charity for what most would regard as essentials. That machine is certainly necessary. The Hensman Road clinic, that many of us have had either the good or bad fortune to visit from time to time because it houses the antenatal and gynaecological clinics, is substandard. In the opinion of at least some of the staff to whom I spoke, it has a third-world quality about it and it should be demolished and resited. Various plans have been made for this from time to time. So far I understand that architectural plans have been drawn up. Unfortunately, any moneys set aside in the past for this project have been swallowed up in budget cuts and work that must be achieved there remains unachieved. The estimate for this urgent refurbishment is approximately \$3.4m.

I recently visited the clinic to remind myself of its condition. It is an old, substandard building. The small cubicles provide no privacy for women when they are having tests and discussing very delicate matters. They have been alarmed to find that they can be overheard by people in the next cubicle talking to the doctor. After visiting that clinic lately I can confirm that that is the situation.

The centenary building is a splendid old heritage building, albeit in rather a bad state. It is certainly worth keeping and much money should be spent on it. It houses the urogynaecology service, the menopause clinic, the diabetes clinic and various other services. The outside of the building is in substandard condition and parts of the roof are falling in. In the view of at least one person to whom I spoke the whole of the interior should be gutted and refurbished to provide a statewide urogynaecology service and menopause mid-life clinic. The need for these services is urgent. Incontinence is a major problem among older women in the community. Work on this section of the hospital must be done very urgently. I understand the cost of refurbishing this clinic is approximately \$2m. I visited one of the delivery suites that has been refurbished. It was a splendid and cheering place and, as I said, I applaud the people who are raising the \$1.4m needed to refurbish those suites.

I will give members an idea of why this must be done. At the moment, only three toilets are available for use by up to 20 or more women who could be in labour in that place at any one time. It would cost up to \$100 000 to bring each of the suites up to date. I am not knocking the efforts of the people who have raised that money. I applaud it; however, this is a government responsibility. Other wards must be refurbished and further sums of money must be spent on those wards. The foetal death room, an important area of the hospital, must be refurbished. I visited that area and it is in a busy thoroughfare of the hospital. Clearly, because of the sensitivity of this matter, the need for privacy and peace and quiet is absolutely essential. This must be refurbished and re-sited in the hospital. Having seen that area, I could not agree more. I also visited the foetal day assessment unit which is where women have their tests and ultrasounds and where their blood pressure is monitored in the later stages of pregnancy. The foetal day assessment unit is part of every obstetric unit in every remaining women's hospital in Australia. This must be refurbished and about \$350 000 is needed. There is also a postnatal depression unit. I draw the House's attention to the fact that much of the best research on postnatal depression has been carried out in King Edward Memorial Hospital for Women. It is a leader in its field and, in order to remain a leader in its field, it must be properly furnished with the facilities to keep up that excellent work. It goes without saying that the matters to which I have referred imply no criticism whatsoever of the staff at the hospital. They are splendid people, who work in conditions which are sometimes difficult, and they deserve better than they receive currently.

I will move briefly on to the special care nursery. Much of the essential equipment in the special care nursery is old and requires replacement; there is no question about that. It is generally accepted that electronic equipment should be replaced after seven years. The ventilators - members should not forget that we are talking about a special care day nursery - should be replaced. We are dealing with ventilators for very sick and tiny infants. If members were in that position and their children were in that nursery, obviously they would want the best technology. The ventilators are out of date. Governments allow the regular replacement of motor vehicles after two or three years, and this occurs because it is regarded as the right thing to do; however, health equipment is not viewed in a similar fashion, which is surprising. The staff at this important teaching and research hospital must use outdated equipment in this sensitive and difficult area. Moving on to the operating theatres, one of the tables is quite ancient. Others have been replaced from either Telethon or Lotto funds or from the hospital's normal budget. They were replaced about three years ago, but one operating theatre table is an antique. More laparoscopic equipment is needed to bring the hospital up to date. It is well behind in that area.

I repeat: This hospital does extraordinarily important work for women at all stages of their lives and for their children. The anaesthetic equipment is 25 years old and terribly obsolete. This is extraordinary. We are talking about a major teaching hospital in a State which can be regarded not as a Third World State, but as a First World State, and certainly well-off judging from the indicators in the budget. This hospital, a major teaching hospital, has anaesthetic machines which are 25 years old and are obsolete. It is urgent to replace those machines and something like \$50 000 is needed for each one. High quality work is being carried out in the ultrasound department. Almost all of the abnormalities which are detected, and which can be dealt with hopefully, come from this department. This hospital has patients from throughout the State. When there is any difficulty in a pregnancy, patients from throughout the State come to this hospital.

There are problems with privacy. I visited a patient, with her permission, who was having an ultrasound, and, to put it mildly, there was a major problem with privacy. There was a curtain around her in an area of the hospital that was quite busy. I do not think I would have fancied being up on that table. If something was wrong or a person was being counselled about a problem, which is a sensitive and difficult time, and this department is in such a state, it is a problem and we should do something about it. I have also been told that a new mammography unit has been given to the hospital. As I understand it - I spoke to someone about this issue a month ago - this unit has been given to the hospital by a company. However, it is in a crate and cannot be used until the space is provided for it and the ancillary services that go with it are provided for it - that includes the staff. The cost of that is considerable. There is no computerised tomography scanner at the hospital and patients must be sent to Princess Margaret Hospital for Children, Fremantle Hospital and Health Service or the private sector. The people at the hospital regard that as unsatisfactory. No money has been spent on the pathology department for over 20 years. It needs a general refurbishment because of the poor staff facilities. The tutorial room is tiny and is used by up to 25 students for teaching and education. That is another area which needs some attention. The lecture theatre is substandard; it can be grossly overcrowded, the airconditioning is substandard, and the theatre is a health hazard. The staff members at the hospital told me that when health symposia are held for visiting medical people - that is relatively often, because this hospital is held in high esteem by other medical people - it must be held off site because it cannot be held at the hospital.

That is a catalogue of issues that point out to members of this House that a great deal of money must be spent on this important hospital. As I have said, it is a hospital that has helped hundreds of thousands of Western Australian women in its long and distinguished history. They have had their babies there; they have had treatments for cancer there; they have had tests for various conditions there; they have had assistance with menopause treatment there; and they have had treatment for incontinence there. At every stage of a woman's life, from infancy to old age, she can depend on King Edward Memorial Hospital for Women, and we must do better by that hospital. The utter commitment of all the staff must be commended, but the hospital requires more funds to bring it up to a proper standard for such an important institution. This is an important teaching hospital. It must keep up a high number of patients for a critical mass for research and teaching. Patients cannot be sent to other metropolitan hospitals for treatment because of some sort of commitment to decentralisation. It needs a large number of patients so the work can be done.

Mrs van de Klashorst: If you want to keep everything in Perth, what do you think should go out to the local hospitals? People in Midland and in my area would like some of those services to be available at local hospitals because they must travel 60 or 70 kilometres to King Edward. What do you think should go out?

Ms WARNOCK: I understand that very well. A research and teaching institution, whether it be Royal Perth Hospital, Fremantle Hospital and Health Service, King Edward Memorial Hospital for Women or Princess Margaret Hospital for Children, must have a critical mass of patients for research to be relevant and important.

Mrs van de Klashorst: I agree with that, but I also agree that we cannot centralise everything in Perth; we must decentralise.

Ms WARNOCK: I am not saying that we should centralise everything but several thousand patients need to attend this hospital every year to make the teaching and research institute work. Certain facilities and a certain number of patients are needed to make the research relevant. That is all I am saying. Certainly some services can be provided at other hospitals.

Mrs van de Klashorst: Should that be the first criterion or should the needs of patients be the first criterion?

Ms WARNOCK: I am not saying that the needs of the patients are not being very well looked after at King Edward Memorial Hospital for Women.

Mrs van de Klashorst: But people from a long way away do not benefit; they need all of these facilities.

Ms WARNOCK: I understand the member for Swan Hills' views. However, this hospital is an important place and needs to be maintained. Hundreds of thousands of women have good reason to thank the hospital.

Mrs van de Klashorst: I agree with all that but we have to have some concern for people who do not live close to the hospital.

Ms WARNOCK: I agree with the member but I am running out of time.

Mrs van de Klashorst: I'm sorry, I have been listening with interest to your speech and was thinking about these issues.

Ms WARNOCK: I understand that but we must not use those issues as an excuse not to provide the facilities for this important place. These facilities have not been provided. It is unreasonable for a hospital to need to take money out of its recurrent funds, its running budget, when clearly capital works funding should be provided. I have no objection to money being provided by Telethon or lotto or by people raising money. However, it should be a responsibility primarily of the Government of the day. Last year a document was released about health to 2020. It did not contain many -

Mr Prince interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Ms McHale): I remind the Minister for Police that it is disorderly for members to speak out of their seats even if the member is sitting in the Leader of the House's seat.

Ms WARNOCK: We will say nothing about what it says about the minister that he is in the Leader of the House's seat at the moment. Perhaps his letting us know that he was sitting in for the person in that chair might solve the problem with the standing orders.

The ACTING SPEAKER: No.

Ms WARNOCK: I am the shadow spokesman for women's interests and people talk to me about matters concerning that portfolio. One of those matters is women's health. Many people were alarmed that in that good, serious document about health to 2020 there was virtually no mention of women's health. That was a worry in itself. Does it mean that the women's health centres which have been so important over the past 20 years are not supported by the present Government? Does it mean that this particularly important hospital and its future is not taken seriously by the Government? What sort of commitment does this Government have to women and their health? Before I move on to another issue, I remind members of how important this hospital is. A document released by an excellent group of people which is doing its best to raise funds for birthing suites at King Edward Memorial Hospital for Women contained the following facts -

There are 5,000 babies born at King Edward Memorial Hospital each year.

This is an average of 14 babies born every day.

KEMH is the principal teaching hospital for midwifery, obstetrics, gynaecology and neonatal paediatrics in Western Australia. KEMH doors opened in 1916.

It has one of the largest nurseries for premature babies in the Southern Hemisphere.

Other services located at KEMH include:-

- \* Sexual Assault Referral Centre
- \* Midlife and Menopause Support Group
- \* Stillbirth and Neonatal Death Support
- \* Multiple Birth Association of WA
- \* Concept Fertility Centre.

We can see from that in sum how important it is for us as members of Parliament to support the hospital. I hope that the budget is not an indication of the future of this hospital and that the Government will accept its responsibility to properly fund the hospital in the future.

An issue which impacts on any member with an inner-city seat is homelessness coupled with domestic violence and the care of the victims. I support my colleague, the member for Burrup, who talked about Homeswest's performance in his area. The member for Burrup was concerned about Homeswest properties being sold off. In itself that is not a matter of concern but the failure to replace those properties on Homeswest's rental list is. Many people are on the waiting list. There is some contention about the exact size of that list; I think it is very large and does not seem to be reducing. In my work as a local member, that issue takes up most of my electorate officer's and my time when I am in the office. We receive many calls from people who are experiencing difficulties in being housed by Homeswest. We spend much of our time on the telephone or writing to Homeswest on behalf of those people. A member of Parliament with an inner-city seat like mine is acutely aware of homelessness as a problem in general; one is aware of the necessity to increase the number of Homeswest properties available for rent and the need to maintain the standard of those properties. However, one is also aware of the importance of organisations like the Salvation Army, the Perth Inner City Housing Association and other groups which assist the community by housing people who are otherwise unable to find a place to live. Despite the valiant efforts of these groups, there are still people in our community who are homeless. It is scandalous that in such a well-off community we are unable to house everybody and people are still sleeping under bridges. As winter approaches life will be particularly unpleasant, uncomfortable and terribly unhealthy for those people. My office was pleased to find a house last week for someone who seemed to have great difficulties finding accommodation for herself and her four children. I am pleased to say that Homeswest was able to assist us in that endeavour. Previously, this woman was sleeping in a shed like the dwelling my colleague, the member for Burrup, described as a box behind somebody's house. This week we received some good news from Homeswest and found accommodation for this woman. However, this is only one good news story among many not so good stories. Obviously, I approve of Homeswest doing up and maintaining its properties, and I approve of them being sold and of the new developments Homeswest is building in various parts of the metropolitan area. However, if that means the number of properties is reduced, that is a great disappointment and something we should put a stop to immediately. There will always be people who need the accommodation provided by Homeswest and, judging by the sheer number of people who contact my office about this issue, their number does not seem to be decreasing.

Specific crisis care accommodation is provided to women who are victims of domestic violence or are running away from terrible situations with no money and perhaps one or two children and need a roof over their heads. These women shelter in the women's refuges which have been provided throughout the State - I was going to say the metropolitan area but these refuges have spread throughout the State over the past 20 years. Once these refuges were an ad hoc arrangements run largely by volunteers, and the women who lived in them simply survived on whatever social security they could obtain. The

situation has been now recognised as an unfortunate ongoing problem and proper refuges are provided for these women. However, as I have been saying over the last few weeks, the people who work in these refuges have been underpaid for some time, despite an award having come down at the beginning of last year. I am pleased to note that some of that money has been provided in the most recent federal and state budgets. However, that by no means solves the problem, and I want to again draw that matter to the attention of the House.

Yesterday I contacted a number of people who work in this field. I am on the board of one women's refuge, the Mary Smith Refuge, so I am accustomed to hearing about these issues. I have sought information, not only from that refuge which has been properly funded, but also from others which have not been. Although some funding has been provided to catch up, as it were, those refuge workers who were underpaid despite the award having come down at the beginning of last year, nothing other than catch-up funds has been provided, and workers in these refuges are still required to take care of children, for example. They are the child care and child support workers who do the special work of looking after children who are traumatised by the dreadful situations in which they and their mothers find themselves when they have had to flee domestic violence episodes.

There is not enough funding for those workers. Although there has been an increase in demand, there has been no increase in funding. That basically sums up the reaction I received from the many people I rang yesterday about this matter. They are certainly pleased that some funding has been provided under the award that came down at the beginning of last year. However, in the meantime, while they have been waiting for these catch-up funds for all of these months, there has been an increase in demand, and none of the money has been provided for the extra workers who are needed in those refuges. I will continue to remind the minister about this matter, because it is unsatisfactory when people who are working very hard in these stressful jobs have to spend a good part of their time submitting applications and trying to find the extra funding for the extra resources they need to meet the increased demand to look after the people in crisis situations. I intend to take up that matter again in a couple of weeks during the Estimates Committee hearings.

I will mention one or two other matters in passing. I am concerned about the fate of what used to be the Office of Women's Interests, about which I spoke a couple of weeks ago. During the Estimates Committee hearings, I shall certainly be questioning the minister about this Women's Policy Development Office, as it is now called. What will happen to it? Will it retain its autonomy? Will it retain its identity if, as we all expect, it goes into Family and Children's Services? I hope that the minister will be prepared to provide me with an answer to that during the Estimates Committee hearings.

I turn to a further matter which relates to issues in my electorate. Recently I asked some questions of the Minister for Planning about the East Perth Redevelopment Authority. That is obviously an authority with which I have had quite a bit of contact over the years. The East Perth redevelopment, which was planned under the previous Government and has been carried out under the present Government, is certainly a splendid piece of urban redevelopment. However, there are still matters of concern for many of us who are interested in it. One such concern is what will happen to City Farm in Brown Street, East Perth. For those members who are not familiar with the area, City Farm is beside the railway line - between the railway line and Brown Street - on an odd patch of land which was a previous industrial site which was provided by the East Perth Redevelopment Authority under persuasion from, as I recall, the Men of the Trees and other conservation organisations.

The people at the farm have worked with young, out-of-work people to teach them various horticultural methods, things like hydroponics and so on. They run a little nursery there. They have been doing this kind of work for some years. However, they are very concerned about their fate and what will happen to this patch of land sandwiched between a car park and the railway line. They are experiencing difficulty getting an answer about what will happen. When I asked the Minister for Planning about it, I was simply told that it would be redeveloped. This is a great disappointment. This has been an important organisation. It is an unusual organisation run by two or three people and some volunteers. I believe the idea first started in New York some years ago where people took degraded pieces of inner city land, did them up and made something like a market garden in the centre of the city. Not only is it cheering to those people who live nearby to see a degraded piece of land turned into something like a market garden, or a farm, as it is called, because they have had animals on this small patch of land as well, but it is also of great benefit to those people who are out of work and depressed and who go down there to work and learn new skills. I would hate to see the institution of the City Farm disappear because of a great desire to build another car park in East Perth. It would be disappointing to see that happen.

I see that I am short of time, but I want to address one further issue; that is, the Noongar patrols which exist throughout the State. However, there is one in the Northbridge area about which I am concerned and interested. I am pleased to note that recently it has received a boost in the form of some new personnel. Young Aboriginal people work on that Noongar patrol. To remind people, I point out that these patrols go around the streets and the staff are both voluntary and paid. Unlike the police, they do not have powers of arrest; that is not their job. However, they go around the streets to monitor the safety of indigenous children and to reduce antisocial behaviour among those young people.

Mrs van de Klashorst: They do a really good job.

Ms WARNOCK: Yes, they do. It is an excellent organisation. I first saw the workings of this organisation in Port Hedland when I was on a government committee for young offenders some years ago. I thought it was a splendid idea. Many young Aboriginal people have concerns about the police. They see a police officer approaching them and they perhaps have the wrong reaction, whereas if a group of Aboriginal people that they recognise, who are dressed in a particular way, comes along, they are likely to listen when it is suggested that perhaps they should go home, perhaps they should modify their behaviour, or perhaps they should not be at that place at that particular time of night.

This has been a successful organisation. In the past it has experienced some difficulties with funding and, from time to time,

with finding people to work in the service. However, I am glad to say that it seems to be working well at the moment. I hope that the various government departments that have been asked to provide funding for this patrol will respond to those requests, because we certainly need it in the inner city and Northbridge area. It is an important idea. The patrol has certainly provided some measure of comfort for people who go to Northbridge to be entertained or who work in that area and have been concerned for some time about antisocial behaviour among young groups of Aboriginals. I am glad that the patrol seems to be working well. I wish it well. I hope that the Government will see fit to continue to fund that organisation in various ways.

Debate adjourned until a later stage, on motion by Mr Bloffwitch.

[Continued on page 8380.]

## **DISABILITY SERVICES - FEDERAL BUDGET**

*Statement by Member for Willagee*

**MR CARPENTER** (Willagee) [12.50 pm]: As opposition spokesperson on disability services, and on behalf of people with disabilities in Western Australia, I express great disappointment at the outcome of the federal budget this week. When a federal budget is released with a \$5b surplus and virtually no extra funds allocated to an area recognised as being in critical need, something is seriously wrong with the thinking behind the budget's construction.

It had been a recognised nationally for some time that the disability area has at least a \$300m shortfall in funding. The state Minister for Disability Services attended a conference on 9 April to plead for more money from the Federal Government, and he received nothing. It was a disgraceful act by the Federal Government. The fact that the federal budget contains a \$5b surplus, and nothing for people with a disability, other than a \$20m increase over four years, which will do nothing to alleviate the crisis, speaks volumes for the priorities of the Federal Government. People with disabilities across the State are rightfully outraged about the result of this budget. I ask the Minister for Disability Services to continue to lobby furiously on behalf of the people of Western Australia with a disability to get a better outcome. As he knows, hundreds of people are in critical need in this State.

## **MUNDARING SHIRE SCHOOLS RECYCLING GROUP**

*Statement by Member for Swan Hills*

**MRS van de KLASHORST** (Swan Hills - Parliamentary Secretary) [12.52 pm]: I salute teachers, parents and students of schools in the Mundaring Shire for their work in recycling. Members may not be aware that those in the Mundaring Shire Schools Recycling Group meet each month to promote recycling issues in their schools. The group has organised for recycling collection areas to be made available in each school so the local community can bring recycling material to a central collection area. Many hills properties are not serviced by rubbish collection, and cannot recycle through the collection processes found in other areas.

Along with the children, parent volunteers at the school organise distribution of collected items, and in many cases give up their precious weekends and use their vehicles to take large quantities of recycled goods from the hills areas to recycling depots in the inner metropolitan area. These parents have beavered away with this task for a number of years. The proceeds from their hard work has in the past gone towards school needs. Unfortunately, with the downturn of the Asian economy, recycling no longer provides a positive cash return. However, I salute the fact that these people feel so strongly about recycling that they continue to teach children by example, and still handle the goods brought to school by students despite the fact that no cash return is involved. Their aim is to remove as much waste from the landfill waste stream as possible. They meet this goal with strong dedication to their enormous task. On the behalf of the community, I recognise their efforts and what they do for the school children and, more importantly, the environment.

## **HEMINGBROUGH, CAPTAIN DAMIEN LEE**

*Statement by Member for Peel*

**MR MARLBOROUGH** (Peel) [12.53 pm]: I pay tribute to a young Australian who, unfortunately, aged 28 years, passed away on Saturday, 8 May 1999. I first met Captain Damien Lee Hemingbrough when he was the head boy of Kwinana High School in 1987. At that stage, he was already showing he was capable of being an outstanding Australian. At the end of the 1987 year 12 graduation, he made one of the finest speeches I have ever heard from a young person.

He became sergeant major of the cadets at Kwinana High School. He saw his career in the military, and subsequently went to Duntroon and rose quickly to the rank of captain. He was attached to the 1st Armament Regiment in Darwin. When he completed schooling at Kwinana Senior High School he indicated his desire to join the military, I pleaded with him to stay in civvy street as he was showing the potential to be a future member of Parliament. I said that when I retire in 10 or 15 years' time, he should be ready to take over the seat. He was a man of compassion and of great integrity. He was a credit to the people of Kwinana, and a credit to his family. My commiserations go his father, Jack, his mother, Sheila, and sister, Danalle, his grandparents and particularly to his wife, Johanna. He was a great friend, whom I was proud to admire and know, and a great credit to Kwinana. He was a fine young Australian.

## **ARMADALE HOSPITAL FACILITY**

*Statement by Member for Southern River*

**MRS HOLMES** (Southern River) [12.55 pm]: I was extremely pleased to see an allocation in the state budget for the much-

needed construction of the new Armadale hospital facility. This was the result of the tendering process carried out by the Government to ensure that every avenue was explored to guarantee the provision of the best possible health care for people in the area. In this instance, the public hospital option was chosen after it was shown that the private sector was unable to satisfy the Government that it could deliver the best health services for the local community.

For many reasons, I agree with the concept of providing a 60-bed private hospital facility to be added to the new building. If it eventuates, Armadale and the surrounding areas will have a complex larger than St John of God Hospital, Murdoch, and a wider range of patients could be treated. Also, private patients will not be occupying beds needed by public patients as is currently the case. This facility will be of enormous benefit to everyone as it will increase patient numbers by providing a critical mass of beds.

This in turn will warrant the availability of a variety of specialists on a full-time basis to look after a variety of health needs. These specialists would greatly enhance the availability of top-class health care, which all people in the area truly deserve. The addition of the private wing to the facility, at no extra cost to the taxpayer, will provide the icing on the cake to this exciting new hospital development.

### **HOMESWEST HOUSING**

*Statement by Member for Armadale*

**MS MacTIERNAN** (Armadale) [12.57 pm]: Following the excellent comments by the members for Burrup and Perth in the budget debate, I raise a matter of grave concern to a group of constituents in my area regarding the lack of Homeswest housing. This issue is critical in the Armadale region because of the renovation program which has seen more than 100 houses disappear from the system. It is a good program, but no adequate provision has been made to fill the gap.

We were contacted today by a person on behalf of the Miller family of Third Avenue, Westfield, who are purchasing a three-bedroom home through the Aboriginal housing program. Nineteen people are now living in the house, and I know from my previous contact with the Millers that up to 23 people have been living in the house. This massive overcrowding is contributing to the very volatile situation emerging in the neighbourhood. Homeswest has told them that it can find no emergency accommodation. In the meantime, we have another Paris Way disaster in the making. The street is at flashpoint. Funds must be allocated to provide more emergency accommodation in Perth, and provide people like the Millers with a more stable living environment.

Also, Homeswest must take a more responsible attitude to the placement of families facing difficulties, rather than loading up a single street or area with problematic tenants - perhaps we should put them in Dalkeith! We need to consider providing more housing on larger blocks in more secluded areas close to transport.

### **WORKERS COMPENSATION PREMIUMS**

*Statement by Member for Joondalup*

**MR BAKER** (Joondalup) [12.58 pm]: As someone who is keen to promote and protect the interests of our local businesses, I was angry to hear of a 35.3 per cent overall increase in workers compensation premiums, effective from 30 June this year. I have watched this issue closely in Parliament, aware of the disastrous consequences of further premium rate hikes for local businesses in the Joondalup region.

Despite an agreement between the Trades and Labor Council representing workers, and the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Western Australia representing business interests, and the Government, and in view of the Labor Party's refusal to support amendments to the Workers' Compensation and Rehabilitation Act, predictions of dramatic increases in premiums have come true. Labor's refusal, aided by the Greens (WA) and Australian Democrats, to accept amendments to workers compensation laws has put WA jobs in jeopardy. This highlights Labor's disregard for the plight of small business.

The coalition Government has initiated an important committee to review workers compensation in this State with a view to stabilising premiums. The coalition Government is committed to reduce the cost of workers compensation to employers, while ensuring that the needs of injured workers are met. In all these circumstances, it is essential that the Labor Party reverse its policy of destroying jobs and making life hard for local small businesses.

*Sitting suspended from 1.00 to 2.00 pm*

**[Questions without notice taken.]**

### **BILLS - APPROPRIATIONS**

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

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.
5. Water Services Coordination Amendment Bill 1999.

**ENERGY COORDINATION AMENDMENT BILL 1999***Returned*

Bill returned from the Council with amendments.

**HIGH CONSERVATION VALUE FOREST PROTECTION BILL 1999***Receipt and First Reading*

Bill received from the Council; and, on motion by Dr Constable, read a first time.

**APPROPRIATION (CONSOLIDATED FUND) BILL (No 1) 1999***Second Reading*

Resumed from an earlier stage of the sitting.

**MRS ROBERTS** (Midland) [2.43 pm]: During this debate on the Appropriation Bill I will raise a number of budgetary and other matters in respect of my electorate of Midland and some general matters relating to the Police portfolio.

The first and foremost issue concerning the Midland electorate is the workshop site, which is still virtually barren. It is a 70-hectare site and while there is some activity at one end of it involving TAFE and the Edith Cowan University, and that activity is welcome, most of the site is a wasteland on the doorstep of the Midland town centre. The site is as big as the town centre itself, yet this Government has failed to address the issues that must be addressed for that site to be incorporated into the Midland town centre and for employment and other activities to take place there.

As members know, in 1992 the Court Government promised to expand the Midland Workshops, as they then were, and to develop them as a centre of engineering excellence. Unfortunately, within weeks of its election, the Government announced the closure of the workshops and hundreds of people lost their jobs. Prior to the 1996 election, we had another bells and whistles launch of a new plan for the site when the Treasurer came out with a band of people and made an announcement about the construction of a university complex. He presented about a dozen colourful sketches of what the site would look like should the Court Government be re-elected for another four years. At the time I questioned what budget allocation would be made for the work as part of the electoral platform. My recollection is that the Government indicated that \$200 000 had been allocated for the refurbishment of some laboratories at the TAFE site. Clearly, \$200 000 would not pay for much.

Many misleading comments were made by various Liberal members of Parliament suggesting that they had the ear of the Federal Government and that a university was a strong possibility for the site. Their comments have been proved to be incorrect because the federal Liberal Government has given no priority to a university for Midland or the east metropolitan region. It appears that the State Government has completely dropped the idea of a university at that site. In fact, the only further announcement we have had from this Government was made over a year ago, when the then Police Minister John Day, Police Commissioner Falconer and numerous other top brass from the Police Service and local police officers gathered at one end of the site and announced that a police operations centre would be constructed. At the time I welcomed that initiative. However, I pointed out that such a development would cover, at most, 6 or 7 hectares of the 70-ha site. It would certainly not resolve the issue of the entire site. However, a \$40m investment and the location of so many essential police services in Midland was very welcome.

As part of the statement, and in response to a question from me, the then Minister for Police said that construction would begin by July 1999. It has become increasingly clear over recent months that the Government is not in a position to honour that commitment. Last week, when the Treasurer presented his budget and the budget papers, we found that while the operations complex is still pencilled in, of the \$40m required to construct it, only \$1m has been allocated for that purpose in the budget. That compares less than favourably with the treatment of the Joondalup police academy project. It was promised at a similar time and previously had a similar construction timetable. However, the budget papers contain an allocation of \$45m for that project, of which \$11m will be spent in the next financial year.

While I am pleased to see that work go ahead, I am bitterly disappointed that Midland has received this slap in the face from the Government in that it has not provided the funds necessary to commence construction of the operations centre at Midland. This operations centre will house a number of police operations and much-needed new technology for communications to be based at Midland.

The Government advised us that it is just a matter of the time frame being developed and that in the future - presumably in the years in which the Labor Party is likely to be in power - money will be allocated at the rate of \$15m to \$16m a year for two or three years. That will mean the Court Government has failed to deliver in Midland after eight years in office; it will have failed to do anything constructive with the workshop site. It is not just a slap in the face or an insult to Midland; it is an insult to the whole east metropolitan region. I have found time and again that many people living in the neighbouring electorates - such as Darling Range and Swan Hills - and indeed people living in electorates like Avon are concerned about what is happening in Midland; they see Midland as their regional centre. While the Labor seat of Midland has received shabby treatment at the hands of the conservative Government, the seats surrounding Midland which are held by conservative members and their constituents suffer just as much as mine from the deterioration of Midland which this Government has allowed to occur.

The year before last the Swan Shire Council initiated what is called a charrette process in conjunction with the Ministry for Planning because people in Midland wanted to see the area redeveloped. At the conclusion of the charrette process I

suggested that what Midland really needed was a redevelopment authority. I had previously worked for the then Minister for Planning, Hon Kay Hallahan, when she oversaw the passage through the Parliament of legislation for the establishment of the East Perth Redevelopment Authority. I was later a member of the East Perth Redevelopment Authority board for two years as a representative of the Perth City Council. I am well aware of the benefits a redevelopment authority can provide to an established area in need of revitalisation. I am aware that these programs can have benefits in areas like Midland and Subiaco and I know of some marvellous projects which have been implemented, both in the eastern States and overseas. There are many examples, such as the docklands in England and in some cities in America where run down areas have been transformed. A comparison could be made with the Darling Harbour area in Sydney. A few years ago it was run down and it is now a popular tourist venue with many facilities - it is an area full of life and activity.

Mr Osborne: If I could do some bragging, I think what has happened in Bunbury has been of great benefit with the establishment of the South West Development Authority.

Mrs ROBERTS: That is right. It seems that the Government has given priority to towns like Bunbury at the expense of places like Midland. I wonder why the Government continues to neglect such an important regional centre. Of course, part of the blame lies in the hands of the Federal Government. When John Howard and his colleagues came to power they canned the Better Cities program, an initiative of the Keating administration, spearheaded by the then minister, Brian Howe. Throughout Australia that initiative gave towns like Midland access to considerable funds for revitalisation.

In Western Australia in recent years we have seen many new regional centres like Joondalup established at great expense to taxpayers. In addition, an enormous amount of government infrastructure has gone into the establishment of new suburbs. However, it seems that the old established suburbs such as Midland have been neglected. We have the basic infrastructure in place - the basic services such as roads, water, schools and government facilities - but we have not had an injection of state government money where it is needed. Midland and Guildford were some of the first areas of the State to be established yet they continue to suffer neglect and that makes the insult worse. Very little money has been spent in the Midland area over the past six years.

I suggested the establishment of a redevelopment authority at the completion of the charrette process and I have made numerous requests in this House for such an authority. A year or so after I made the initial request, the Treasurer came to Midland with the Minister for Planning and seemed to commit to the establishment of a redevelopment authority for Midland. However, when I looked at the *Budget Statements* I could not see any money on budget to establish such an authority. The Midland community newspaper, *The Reporter*, this week contained an article about the lack of funding in the budget for the Midland redevelopment authority. It states -

It is possible - though remotely - that Midland's long-awaited executive body and think tank will never be formed.

A spokesman for Planning Minister Graham Kierath said a no-go option was left open in last month's media announcement which said establishment of an authority was subject to a financial feasibility study.

I hope the Government intends to deliver on this authority but looking at the record of someone like the Minister for Planning does not allay one's fears. The article continues with a quote -

"It's not a forgone conclusion," he said. "At the end of the day if the Government can't afford it, it's not likely to go ahead."

It will add further insult to injury if the Treasurer and his ministers have once again come to Midland, promised the world and delivered nothing. It is nothing short of a disgrace that already the Minister for Planning has talked in his press release about having left a little out. The Government cannot constantly promise things and never deliver. We have been through this time and time again with this Liberal Government. First it promised the expansion of the workshops as an engineering works, but it did not deliver. It then promised a university and it did not deliver. The Government promised that construction of the police operations centre would start in July 1999, but it has not delivered. The Minister for Planning is now telling us he has left a no-go option open for the Midland redevelopment authority. That is how it was described by the minister's spokesman who added that the establishment of the authority was subject to a financial feasibility study. Aspects of the redevelopment of Midland will be financially sound, but the Government has a huge responsibility for the workshop site. Making that site fit for redevelopment will undoubtedly be a huge expense. There is an enormous amount of pollution at the Midland Workshops site and much site work needs to be done, none of which will be cheap.

A constant cry these days about protecting our environment is that the polluter should pay for the clean up. No question arises about who polluted the Midland Workshops site as it has been under government control for years. Asbestos, heavy metal and other pollutants are found on this site as a result of former usage by government. Therefore, government has a responsibility to clean up that site.

The greatest impediment to East Perth progressing without a redevelopment authority was that by far the largest landowner in the area was government. Well over 70 per cent of property within the East Perth Redevelopment Authority boundary was owned by one government agency or another. Over 20 agencies were involved, including Main Roads, the Education Department, the Health Department, and the then State Energy Commission of WA, and gas works and a bus depot were located in the area. It was a surprise to most people to learn that many areas of East Perth, which is one kilometre from the central GPO, still had no deep sewerage when the authority was first established.

We face a problem in Midland. Rather than the land being in private ownership, by which government can place expectations on people to clean up their properties, the property is owned by government, which must pay to clean up the site.

Mr Prince: Is there any suggestion that government has said it should not do so, either in Midland or East Perth?

Mrs ROBERTS: It is left as waste land and nothing happens. People in government say it should be cleaned up, but it does not happen.

Mr Prince: A number of sites involve private polluters. I agree with you. I know a bit about Midland as the police operations centre is to be located there. It is part of the police operations centre plan for the land to be cleaned up for that redevelopment.

Mrs ROBERTS: I stated when the Minister for Police was not in the Chamber that the police operations control centre involves six hectares of the 70-hectare site.

Mr Prince: That is right.

Mrs ROBERTS: It is too much of an impediment to expect the Police Service to pick up the tab for the clean-up of the entire area, or for any other potential user of the site to pick up the bill for the pollution clean-up. The site must be cleaned first.

This site and the entire area around Midland has enormous potential to become a showpiece. A few years ago very few people thought of East Perth as a riverside suburb. It was an industrial area with its back to the river. No visual aspects involved the river. The East Perth Redevelopment Authority Board, of which I was a member, wanted it to be clear to people driving on major roads through East Perth that the river was close. That is part of the reason for the Claisebrook inlet being recreated, and coming inland further than it did originally, so the river can be seen by many people; therefore, East Perth has regained its status as a riverside suburb.

People commented at the time of the redevelopment that this section of the river at East Perth was more interesting and vibrant than sections of the river at Nedlands and Dalkeith. There are views across the river to the casino, the racecourse and other sites. Likewise, many people do not regard Midland as a riverside suburb, although it is surrounded by river. When people think the anchor on the coat of arms of the Shire of Swan is misplaced, they ask: What is an inland area in the eastern suburbs doing with an anchor on its local council crest? Some of the first ports in Western Australia were in my electorate at Guildford and West Midland. In those days much of the trade took place on the river, and the anchor was a very appropriate symbol for Swan.

Many people see the potential for Midland, west Midland and Guildford to re-establish themselves as riverside suburbs by taking advantage of access to both the Swan and Helena Rivers. The Midland Workshops site borders the Helena River. If we could get rid of the pollution and redevelop the site, we could open up access from the Midland town centre to the river. This will not happen unless the Government injects some funds. As I have said in the House before, an enormous number of people in Midland are keen to see this happen, some of whom are willing to put in personal contributions in order to make it happen. Our business community currently has a lot of confidence. Many businesses are redeveloping and re-establishing themselves in Midland.

I had the pleasure of opening the new Mack 1 Kawasaki motorcycle shop on Great Eastern Highway, which is three times the size of its previous shop. It may surprise members to learn that this shop was the number one Kawasaki dealer Australia-wide in the past year. In fact, every year for the past 10 years, it has been in the top four dealers nationally for that brand. It finished first nationwide in a number of those years. I understand that a number of businesses in Midland have similar statistical performances regarding their sales. We have seen a complete redevelopment of businesses like Purslowe Funeral Homes and building and construction taking place in Midland. Many businesses are very keen to establish, and re-establish, in Midland because of its excellent location with transport.

The area was originally called Midland Junction as it is the junction of many transport routes, with excellent river, rail and road access in most directions. Both the Great Northern and Great Eastern Highways come through Midland.

Many people are interested in the heritage of Midland. People throughout the established suburbs of Midland and beyond are keen to see Midland town centre reinvigorated and renewed. The only impediment is a lack of commitment by the Government to invest in Midland to get it going. I cannot say strongly enough how disappointed I am that the Minister for Planning has made these negative comments on the prospect of the establishment of a Midland redevelopment authority. I will be happy if the Minister for Planning, or anyone in the Government, could indicate where money is allocated in the budget to such an authority. I would welcome that. At this stage, it seems there is no confirmation of funds in the budget for it. When the Treasurer announced the formation of this authority, I remarked that it was all very well but where was the money and when would the board be appointed. The Government is still saying the board appointments will be made, but unless there is money in the budget, I doubt whether it can do or achieve very much. This matter is not being given the priority from the Government that I, together with most of the people attending a luncheon organised last month by the Midland and Districts Chamber of Commerce, anticipated after the Treasurer's commitment and his announcement at that luncheon.

I now raise other local matters, the first of which relates to my concerns about the Education Department and schools in my electorate. One of the biggest concerns is the Middle Swan Primary School. It is based in Stratton and its student numbers have been steadily increasing over the past few years. It is indicated on the Education Department's web site that in 1993 it had 402 students; in 1994, 476 students; in 1995, 620 students; in 1996, 726 students; in 1997, 807 students; and in 1998, 830 students. It does not have student figures for 1999, but the figures to 1998 are indicative of the increasing student numbers. In the five-year period between 1993 and 1998, the number of students has more than doubled from 402 to 830. I understand the current number of students is closer to 900. In my view, that is a huge number of students to be attending one primary school. It has caused considerable traffic problems in the area, and the school has a large number of

demountable classrooms. It is anticipated that next year an additional three demountable classrooms will be required on site just to cater for the additional preprimary children. The Government originally announced that a primary school would be established at Jane Brook, which is the main suburb catered for by the Middle Swan Primary School. It now seems there are no plans for a primary school to be built at Jane Brook, despite an answer given in the other place by the Leader of the House representing the Minister for Education, in response to a question by Hon Tom Stephens, the Leader of the Opposition. In question on notice 1391, Hon Tom Stephens asked about the prospect of a primary school being built in Jane Brook. The reply was -

The Education Department is currently discussing the proposal for a "school in houses" development for 2001. Costings for "schools in houses" are difficult to determine; however, as a guide, current costs are around \$10 000 per annum per house.

That is no solution for a school whose numbers are increasing at the current rate. Also, enormous housing development is taking place in Jane Brook and neighbouring suburbs. The parents of children attending the Middle Swan Primary School, after reading the answer to the question asked by Hon Tom Stephens, asked the developers of the Jane Brook estate if they had been approached by the Education Department in connection with the school in houses project. The developers said that was the first they had heard of it, and they had not been approached by the Education Department. I highlight in the strongest terms that it is not acceptable for the student numbers at the school to increase to this level, and that a new school is required in the area. The Education Department should give priority to that. The evidence suggests a steady increase in the number of students attending the Middle Swan Primary School.

Another school in need of redevelopment is the Midvale Primary School. It has been temporarily reroofed because the roof was close to collapse. Again, there is considerable demand for places at this school and it is totally inadequate. It needs complete refurbishment. The Government has said it will redevelop the school in 2001, and I hope it will stick to that commitment.

I draw the attention of the House to another school in the vicinity of Middle Swan Primary School and the Midvale Primary School; that is, the Swan View Primary School. According to the Education Department's web site, more than 500 students attend that school. It seems to have little capacity for expansion on that site, and that limits the alternatives.

There are also problems at the Bellevue Primary School. Despite the fact that the Minister for Education has been saying for the past two years that the Government will acquire land adjoining the school in order to expand it, as a result of procrastination by the Minister for Education and the Education Department, it appears that the Government has not been able to secure the land and will not have easy access to Goodchild Oval. The expansion is unlikely to go ahead. I understand the Education Department has presented a number of options to the parents of children attending the Bellevue Primary School, most of which are unacceptable, especially in view of the promises made in recent years. The most unacceptable aspect of the Education Department's proposition is that the inadequate facilities at that school will not be addressed until several years into the future. Many of the children currently in the lower and middle levels will have left the school by the time the Minister for Education sorts out the problem.

I now refer to some Homeswest matters. Suburbs in my electorate have a high proportion of Homeswest housing, particularly the suburbs of Midvale and Koongamia. Undertakings have been given by the Minister for Housing and the Premier for redevelopment of Midvale, similar to the developments which have taken place in Lockridge and elsewhere. However, I have grave concerns about the timetable for this redevelopment because everything seems to take longer than originally predicted, and there never seems to be as much money as was originally promised. It is unfortunate that the director of Homeswest and his staff are not present during the estimates committee process to answer questions about how much money is in the budget for the redevelopment of both Midvale and Koongamia.

Mr Prince: When I was Minister for Housing, I brought the full complement of the department's executive into the Estimates Committee for that purpose. In my view they should be here for the estimates process. Unfortunately, that is not mandatory but I think they should be present.

Mrs ROBERTS: I commend the minister for that initiative because it is important that Homeswest be accountable and give some indication of where it will spend public money in the next 12 months. I will be pursuing the Minister for Housing to determine how much money is in the budget for Midvale and Koongamia. I know that our housing spokesman is attempting to hold negotiations with the Minister for Housing to determine whether the director of Homeswest and others can be here for the Estimates Committee. I signal now that I will be pursuing that matter.

I turn to policing matters in the Midland electorate. I am concerned that as a result of the enterprise bargaining agreement recently struck with the Western Australian Police Union, an additional \$19.6m will be required.

Mr Prince: No, it is fully funded. There is a carryover from this financial year into next financial year because the enterprise bargaining started part of the way through the year. It is fully funded, not only in this financial year, but in the budget financial year and in the out years.

Mrs ROBERTS: How much money is being brought forward?

Mr Prince: I cannot tell you, but there was a budget allocation in this current financial year, which was not drawn down until the union membership voted in favour of it, which I think was about six weeks ago.

Mrs ROBERTS: I would be interested to know how much it is because by my calculations it needs to be about \$8m.

Mr Prince: No doubt you will ask in the Estimates Committee and I will be able to give you the accurate answer.

Mrs ROBERTS: I will pursue those matters in the Estimates Committee because one of my chief concerns is that the officers at the front-line in the police districts - many of whom in the Midland and other areas have some excellent initiatives, which they are currently undertaking, and some others which they would like to undertake - have the funds to undertake much local policing work, which can prove to be effective in preventing crime and apprehending offenders.

I will also address some environmental matters in my electorate. Ongoing work is being done by the Environmental Protection Authority at the Omex site in Bellevue. By and large, I am pleased with the way the operation is going. However, some difficulties have been experienced in ensuring monitoring takes place. Some people have had some health concerns about continuing to live next to a site which is in the process of being remediated. I am not confident how effectively those concerns have been addressed. More importantly, it concerns me that the Minister for the Environment has recently approved of the establishment of yet another brickworks in Hazelmere. Although talk about monitoring has taken place, no commitment has been made to a health survey which many people in the Midland electorate want. That includes the suburbs of Midland, Bellevue, Hazelmere, Helena Valley and Middle Swan. It appears that my electorate has more than its fair share of brickworks and other industries. Some real concerns have been expressed about the emissions from brickworks. The Minister for the Environment says these can be monitored. I would like some assurance that they will be effectively and independently monitored. I would also like an assurance that a health survey will take place. In essence, the minister has put the cart before the horse because a health survey and proper monitoring of the emissions from the existing brickworks should have occurred before another brickworks was approved. If the monitoring and the health survey prove that a real problem exists with the emissions from the various brickworks and the impact that is having on local residents' health, it will be too late because the minister has already approved other brickworks in our area.

It is my intention to pursue the Police budget during the Estimates Committee debate. I will have a range of questions on that budget at that time.

In my few remaining minutes, I raise an issue of women's health, which a couple of my colleagues have also raised. I recently took the opportunity at the request of Dr Harry Cohen, Medical Director of Gynaecology Clinical Care Unit at the King Edward Memorial Hospital for Women, to look at its facilities. I was appalled at some of its antiquated facilities. The most appalling thing I saw was the age of some of the equipment in the special care nursery. This equipment is for babies who are born prematurely. They are using ventilators which are out of date. One of the doctors told me that some of these old ventilators and incubators that the babies are connected to are 10 to 17 years old and they damage babies' lungs. They must put the weaker and younger babies on the newer equipment, and in time, when more babies are born and babies who are in greater need come into the unit, they must take some of the babies off the newer and better ventilators and put them on the out-of-date equipment. The point was made that 10 ventilators are required at a cost of \$40 000 each to replace ones that are 10 to 17 years old. Ten incubators are required at a cost of about \$20 000 each to replace ones that are aged between 10 and 15 years. Old intensive care cardiorespiratory monitors that are six years old, old apnoea monitors that are 20 years old, oxygen monitors that are 19 years old and syringe pumps that are seven years old all need replacing. It is generally accepted that electronic equipment should be replaced after seven years, but these ventilators are way out of date. I note that government policy allows for replacement of motor vehicles after two or three years, but it seems the same principle does not apply when considering health equipment. I was concerned when one of the top specialists at King Edward told me that the ventilators were damaging premature babies' lungs, and that for the sake of \$40 000 a monitor, approximately the same cost as a government car, they could be replaced. This Government has its priorities wrong if it will not replace these out-of-date ventilators at the same time that it is continuing to update the government car fleet at a cost of approximately \$30 000 a car.

**MR MARSHALL** (Dawesville - Parliamentary Secretary) [3.28 pm]: I commence my speech on this year's Appropriation (Consolidated Fund) Bill (No 1) by acknowledging how fortunate I am in representing such a vibrant and exciting electorate as Dawesville. My electorate is one of the fastest growing areas in Australia, which means that the increased population demands improved and new infrastructure, which in turn brings many challenges, and I must say that every day of my life is an adventure. In 1994, the electorate of Dawesville had 10 978 constituents. In January 1999, figures from the Western Australian Electoral Commission indicate that Dawesville had 15 360 constituents, an increase of 39.2 per cent, which is the highest increase in country areas in Western Australia. The average mean increase for a country electorate is 12 000. The City of Mandurah also experienced incredible growth. It increased from 19 411 in 1986 to 43 489 in 1998.

The figure for 1999 is even higher. As a regional city, Mandurah is now larger than Geraldton and Bunbury. Some years ago people believed the myth that if they could win the most seats in Bunbury they would win government. However, right now the action is in Mandurah and the Peel region. In its wisdom the Government recognised the need to harness the Peel population growth through careful planning. It achieved that in July 1996 when it announced that a Peel regional plan would be implemented. I am pleased to say that in 1997 an inner-Peel regional plan evolved from the Peel regional strategy. In 1999 a Peel regional scheme was launched which identifies urban land for the next 25 to 30 years and industrial land for 15 years.

One could ask: Why is a statutory region scheme required? It is necessary to plan for the future, particularly if the population growth is explosive. By planning for the future we ensure that key environmental areas are preserved, regional parks are created, and land is set aside for railways and roads, etc. One of the major roads identified in this scheme was the Peel deviation road designed to relieve traffic pressure on South West Highway and Old Coast Road. It is only a 39 kilometre piece of road deviating around the back of Mandurah, from Pinjarra Road, Ravenswood to Lake Clifton at the back of the estuary. It is a priority project that will cost about \$100m.

Mandurah is the gateway to the south west. The most recent Electoral Commission survey shows that Dawesville, Mitchell and Vasse are the areas in which people want to live. They have the highest number of constituents in country electorates. The latest road usage figures that Main Roads can supply are for 1997. According to those figures, Old Coast Road averages 5 000 vehicles a day. That increases in the built-up area of Dawesville to 7 200 vehicles a day. On South West Highway through the Murray-Wellington electorate, Pinjarra, etc the road usage is 5 100 vehicles. The figures show that 15 per cent of usage is by heavy traffic which includes trucks, buses, single-axle trucks and long vehicles. That is increasing as trucks must meet the population demands and infrastructure. As a result both roads are becoming dangerous.

Recently Main Roads said that the so-called priority deviation road will not commence until 2010. I understood that four years ago it was considered to be among the top four priority roads. The previous Minister for Transport led me to believe that it would be completed by about 2005. I challenge Main Roads' figures and remind the department of the population growth along the coastal strip in my Dawesville electorate. On the bypass road to Mandurah the new bridge, which was built to cater for increased traffic to the south - I do not know why it was not named; there is the old bridge and the new bridge -

Mrs van de Klashorst: It should be the Arthur Marshall Bridge!

Mr MARSHALL: We will have to name it; it would be great to have a bridge named after oneself. I might be called "Sydney"!

Mr Minson: Is that near the Creery wetlands?

Mr MARSHALL: That is the new bridge. When I was campaigning in 1993, Erskine was the only subdivision on the other side of the bridge. When I campaigned in the area in 1996 there were four subdivisions. Two subdivisions have been added to the area on the other side of Halls Head. The Port Mandurah canal development No 1 scheme is completed and the No 2 scheme has commenced. Development in that area has tripled. Further south, blocks in Falcon and Cox Bay, next to my electorate office, are selling quickly and houses are popping up everywhere.

Since the Port Bouvard Bridge and the Dawesville Cut developments have been taken over by new management, 80 blocks were sold last month. Among that prime land are some bargains. Blocks by the canal have decreased in price from approximately \$350 000 to \$210 000. Surrounding blocks are selling for approximately \$80 000. Two kilometres further south of the channel is Florida where 116 blocks have been earmarked for development. A subdivision has been created at Tims Thicket where houses are popping up every year. A new development is to be created at Park Ridge estate. I appreciate that these suburban names do not mean much to anyone in this packed Chamber right now! However, they would understand if they lived in the country and were surrounded by exciting new developments. They would also understand why I am so concerned about the pressure of increasing traffic on Old Coast Road.

People in the metropolitan area do not realise that the people living between the channel and the new bridge are living on an island. Not too many people I know in this life can boast that they live on an island as they can in that area. The ocean is on one side and the estuary is on the other side with a bridge at either end.

In addition to the urban development that has occurred over the past three years a multipurpose recreation oval has been developed on the Merlin St Reserve.

Mr Minson: What did you do with the kangaroos?

Mr MARSHALL: They are still there. The South Mandurah Tennis Club has increased its number of courts from six to 10. Another 10 shops were added to my shopping centre last year and they are fully occupied. As a result of this growth the people living on both sides of this now close-knit community are having trouble getting onto the highway. On Friday nights, entry onto the highway is very dangerous especially as most people travelling in that area own caravans and boats. Accidents are caused by boats or caravans encroaching onto the road behind cars waiting at the median strip between the two lanes.

I have mentioned the increased traffic and why the 1997 Main Roads' figures are no longer relevant. Other surveys show that since the tree-top walk in Walpole was established, more than 500 000 people have visited the area. Added to that, increasing numbers of people are travelling to the wineries in the south west - more vineyards are being developed all the time - fishing spots and events such as the Margaret River surfing championships. In the light of all that, the deviation should be given priority. I challenge Main Roads to reassess its 1997 estimates and prove to me that the new deviation road should not be a priority.

The Peel regional scheme has identified a proposed railway route from Perth to Mandurah. Although it is subject to the sale of AlintaGas, I am pleased that the Government has indicated it will become a reality by 2007. The master plan for the extension of the metropolitan railway to Mandurah has been launched. When the route is operating, Mandurah residents will be able to reach Perth station in only 60 minutes. That railway link, which will close the gap between the regional areas and the metropolitan area, will mean that people will have more job opportunities and will be able to increase their choice of shopping areas. It will be wonderful for the area. The trains will reach speeds of up to 140 kilometres an hour. Surprisingly, research shows that 80 per cent of people want the link to Perth rather than to Fremantle.

For the past two days I have been listening to negative, hit and run speeches by opposition members against ministers and the Government. This is a good-news speech. Although the Labor Government continually said that it wanted a rail link from Fremantle to Rockingham, why did it delay the process? Were its members talking through their pockets because they thought that their two safest seats were in the industrial working areas of Fremantle and Rockingham? Were they considering the big picture and what people in the south west really wanted?

Was it just oversight or were they thinking politically? They made a mistake. Everyone wants to go to Perth on the rail link. I congratulate those involved for the time and effort put in to produce the new plans. However, if people want to go to Fremantle all they do is travel to Rockingham by train and get off at the Hub. There are buses every 10 minutes to take them to Fremantle and the rail link from Fremantle to Perth is already there. However, the people who want to do that are the minority. Most people do not want to travel from Mandurah to Rockingham; they want to go to Perth. If the previous Government, in running this State for 10 years, had had the vision that the demand was for a rail link from Perth to Rockingham and on to Mandurah, it could have purchased the land and had the infrastructure in place along the freeway and this present Government would not have its current problems. I congratulate this Government, subject to the AlintaGas sale which is important, on its declaration that the rail link will extend to Mandurah by 2007. The master plan prediction on the population growth is that by 2006 the new railway will be used by 30 000 passengers a day.

I mentioned at the beginning of this address the challenges that occur in our growing population, and health is one. I am pleased to report that our new 132-bed public hospital under the administration and direction of Health Solutions, is performing professionally. The hospital has been open for only five months and it is already booked to capacity every day. Again, I had a problem when ministers visited the area. Four state Ministers for Health have become part of the project. While we were getting it up and running, the Labor Party chap who stood against me at the last election headed part of an action group that wanted to save the then 32-bed hospital and tried to stop something good that the Government planned to do. That gentleman is on the council, for goodness sake, and he tries to negate good projects in the area. When there are innovations by a forward thinking Government, a chap like that gets people together to stop them. Now we have a 132-bed hospital and it is not big enough! What kind of a wisdom would that fellow have had in this House if he had been elected? None at all.

Elective surgery procedures for joint replacements are now being performed at the Peel Health Campus. Six orthopaedic operations a week are being done and, hopefully, 140 operations will be completed by the end of August. In Mandurah, 56 per cent of the population are over 60 years of age and in my electorate of Dawesville, 26 per cent are over 60 years of age. They are the people who will need hip and knee replacements requiring orthopaedic surgery.

Mr Prince: All from playing football and tennis over the years when they were young.

Mr MARSHALL: Old tennis players and worn out footballers, as the member for Albany said, with which I agree. We are able to give them that service right now. The Mandurah hospital has an efficient 24-hour emergency service, which it did not have before. The patients are bulk billed and incur no extra costs.

I also mention a few of the extra things that have occurred, making people very confident about their health and confident about this Government. Five dialysis machines treating 20 people three times a week have been introduced; a new rehabilitation service has commenced; more ophthalmic, paediatric and ear, nose and throat surgery is taking place; and a reorganised in-patient paediatric service and a new general surgeon have commenced operating. It is very difficult to get surgeons to come to country areas although the Minister for Health recently said that problem has been solved. The hospital is constantly reviewing obstetric, ante and postnatal services. A new administration centre has commenced to streamline paperwork on admission, and a review of community service has commenced to investigate more support for patients at home. The list goes on.

Another challenge that I wish to talk about is education. In a town that has a changing age population ranging from retirement people to many young families, education is as important as health. I am pleased to say that our education system has been very well served by this Government. Two of the four primary schools built in Western Australia in 1994 were in Mandurah and a TAFE college was introduced in 1996, the first time that tertiary education had come to Mandurah. One would think we could sit back and relax with that record. However, we cannot relax because the population is booming and when it is booming we need to add more to the education schemes.

I am pleased to say that in another year we will be launching a new Peel campus. This is not a new idea; I believe it was tried in Geraldton with great success. By the time students get to years 11 and 12 at the two highest achieving high schools, Mandurah and Coodanup Senior High Schools, the numbers at each school are so imbalanced that not all of the TEE subjects can be taught. Therefore, if there were 40 students at one school and 30 at another, the full range of subjects could not be taught at those schools. If the 40 and 30 are combined to make 70 students, there is then a full complement of senior scholars and all subjects can be taught, whether professional or trade subjects, by the right teacher. We will be building such a school located next to the TAFE college so that once again years 11 and 12 students will be mixing with tertiary students on the buses, in their cars and on the same playing fields, and they will get the feeling about the dedication that is needed to go on with their studies and how to allocate their time for study and not be distracted.

Earlier I referred to the urban strip going through Dawesville. Halls Head has grown so dramatically that a new middle school is needed there and by 2001 there will be a middle school adjoining the hockey ground. That school will cost \$16m to build and could become a specialist school for hockey. I keep talking about growth and when there is growth with young families we need even more primary schools. A new primary school is required at Melros in my electorate. It is south of the Port Bouvard bridge. The Falcon school has swelled and is bursting at the seams with 780 students, of which 278 come from south of the Dawesville Channel. That is why we want the Melros school. Normally a school can be started with around 300 students and although it has been planned to happen in 2002, I would like to think that the Minister for Education will see the value of a new school and we will get it at Melros by 2001.

Unemployment continues to be a major concern in the area running at 8 per cent, but more disturbingly 15 per cent for youths. Eighteen new restaurants were opened in Mandurah last year. Where, in any other provincial town, could anyone measure up to that? Of course, they provide employment. The hospitality courses at Mandurah TAFE are always full but

teenage unemployment continues to be high. I would like to think that the new 500-pen marina, scheduled to be completed by 2005, will assist with unemployment. This complex will be exciting. The Hillarys Boat Harbour is fantastic, although there were negative attitudes about that when it started operations. However, that is now at capacity and showing a profit. The same will happen in Mandurah because it is on the coast, it is a holiday place and people use boats. The complex will have pens, commercial boating and fishing, tourists and mixed residential land, 35 short-term chalets, four-star hotel accommodation, more restaurants, retail boating and souvenir shops. I believe this marina will create an extra 300 jobs for the area.

Manufacturing and retail trade provide most of the employment in the Peel region. That is followed by building construction which is going so extraordinarily well with so many people moving into the area that one cannot get a tradesman in the area currently. Many houses are being built and most of them in the Dawesville electorate. Building construction is followed by mining projects and business services. However, we must not overlook the importance of agriculture, forestry and fishing opportunities in the area. I will quote some figures on fishing, particularly because I know the member for Geraldton and the member for Greenough are in prolific lobster fishing areas. I remind them when I hear about how well they are going, that along the coastline in little old Mandurah and on the Dawesville coast at Falcon, Florida and White Hills, the rock lobster catch in 1997-98 was 268 tonnes with a value of \$5.4m for the area. Wetline fishing accounted for 358 tonnes valued at \$948 000. Prawns were estimated to have a value of \$548 000. Unfortunately, this has been halved because of the opening of the Dawesville Channel. All the prawns that breed in the shallow waters of the estuary go out when the rains come, to get to the salt water and breed again. They continue to go out through the Dawesville Channel but do so now at 100 miles an hour. Because of the fast tides, they get swept away, and the fishermen cannot catch the prawns at that entrance. Therefore, what used to be a million-dollar industry for the fishermen has slipped now to \$548 000.

Crabs continue to be the mainstay of fishermen. It is well documented that Mandurah is the crab home of Australia. There are more crabs there than anywhere in Australia. This year it was a \$330 000 industry. It is amazing that the fishermen are still catching crabs. There was a crab festival six weeks ago, and 35 000 people came to Mandurah for that festival. One would think that the crabs would be wiped out, but there are still plenty of them there. With respect to molluscs, such as scallops, squid and mussels, in 1997-98 the return went from \$49 000 to \$92 000 in one season. Therefore, that is another industry that is developing.

The 2007 rail link and the new buses that are already running successfully will add to the transport connection between the Kwinana industrial area and Perth. When these transport systems are in place, it will also enhance job opportunities.

Before concluding, I refer to the Peel Thunder Football Club. I know that in the past I have copped a bit of flak from opposition members because they do not know anything about football. Opposition members here at the moment would like to object, but they are looking at me and telling themselves that it is no use their interjecting because they are going to hear about Peel Thunder anyway. The Peel Thunder Football Club is creating its own history in the town. Although it has not been successful on the playing field, it has a good following. I was able to create a 100 Club last year - one hundred members at \$100 each. I actually got 126 people, so we gave the club \$12 000. There are 110 members this year. Therefore, in a few weeks we will be able to give the club \$10 000. Not many other Westar Rules football clubs can get their 100 clubs up and running nowadays. In the old days they were booming and easy to organise. However, the present old-style clubs are finding it difficult to raise that kind of funding.

People underestimate the value of football for educational purposes. Today, when so many single mothers have to raise their primary school children by themselves, young lads miss the education that comes from having a man around the house. They experience that when they go to underage football for the first time. Hopefully the coach will have the right attitude and will set the standards for these lads to grow with the right expectations to see them through their football life and life generally. At 16, 17 and 18 years of age, when these lads get a bit better at the game - these kids will then be playing Colts for Peel Thunder - a good football coach can turn a youth into a man. That is vital. Therefore, when people say that the Peel Thunder Football Club has not won a match, it does not worry me, because what we are doing is turning youth into men, which is very important.

Football is tribal. Melbourne people belong to Richmond, Collingwood and the other Melbourne clubs and never the twain shall meet. It is the same in Western Australia. A person has to know who he is and to whom he belongs if he is ever going to stand up straight, look himself in the mirror and say, "I'm okay." The member for Cockburn, bless him, has been a supporter of South Fremantle since he was a lad. He is still one-eyed about South Fremantle and believes in South Fremantle. Although I disagree with him on his choice of teams, I admire him for the way he sticks with his team. That is what football teaches people.

The population in the area of the Peel Thunder Football Club has changed a great deal, and many people in that area have never had a team to belong to. When I ask people in the Mandurah Forum where they come from, they tell me they come from Leederville, Midland or Timbuktu. When I ask them where they live, I am told they have lived in the Mandurah area for four years. The one thing that will get those people to change their lifestyle, believe it or not, is a football side. Peel Thunder is battling to win a game, but it is doing a great service to the community. Last year, young Brandon Hill went to the West Coast Eagles from Peel Thunder. He was drafted to the Australian Football League. Young Darren Bolton went to the Fremantle Dockers. He has already played one game. Those two lads from the south, who began their football lives playing in their minor leagues, played for Peel Thunder. Their ability has now been recognised by talent scouts from the AFL, and provided they can keep stepping up and keeping pace at the required level, they will do well. Young Darren Bolton is a gifted Aboriginal boy. He would never have been discovered without Peel Thunder!

Mr Bridge: You are on strong ground. I am nodding my head in acknowledgment of the wisdom that you are providing to

the House. You are spot on. If that football team never wins another game, it does not matter. People can identify and associate with the football team in that area. It is all about life.

Mr MARSHALL: Yes. The young kids are now wearing Peel Thunder guernseys. I was fortunate to chair the steering committee that designed those guernseys. We brought in a consultant and we named the club. In years to come people will forget about all that work that had to be done.

I will quote from a letter to the editor in *The West Australian* on Tuesday, after the Dockers had their first win for the season.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I remind the member that we are dealing with the budget.

Mr MARSHALL: This is important because it emphasises what football means to a community. I have now gone up another notch to the AFL. This letter is from Geoff Hutchison of Burwood, Victoria. The letter is headed "A great moment" and it states -

CONGRATULATIONS to Damian Drum and the Fremantle Dockers for rewarding my six-year-old daughter's patience.

She has been to WA just once in her young life and inherited her father's support for the Dockers out of blind faith, -

This is the important point. People need to know who they belong to and where they come from if they are ever to be a success, because if people have a base they can gamble and go forward, knowing they can always come back. It is the young kids of today who do not have anywhere to come back to who are getting into strife. Football can help them out. The letter continues -

- so the win over Geelong marked a great day in our relationship.

Putting the Dockers' theme song in the car stereo and draping a scarf out of the car window, we drove around the eastern suburbs of Melbourne, doing to them what they have long been doing to us. It was ludicrous, it was hilarious, but it was a wonderful moment for a dad and his daughter.

Not only does football give young lads faith and teach them standards, it does the same thing for daughters.

My wish in this year's budget was for a police station at Falcon. I do not suppose we get everything we want in life. Nevertheless, I will be working to see that facility eventuate in 2001.

In conclusion, I will share an experience with the House. It happened last week while I was boating. The weather out on the Mandurah waterways has been fantastic. The Peel waterways are three times the size of the Swan River. They are the hidden jewel. They have yet to be truly marketed. Along with my canal neighbour, I slipped out at 4.00 pm to see whether there were any crabs. The water was calm and flat. We had time for only four runs before dark. On the first run we got only two legal-sized crabs - we threw back about 20. The next run we got six, and the next run, out of 10 legal pots, we got 15 crabs! That was a historic moment for us; we have never had that many crabs in one run in our lives. The crabs were virtually jumping in the boat. As the sun set, an incredible thing happened. The member for Kimberley will understand what happened next. As I looked to the right I saw a ball of red-orange flame - the sun was setting. I was going to say it was as good as the spectacle in Broome, but it was almost as good. To the left, on the flat, calm water, a full moon was rising. It was like a tennis match: We looked to the right and saw the sun setting, and we looked to the left and saw the moon rising. To top that off, because we had been throwing out bait, the pelicans came along. To top that off, we heard a few snorts around the boat and there were half a dozen dolphins. I cannot imagine being more wondrously rewarded than I am in being the member of Parliament representing the constituents of Dawesville. My cup runneth over.

**MRS van de KLASHORST** (Swan Hills - Parliamentary Secretary) [4.01 pm]: I commend and support the Government on its 1999-2000 budget. Its emphasis on health, education and law and order are very positive outcomes for everyone in Western Australia. They are the most important issues confronting us, but the budget has many other positives.

The Treasurer has balanced the need for stimulation of the economy because of the downturn in the State's income with a capital works program. I commend the good financial management that will enable capital works to be built and allow us to maintain positive growth in our State. After all, that improves the job outlook in Western Australia. I am sure members recall that Western Australia has been leading Australia in employment growth.

The member for Dawesville said that he represents one of the best places in Western Australia. I represent what we in the hills call "God's own place". We are surrounded by trees and live on large blocks. The member for Dawesville referred to his large number of constituents. I have nearly 28 000 constituents, which is double the number in his electorate.

The Swan Hills electorate has benefited as a result of the capital works the Government has planned. We have two school upgrades - Glen Forrest and Parkerville; construction of a new adolescent and child support centre at Hillston in Stoneville; new fire stations in the north east corridor; major roadworks; and a huge allocation of \$31m to be spent by the Water Corporation at Ellenbrook on the construction of a water main and an upgrade as well as a new sewer pumping station; and something that benefits all of Perth: The Lexia ground water treatment plant and bore field, which will provide much more water of a better quality to the rest of Perth.

Swan Hills is also benefiting as a result of capital expenditure in the justice system. That includes asset replacement at the minimum security Wooroloo Prison Farm. That is a necessity since the fire destroyed many of its buildings. I have been lobbying for some years for improvements to the Bandyup Women's Prison. The Government will now spend \$9m to

undertake the long overdue upgrade of the physical structure of the prison. If we are to have equality, the women's prison should be as good as the other prisons in this State, and that is not the case at the moment. The budget allocates nearly \$2m for infrastructure planning and advance works for the new Wooroloo Prison South, which is one of the major works in Swan Hills this financial year. It will be a significant establishment for many years to come because it will be one of the biggest employers in the region.

This budget contains a potpourri of capital works - all very much needed. I put the Government on notice that I will be working this forthcoming financial year to achieve a major upgrade of the Bullsbrook District High School. I will also be pushing for funding for major highways, including the Great Eastern Highway and the Great Northern Highway. Funding has been provided in the past five years, but more is needed. I will also be pursuing several other projects for the Swan Hills area.

My major contribution to this debate relates to a completely different topic, something that is of concern to hills dwellers and other people of Swan Hills. I refer to the drug problem. The budget contains an allocation of \$14m as recurrent funding to combat drug abuse. The Significant Issues and Trends section, at page 506, points out that the State Government provides leadership, essential services and support, and then goes on to make it absolutely clear that combatting illegal drugs is a very complex issue and one in which the entire community must be involved. We must be part of a partnership process if we are to fight the international and national escalation of illicit drug use. Governments and the entire community are faced with trying to develop strategies to deal with drug abuse. It is very important that these strategies and decisions are based not on emotions, mythology or ideological beliefs but on fact.

This leads me to comment on the way in which some of our community leaders and others are looking at pot, hash or marijuana. There seems to be a very concerning move in our community towards this drug being called a "soft" drug - like a soft drink as opposed to alcohol. There are calls from some sections of the community to legalise the use of marijuana because it is a so-called soft drug. Some literature that I have read states that marijuana is a recreational drug. That terminology is prevalent in public debate, in literature and in the media. I believe that that is leading to a softening in community attitudes towards it. There is talk of harm minimisation, and that has become part of the public debate. The proposition is that these drugs can be allowed if people are taught to use them in a responsible way.

I will discuss not the rights and the wrongs of this but the rationale of allowing young people in our community to think that they can use marijuana without harming themselves. I will point out why Governments must be very strong in this regard and not be allowed to take the soft option. I quote a book entitled *Marijuana* written by Elaine Walters, which contains some correspondence from parents. One parent states -

My son is 19 and has been using cannabis for approximately 5 years. Over the past couple of years he has become totally addicted. He suffers from lack of confidence, paranoia, mood swings, suicidal depression etc. He wants to stop, but lacks the will power, even though he is desperate to get on with his life.

Another parent writes -

... over a 5 year period I have seen my son become a 99% per cent vegetable by day, and by night a 'Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde' type of character. He feels I am persecuting him because I try to persuade him to seek help.

The laments continue -

I am concerned by what I see marijuana doing to my son - memory lapses, bizarre behaviour, mood swings. He is not convinced of the dangers and generally disregards what I say about it. This is an intelligent loving young man who has lost his way and I can only see him staying at this point or maybe even deteriorating further.

I will refer to some of the facts that people need to know. I do not think we as a Government or the community are being told the truth about marijuana. It is a psychotropic drug; that is, it stops people making responsible decisions. It causes people to relax and to be less inhibited, and they eventually lose control. The more they use, the more control they lose.

The research has shown that the real harm of these prohibited psychotropic drugs relates to the effect they have on the psychological, physical and mental health of users. The younger users are and the earlier they start using, the more pronounced the effect. Marijuana is a very complex drug. It is far from the soft, harmless drug it is promoted as being. Scientific data shows it to be very toxic. What is not known by many people who use it is that it contains 426 different chemicals including some psycho-active drugs. The psycho-active strength of marijuana depends on the variety of cannabis grown, and how it is cultivated and prepared for use. These 426 chemicals fall into 18 chemical groups including alkaloids, sterols, terpenes and furan derivatives. Sixty-one of these chemicals are unique to the cannabis plant. The chemicals affect the DNA and protein synthesis in body cells. They lodge in the fatty parts of the tissue and remain there for long periods. We banned DDT in this State because it remained in the fatty tissues of the body. It is not well known that marijuana has the same effect. No other illicit drug on the market has the same base chemical composition as marijuana. I had never heard before that cannabis contains many known carcinogens and other chemicals which remain in the body sometimes for up to eight days after use. People are not told that they are putting carcinogens into their bodies which stay there. The toxic combination of marijuana is the cause of much concern and we should be telling users that. The research I have done shows that temporary brain dysfunction during use is of concern and even more worrying is the impairment which continues after use. Scientific evidence shows a relationship between cannabis and mental illness - this drug affects the mental stability of the user.

I find it very peculiar that as a community we spend millions of dollars trying to educate people not to smoke cigarettes - we put horror advertisements on the television and have almost had a 10-year plan to stop people smoking - yet as a

community we do not give people the true facts about cannabis. We do not seem to be worried about this brain altering substance. We are worried about the cancer causing cigarettes but I consider a brain altering substance to be much more dangerous to our community. Acute toxic psychosis is the long-term outcome for many heavy users. Why are we not passing this information on to the community in the same way we talk about cigarette smoking? Marijuana abuse has been proved to cause paranoid reactions, anxiety attacks, panic attacks, acute confusion, delusion, hallucinations and general psychiatric problems including schizophrenia. A longitudinal study in Sweden involving 50 000 subjects over 15 years showed that people who have used cannabis 50 or more times have six more times the chance of being schizophrenic than those who have not. The study also found a strong predominance of violent death. Suicide accounted for 34 per cent of all deaths in the study group; that is well above normal suicide rates. The study found that the proportion of suicides increased sharply and in parallel with the level of cannabis consumption. If members are interested in the subject, it is worth their reading a book titled *Drug Precipice*. It talks about mental illness and acute toxic psychosis and on page 13 states -

It is only in recent years that the adverse effects of cannabis have been observed in Western culture. Earlier reports came from India, the Middle East and Africa. Chronic mental reactions have become common in the West over the last 25 years: 'Hallucinations, paranoid delusions, and feelings of depersonalisation and derealisation are not uncommon and are seen in acute intoxicated states as well as acute or chronic psychoses'.

In the 1960s, marijuana was produced at a fairly mild strength. Current production varies greatly but the strength is slowly increasing with high concentrations of the psycho-active chemical. In 1990, the American Bar Association looked at the policy which had allowed decriminalisation of marijuana use for the previous 18 years and reversed it due to its awareness of the increased potency of the drug. The association concluded -

It is a far more powerful drug than before, and therefore poses a far more serious hazard to users today. It is one of our nation's most serious public health problems and requires a renewed nationwide effort to reduce its use.

Strengths have increased further and obviously so has the danger to users. In 1997 in Australia, strengths were recorded up to nine times the level which concerned the American Bar Association in 1990. That is very alarming.

Worldwide research into marijuana has looked at the long-term effects and also at the diverse side effects. This has shown that the current message being given to our young people that marijuana does not cause harm is complete rubbish. Many serious long-term effects have been identified. Over the years governments have spent countless dollars educating people about the link between cigarette smoking and cancer and heart disease. There has been a major public reaction to those education programs; marches on the streets, doctors' testimonies, television horror advertising, billboards and school education programs and much more telling people how bad smoking is for them. We have recently banned smoking in public places to try to stop people from smoking. The Government must do the same for people who use marijuana. We must bring to the attention of our Western Australian community the scientific findings which show what this drug does to our community and to our youth who are in grave danger from using this drug. Marijuana affects the central nervous system. It increases the incidence of depression and as the use increases, more depression is experienced. I believe it is a cause of youth suicide in Western Australia. Studies have shown that young men in this State are killing themselves at an increasing rate and as marijuana has been proved to cause people to commit suicide, we must look at a causal link. As leaders of our community and lawmakers, we must discourage people, especially young people, from using marijuana. Heavy use by adolescents is linked to crime because, as has been scientifically shown, its use predicts and forecasts increased delinquency, unemployment, divorce and major health problems later in life. These are just some of the predictors without considering the gateway effect: Marijuana leading to use of other drugs, being a stepping stone because of the dependency factor. However, that is another story.

The World Health Organisation has identified what is known as chronic cannabis intoxication. This condition is shown by users as a loss of interest, dullness, apathy, loss of concentration, lack of care of personal dress and long-term developmental problems. Does that sound like some of the children in our high schools? Teachers are talking about these things all the time. The Australian studies have observed that users show signs of apathy and antisocial behaviour. Many other studies show possible side effects in addition to those I have already mentioned. These include lower sperm counts and abnormally shaped sperm in male users, links to child leukemia in woman who smoke marijuana while pregnant, the destruction of lung cells and chromosomes, cell metabolism damage and possible suppression of female fertility hormones.

The dangers go on and on. We must not ignore the scientific research which links this drug to so many illnesses. We accept that there is no such thing as a safe level of tobacco use. We must accept, therefore, that there is no such thing as a responsible use of marijuana; this simply does not exist. The Government and all those responsible must ensure that we put a plan in place to educate our community to the dangers of this brain-altering drug. Governments must ensure that it is not decriminalised, because that would encourage greater usage and, therefore, more brain dysfunction. The link is there. We must not accept the integration of drugs as being the norm in our society. We must keep up the fight which involves three aspects - education, treatment and law enforcement. We must make sure that the use of marijuana remains a socially unacceptable form of behaviour. As leaders in our community we owe nothing less to our youth.

Finally, *Drug Precipice* states that a drug free society is a vision expressing optimism and a positive view of humanity and that the onslaught of drugs can be restrained and drug abusers can be rehabilitated. I completely agree with those sentiments and urge our Government to continue to work towards the goal of a marijuana-free society.

**MR BRIDGE** (Kimberley) [4.22 pm]: Those words of wisdom so well expressed by the previous speaker, the member for Swan Hills, would be all very good if they were consistent with a commitment to take action. I sat in this Parliament only a week ago and heard the member for Swan Hills advocate the necessity for building further prisons in Western Australia. That is an example of an absolute contradiction.

Several members interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Order!

Mrs van de Klashorst: You did not hear me say that.

Mr BRIDGE: I heard the member say that. I agree with what the member has said in the past 10 minutes, but those words have a shallow meaning if the member for Swan Hills does not understand that they need to be enshrined in procedures for a range of other corrective measures.

Mrs van de Klashorst: In my speech I said that prison is the last resort. We must try all those other options before people go to prison. You obviously heard only half of my speech.

Mr BRIDGE: How can the member say that it is a measure of last resort when the headline in the *Sunday Times* of last week said that prisons were bursting at the seams? For a long time it has been resorted to as a means to an end, and not as a last resort.

I will touch on a range of issues to do with the appropriation Bill. Before I do so I point out the member for Dawesville was correct when he spoke of the significance of a football team and the image and identity that a team provides for a local community. I do not suppose it matters whether the team wins regularly; the fact is it is a focal point and a means of communication involving a process which enables dialogue to occur within a community structure. I put forward the same argument in the lead-up to the last election. I said a football team was essential for the Kimberley and I asked why we did not have a team from the north west. If the area of Peel can produce a team from the Dawesville electorate south west of Perth, which is just down the road but is deemed to be country, why cannot we have a team from the north west? Madam Acting Speaker, do you know what the reaction was to that question? To my amazement, the reaction from so-called enthusiastic footballers in the Kimberley was that we should recruit our footballers into the league fixtures in Perth and get them assigned to clubs down there, because that is how they will make it. That is not the way forward. It is not about dialogue or local identity and it does not focus on the importance of us all being proud of a football team.

The member for Dawesville is not present but I will tell him something that he can feel good about. He did not want to say too much about the record of Peel Thunder Football Club. A couple of weeks ago a bloke from the north west was sitting with me at the only game of football that he had seen for years. During the 20 minutes that he watched the Peel Thunder footballers play, they scored four unreturned goals. He said Peel Thunder must be one of the greatest teams that has ever been mounted and we should look at all the goals they had scored. He said they had kicked all the goals and nobody else seemed to be able to kick any. Even though they are not at the top of the league, as far as he was concerned they are a pretty good team.

I will to some extent repeat what I have said for the past year or two: Whichever political party is the architect, budgets are very irrelevant as far as I am concerned, because they are designed and essentially influenced by a force beyond the process of the Parliament that must deal with them. Here is a classic example of a budget that fits that bill. Since the introduction of the Council of Australian Governments and the foolish and reckless decisions of States to embrace it, we have had to steer our ships in our respective States of Australia having regard for the policies determined by COAG and the quangos it administers, such as the National Competition Council. Do members know the prerequisites for the end result that those bodies require from the States? There are three fundamentals: The presence of economic rationalism to its fullest extent; the full cost recovery of infrastructure; and the provision of services with the application of the user-pays principle. That is what the policies of Australia are about at the moment. Not one of the politicians here is driving that agenda; we are not the ones who are executing that plan; but we must respond to it. If we do not, and if States do not fulfil their obligations under those rules, their expenditure receipts for the following years will be under threat.

Our system has evolved in that crazy way. The end result is that some of us say some areas of the budget are deficient and others say other areas are deficient. Some may say that the budget contains some good policies, and good luck to them. However, in the main, the budgets of State Parliaments in Australia today are irrelevant. That is the most concerning feature of the presentation of budgets. The reason that budgets are irrelevant is that, with the best intent of the ministers administering their portfolios and the vigilance of members of Parliament to establish a practical budget, the fine-tuning of the determination of expenditure is carried out by those whom I call the people in the purple circle of the bureaucratic process. Those people get in a huddle and they call themselves the COAG group. It is made up of people from the National Competition Council and other organisations who are not accountable to us. We do not put them there; they are not elected, they are appointed. Madam Acting Speaker, to all intents and purposes as far as you and I as Western Australian politicians are concerned, they are faceless. They are faceless in the context of our ability to influence them, but profoundly strong in their ability to influence the States. There is evidence in the Queensland Parliament that in the past two or three years the chairman of the National Competition Council has written to the then Premier of Queensland asking how he dared to engage in expenditure on infrastructure in Queensland outside the due processes of the reform prescribed by COAG. What a cheek! If COAG is prepared to say that to the Queensland Government, why should we think it is not prepared to exert some influence on our Government? Of course, it does. Bearing in mind all the evidence about the way the structure is evolving, there are real danger signs. My comments on this are contrary to those of many other people. I said that a headline in a Queensland newspaper "Rural cleansing of inland Australia" was a fair account of what is happening in the bush. The people who are being cleansed through this process of so-called efficiency and the things that cause our Governments to be lenient in their contributions towards much-needed services, are being driven by COAG. It will result in the demise of family farms, pastoral families and general communities of towns in the bush. Figures in recent years indicate there has been a major migration of people from the bush into the metropolitan areas of Australia, or those surrounding, but in close proximity to, metropolitan areas. I am not interested nowadays in spending too much time on the budgets. Until the Governments in the

States, driven by their parliamentarians, wake up to what is happening, there will never be an accommodating budget to meet the needs of the people. Governments will tamper with the edges, and use the budgets for shadow sparring in political terms and to find voting trends for political purposes. However, not much attention will be devoted to delivering services which mean something, are of substance, and are highly relevant to the needs of the community, while the organisations to which I have referred are in place and are accommodated by Governments.

In the next few weeks I intend to introduce a motion in this place designed to highlight these issues. I hope that all members of the Assembly will say their piece in whatever way they deem appropriate. That is the intention of the motion. I advise members in advance that I will say my bit because I am very concerned about the future of Australia - far more concerned than most people.

Mr Bloffwitch: Be fair.

Mr BRIDGE: I said "most people", not everybody, and that is fair comment. Most people are not concerned enough about the plight of people in the bush.

Mr Prince: You are dead right.

Mr BRIDGE: That is the point I am making. I repeat: Most people are not concerned enough about the plight of people in the bush. That is a fair comment.

Mr Prince: Only about 25 per cent of the population live outside the city.

Mr BRIDGE: That is correct. The population beyond those country boundaries is one thing, but the resources within those country boundaries are significant and they must be maintained. That is why I make the point that our budgets must be relevant and must target those areas. Members must keep on track in terms of their ability to control and influence budgets. That is the problem and it has been foisted on this State. Members can argue in this Parliament about whether the problem is because of the Government, the Opposition or all of us. The reality is that a bigger problem exists, which at the moment is beyond our ability to control.

People have been talking about the criminal justice system in this State. That has occurred because people are acutely concerned about what that problem represents in terms of overall dangers and the threat to the multitude of people within society. People are concerned because the cycle is getting bigger and bigger. That is fair comment because many arrests are being made and many people are being brought into the criminal system. As a result of that, additional prisons must be constructed to accommodate the intake. That cycle must be changed, and barriers must be put up to stop that cycle. The Government should be devoting attention to that area, rather than acting after people become part of or victims of the criminal system. It is dangerously late at that stage because at that point people could make a decision to react with anger, hurt and denial of the pain involved in the process. The net result is that people may seek revenge. How does society react to people seeking revenge? It puts them in jail, as a result of which they may become even more angry and have another go. The way forward is to identify the critical stage at which to deal with people, and we must target the period before they first come into contact with the criminal system. Governments are shockingly weak in that area and something must be done about it. It has not been sufficiently targeted by government programs.

People talk constantly about the need for better health services for Aboriginal people, and the need for employment opportunities and a range of measures to elevate the position of indigenous Australians and create more pride, purpose and so on. How can that be achieved when 65 per cent of the detainees in this State are Aboriginal youth? I ask the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs how it can be done? There is no hope. Those goals cannot be achieved when such a high percentage of Aboriginal youth is caught up in the criminal justice system. Also, between 43 and 45 per cent of the adult prison population is Aboriginal. We, as parliamentarians, must get our priorities right. If we are genuine about doing something for the indigenous people, we must reduce the proportion of them in the criminal justice system. If Aboriginal people represent only 3 per cent of the population in Western Australia, and yet 65 per cent of the detainees in this State are Aboriginal youth, how can the Government expect its programs to succeed or to be effective? It is crazy.

I now refer to health issues. People talk about the great work of Governments in health services. I could say that we should all go to jail for our neglect and our inability to deal with issues of this kind. Halls Creek happens to be in Western Australia; it is not a third world country. A recent report on child malnutrition in the Shire of Halls Creek stated -

Three-quarters of children in Halls Creek Shire are malnourished . . .

Many of these children are severely malnourished by international standards - They are not just skinny - They are slowly starving.

Child malnutrition in Halls Creek is much worse than in most "Third World" countries.

The graph headed "Under-Fives with Severe Malnutrition" indicates that the only countries that have a higher percentage of malnourished children than Halls Creek are Pakistan, Vietnam, Bangladesh, India, Nepal and Ethiopia. How can we sit in the Parliament of a State that is resource rich and say that is tolerable?

Mr Minson: I was wondering what the report is. If those figures are right, it is a disgrace.

Mr BRIDGE: I can only take the figures as correct because the report was done professionally; it was not loosely compiled.

Mr Bloffwitch: You must give credit where credit is due. In Geraldton, ATSIC set up an AMS which does an absolutely sterling job for Aboriginal people.

Mr BRIDGE: That is a tragedy. Before the member said that, I said that all of us should go to jail when we hear figures such as that. I am not interested in that isolated pocket of Geraldton because the reality is that one will always get a good thing among many bad things; that is a fact of life. One bad orange among many good oranges in a carton will send the rest bad. It is wrong that, in a nice country such as Australia where we advocate, and rightly so, that we have the resources of the world at our fingertips, and that we have the capacity to make things reasonable and liveable for most people, a set of circumstances such as that exist. That is horrible as the member for Greenough interjected.

Mr Bloffwitch: What do they need to bring them out of the desperate situation they are in?

Mr BRIDGE: The greatest thing that can happen is for policies, programs and plans to be created that will vest the ownership of these problems in the people locally and directly. That is not happening. The bureaucrats in the government have a view that when it comes to wisdom being finally divvied up, they must retain an element of power, and that is when our trouble begins and ends. I have had seven years' experience as a minister and 20 years as a politician and so I talk from experience. I found that not only with our indigenous people. I had to deal with farmers and their water supply schemes - the member for Roe knows only too well about that. When I went around this State talking about empowering these communities and farmers with these programs, what happened? I had an almighty brawl with the bureaucrats. However, I said they would be empowered and I made sure they were. That is where our problem lies. Let us face it; Aboriginal people have had 200 years of putting up with these practices and that has been our problem historically. All of the good intentions and all of the millions of dollars that have been provided through this and other budgets to deal with these issues is irrelevant. It is not finding its target, it is not reflecting the concerns of politicians, and it is being tailored by people other than Aboriginal people to continue the failures of the governments not to do anything about it.

I say to the ministers of this Parliament that we must recognise that these budgets are not as relevant as they should be. We have an obligation and a responsibility to face up to that reality and to accept our sovereign obligation and the process of policy determination for which we have been elected. If we can do that, we will start to get budgets back on track which will mean something. As far as I am concerned, budgets are a joke because they are not being handled by the members of this Parliament. The sad part is that we are seen to be the people who are in charge of these budgets. The Parliament of Western Australia must determine the processes for distributing wealth and financial and policy support. Yet the stewardship of the budgets is a weak element of our role as members of this place. I am not too excited about it; I have not been for a number of years. Until we get things sorted out, we should all be concerned about where we are headed.

**MR BARNETT** (Cottesloe - Leader of the House) [4.46 pm]: On behalf of the Treasurer, I thank members for their comments. I am conscious that a number of members on this side of the House have not yet spoken, but it is intended that in the week following the Estimates Committee, the Loan Bill will be brought on for debate to allow members to make general speeches. I appreciate the cooperation of members in allowing us to bring these Bills to this stage. That allows the Estimates Committee to sit the week after next. I thank members for their comment.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time and, pursuant to the sessional order, referred to the Estimates Committees.

### **APPROPRIATION (CONSOLIDATED FUND) BILL (No 2) 1999**

#### *Second Reading*

Resumed from 6 May.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time and, pursuant to the sessional order, referred to the Estimates Committees.

*Sitting suspended from 4.48 to 4.51 pm*

### **ESTIMATES COMMITTEES MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE**

#### *Report*

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

That the report of the management committee of the Estimates Committees, which prescribes which parts of the estimates are to be considered by each committee and the maximum time allocated for each division, be adopted.

[See paper No 961.]

### **ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE**

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

That the House at its rising adjourn until 2.00 pm on Tuesday, 1 June.

*House adjourned at 4.53 pm*

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### QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Questions and answers are as supplied to Hansard.

#### MIDDLE SWAN PRIMARY SCHOOL, ENROLMENTS

2596. Mrs ROBERTS to the Minister for Education:

- (1) What are the current enrolment numbers at Middle Swan Primary School in each of the following categories -
  - (a) Pre-Primary;
  - (b) Year 1;
  - (c) Year 2;
  - (d) Year 3;
  - (e) Year 4;
  - (f) Year 5;
  - (g) Year 6; and
  - (h) Year 7?
- (2) What is the total enrolment number?
- (3) How many classes are there in each year group?
- (4) What are the projected pre-primary numbers for-
  - (a) 2000;
  - (b) 2001; and
  - (c) 2002?
- (5) How many demountable classes are there at Middle Swan Primary School?
- (6) Are more demountables proposed to be placed at Middle Swan Primary School next year?
- (7) If so, how many?
- (8) Why hasn't a primary school been constructed in Jane Brook in accordance with previous Government commitments?
- (9) What site will a new primary school in Jane Brook be constructed on?
- (10) What is the current timetable for construction?

Mr BARNETT replied:

- (1) Current enrolment numbers:
 

(a) Pre-Primary	127
(b) Year 1	134
(c) Year 2	98
(d) Year 3	102
(e) Year 4	106
(f) Year 5	99
(g) Year 6	81
(h) Year 7	93
(i) Education Support	9
- (2) Total enrolment numbers is 849.
- (3) Number of classes in each year group:
 

(a) Pre-Primary	5
(b) Year 1	5
(c) Year 2	3
(d) Year 2/3	1
(e) Year 3	3
(f) Year 3/4	1
(g) Year 4	2
(h) Year 4/5	2
(i) Year 5	1
(j) Year 5/6	2
(k) Year 6	1
(l) Year 6/7	1
(m) Year 7	3
(n) Education Support	1
- (4) Projected Pre-Primary numbers:
 

(a) 2000	127
(b) 2001	127
(c) 2002	Not available.

- (5) Number of temporary classrooms is 11.
- (6) Yes.
- (7) Two, based on projected enrolment numbers.
- (8) No commitment has been given to the establishment of a primary school at Jane Brook. The establishment of new primary schools depends on there being sufficient school age children within the catchment area of the proposed school.
- (9) The Education Department has a future primary school site in the North West corner of Jane Brook Estate.
- (10) The Education Department is negotiating with a developer for a "school in houses" for 2001.

#### PERTH AIRPORT, NOISE IMPACTS

2683. Mr RIPPER to the Minister for Planning:

- (1) Is the Minister aware that the latest noise exposure forecast (ANEF) for Perth Airport shows increased noise impacts on the suburbs of Queens Park, Cannington and East Cannington?
- (2) What action is the Minister taking to assess the land use planning implications of this ANEF in these suburbs?
- (3) Will the Minister take steps to consult local people on these matters?
- (4) If not, why not?

Mr KIERATH replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) I have outlined my concerns, through the West Australian Minister for Transport to the Commonwealth Minister for Transport, and sought amendments to the Noise Exposure Forecast approach as it is related to very long term projections and their effect on planning and development.
- (3) The Commonwealth Government has control over this issue as Commonwealth law overrides State law. I have publicly supported the position that the airport should be subject to State laws, particularly Planning law.
- (4) This is a matter for the Commonwealth Government and Westralia Airports Corporation.

#### MALIBU SCHOOL, NURSE

2797. Mr McGOWAN to the Minister for Education:

- (1) Is the Minister aware that the Malibu School is suffering from a reduction in the number of hours the school nurse is able to be in the school?
- (2) Is the Minister aware that this is the cause of at least one child, Jessica Beattie having to decrease the number of feeds per school day from 4 feeds to 3 feeds, when 4 feeds is the minimal amount required by Jessica to prevent her from becoming malnourished?
- (3) Is the Minister aware that Jessica is unable to digest more than a certain amount of food per feed and is therefore going to receive less per day than she would have received prior to the reduction in the hours of the school nurse?
- (4) How can the Minister justify the reduction of the hours of the enrolled nurse now that he is aware of the nutritional problems that this will create for at least one child?
- (5) As Malibu School has approximately 86 students and about 15 gastric feeds are required per day by the students will the Minister explain why Malibu School does not have a full time nurse?

Mr BARNETT replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2)-(3) The School has attempted to negotiate further school nurse time. The Peel District Education Office is involved in negotiations with the Health Department. It is acknowledged that further time would benefit all children including Jessica Beattie. The Local Program Manager at Rockingham/Kwinana Community Health Service is supportive in addressing the health issues of the school within available resources.
- (4) The Peel District Education Office is currently in negotiations with Malibu School and the Health Department to manage Jessica's gastric feeds.
- (5) Malibu School currently has two Health Department nurses on site. A registered nurse for 7.5 hours daily and an enrolled nurse 5 hours daily.

#### FESTIVAL OF PERTH, FUNDING

2841. Ms ANWYL to the Minister representing the Minister for Racing and Gaming:

- (1) What was the total allocation of funding provided to the Festival of Perth for the years -

- (a) 1996;
- (b) 1997;
- (c) 1998;
- (d) 1999; and
- (e) 2000;

by the Lotteries Commission:

- (2) What amount of that funding or any other amount provided by the Lotteries Commission is paid towards the staging of performances from the Festival in places other than Perth?

Mr COWAN replied:

The Minister for Racing and Gaming has provided the following response:

- (1) Funding provided by the Lotteries Commission (including sponsorship of the Lotteries Film Season) totalled:

- |     |       |                |
|-----|-------|----------------|
| (a) | 1996; | \$2.35 million |
| (b) | 1997; | \$2.35 million |
| (c) | 1998; | \$2.45 million |
| (d) | 1999; | \$2.75 million |

The increase in 1999 was to cover the sudden change in the exchange rate of the A\$ which could have impacted seriously on the quality of the Festival

- (e) The budget for 2000 has not been finalised, but funding by the Commission is not expected to exceed that for 1999

- (2) Other than sponsorship of the Lotteries Film Season, the Commission's funding is not directed at the support of any particular event or group of events, but is an overall grant towards the general administrative and operating costs of the Festival. The Lotteries Commission supports regional areas in obtaining access to the performing arts through the Commission's Gordon Reid Foundation for Access to the Performing Arts.

Note: The Labor Party passed legislation to distribute funds to the Festival of Perth.

#### INDUSTRIAL TRAINING ACT, REPEAL

2858. Mr KOBELKE to the Minister for Employment and Training:

- (1) Is that part of the Vocation and Education Act 1997, which repeals the Industrial Training Act 1975, to be proclaimed?
- (2) If so, what is the intended date for the repeal of the Industrial Training Act 1975?
- (3) Have the regulations, which will be required to replace the Industrial Training Act 1975 been developed?
- (4) If not, when will there be consultation with the various interest groups and the wider community regarding the regulations that will be required with the repeal of the Industrial Training Act 1975?
- (5) Which organisations have or are to be involved in providing advice on the development of any such regulations?

Mr KIERATH replied:

- (1)-(5) To date, there has been consultation with relevant stakeholders including the Chamber of Commerce and Industry, the Trades and Labour Council and the Chamber of Minerals and Energy, in the process of developing options for the implementation of a scheme for New Apprenticeships in Western Australia. In addition, the views of employers were sought in a survey by the State Training Board. Further consultation with the relevant stakeholders, as appropriate, will occur when decisions about the scheme have been made.

#### BATAVIA COAST CARAVAN PARK, GERALDTON, INSPECTION CONTRACT

2868. Ms MacTIERNAN to the Minister for Local Government:

- (1) Why was the decision made to inspect annexed carports, fences and gates of elderly residents of Batavia Coast Caravan Park in Geraldton last year?
- (2) Can the Minister confirm that each resident was charged \$145.00 for the inspection?
- (3) What was the name of the Geraldton company which conducted these inspections?
- (4) Was a contract awarded for this inspection work in the Geraldton area?
- (5) If yes -
  - (a) on what date was the contract awarded; and
  - (b) were written quotes sought from other companies for this tender?

Mr OMODEI replied:

- (1)-(5) It is a requirement under the *Caravan Parks and Camping Grounds Act 1995* that local government inspect all caravan parks within their district at least once every 12 months. The balance of the questions should be directed to the Shire of Greenough.

## CRIME, CLEARANCE RATES

2883. Mr GRAHAM to the Minister for Police:

In which categories of crime does Western Australia have a clearance rate of 83 per cent in the city?

Mr PRINCE replied:

CLEARANCE RATES (83%+) IN THE METROPOLITAN REGION		
	1996/97	1997/98
Murder	87.5	100.0
Attempted Murder	84.6	88.2
Manslaughter	100.0	100.0
Driving Causing Death	91.7	100.0
Aggravated Sexual Penetration	89.9	99.0
Sexual Penetration	96.2	89.3
Indecent Assault	99.0	88.8
Serious Assault		84.3
Common Assault	83.3	83.9
Assault Public Officer	89.3	99.3
Assault Police Officer	97.9	99.9
Fraud		97.2
Breach Restraining Order	94.8	92.0
Drugs	89.7	91.3

It should be noted:

The table notes clearance rates for the Metropolitan Region (WA) only.

In the absence of a specified timeframe, the table notes selected clearances rates for the 1996/97 and 1997/98 financial years only.

As no offence category had a clearance rate of exactly 83.0%, the table notes those offence categories with clearance rates as close to the requested rate as possible.

## CRIME, CLEARANCE RATES

2884. Mr GRAHAM to the Minister for Police:

In which categories of crime does Western Australia have a clearance rate of 96 per cent in the country?

Mr PRINCE replied:

CLEARANCE RATES (96%+) IN THE COUNTRY REGIONS		
	1996/97	1997/98
Murder	100.0	122.2
Attempted Murder	100.0	100.0
Manslaughter	100.0	
Driving Causing Death		168.8
Assault Public Officer	100.0	103.8
Assault Police Officer	99.7	99.8

It should be noted:

The table notes clearance rates for the country areas (WA) only.  
In the absence of a specified timeframe, the table notes selected clearances rates for the 1996/97 and 1997/98 financial years only.  
As no offence category had a clearance rate of exactly 96%, the table notes those offence categories with clearance rates as close to the requested rate (of 96%) as possible.

#### POLICE, OFFICER TRANSFERS IN NORTH WEST

2887. Mr GRAHAM to the Minister for Police:

- (1) Since 1 January 1999, having completed the required tenure in their current position and having applied for transfer, has any Police Officer been denied that transfer due to lack of funds in the following areas -
  - (a) South Hedland;
  - (b) Port Hedland;
  - (c) Marble Bar;
  - (d) Nullagine;
  - (e) Hall's Creek;
  - (f) Wiluna;
  - (g) Karratha;
  - (h) Wickham;
  - (i) Roebourne;
  - (j) Tom Price;
  - (k) Paraburdoo;
  - (l) Newman;
  - (m) Carnarvon; and
  - (n) Geraldton?
- (2) If the answer to (1) above is yes -
  - (a) how many officers have been refused in each station; and
  - (b) when will officers be entitled to transfer?
- (3) If the answer to (1) above is no, what are the reasons for delaying transfers of officers who have served their time in the locations mentioned above?

Mr PRINCE replied:

- (1) (a)-(n) No.
- (2) (a)-(b) Not applicable.
- (3) (a)-(e) There have been no delays in any transfers due to financial reasons.  
(f) Transfers in Wiluna are not delayed.  
(g)-(l) See (3)(a)-(e).  
(m)-(n) Any delays in transfers under the normal tenure policy were minimal and caused by the prioritising of transfer applications.

#### POLICE, BARRACK STREET STATION

2911. Ms MacTIERNAN to the Minister for Police:

- (1) What female officers were on duty at the Barrack Street Police Station at 12.44 am on 28 February 1998?
- (2) Will the Minister table the running sheets and journal pages relevant to that day for each of those officers?

Mr PRINCE replied:

- (1) In February 1998 the Western Australia Police Service had a Police Post in Hay Street, under the Town Hall and a Police Station in Beaufort Street (City Station, Curtin House). Please specify which facility is being referred to as no police station is situated in Barrack Street, Perth.
- (2) For operational confidentiality, the Police Service would not disclose running sheets or journal pages of any officer without cause. A request made to the Commissioner of Police outlining a particular circumstance would be investigated before a decision is made to disclose such information.

#### KEENE'S PIGGERY

2916. Dr EDWARDS to the Minister for Planning:

I refer to the Ombudsman's Report into the handling by the Shire of Gingin of the development approval for Keene's Piggery in 1987 and the subsequent application for expansion made in 1993 -

- (a) given the Ombudsman's findings that the Shire of Gingin did not comply with the requirements of Part 6.4.3(b), Part 6.4.4 and Appendix 4 of its Town Planning Scheme No. 8 on 12 December 1993 when assessing the

development application for the expansion of the piggery, what action will the Minister be taking to ensure the Shire of Gingin is held accountable for its actions;

- (b) given the Ombudsman's findings in relation to the actions of the Shire of Gingin with respect to its Town Planning Scheme No. 8, what action will the Minister be taking to ensure that similar actions will not be repeated in future; and
- (c) if no action is intended to be taken, why is this the preferred response?

Mr KIERATH replied:

- (a) The same person who initiated the complaint with the Ombudsman has requested that I undertake an enquiry under Section 18(2) of the Town Planning and Development Act 1928 (as amended) on the grounds that the Shire has failed effectively to enforce the provisions of its Town Planning Scheme. That enquiry was held in abeyance while the Ombudsman's enquiry was being conducted. In the light of the Ombudsman's findings, further action is now being taken with respect to the request for an S.18(2) enquiry.
- (b) The Shire is already aware of its shortcomings in relation to this matter and has advised the Ombudsman that "procedures have been implemented since January 1997 to ensure that development applications are dealt with in a more efficient manner." Following my review of the request for an S.18(2) enquiry and the outcome of any such enquiry, if held, I will then consider the form of my representation to the Shire about its obligations effectively to enforce the provisions of its Scheme.
- (c) Not applicable.

#### NORTHBRIDGE TUNNEL REDEVELOPMENT AREA, HOUSING

2920. Ms WARNOCK to the Minister for Planning:

- (1) What is the Government's policy on affordable housing in the Northbridge Tunnel re-development area?
- (2) How many subsidised "social housing" units will be provided?
- (3) Will the Government be demolishing any buildings on the City of Perth's draft register of heritage buildings or any Town of Vincent heritage buildings?
- (4) How many buildings over 60 years old will be demolished, if any?

Mr KIERATH replied:

- (1) Property sales must follow a competition process e.g. public tender or auction, except where market prices are well established, when private treaty may be used and direct sale to a Government agency following valuation. Further discussion with government stakeholders in the renewal area is to take place regarding affordable housing.
- (2) Cannot be determined at this time.
- (3) The strategy on heritage buildings is currently being finalised and will be presented to the Heritage Council in accordance with the guidelines for heritage properties.
- (4) Subject to discussion with the Heritage Council and yet to be finalised.

#### PLANNING, REFUNDS OF COMPENSATION

2924. Dr EDWARDS to the Minister for Planning:

- (1) How many caveats have been registered by the Western Australian Planning Commission for the purpose of recovering a "refund" of compensation previously paid, where the reservation is revoked or reduced, in -
  - (a) 1998; and
  - (b) 1999 to date?
- (2) What moneys were received from these "refunds" in -
  - (a) 1995-1996;
  - (b) 1996-1997;
  - (c) 1997-1998; and
  - (d) 1998-1999 to date?

Mr KIERATH replied:

- (1)
  - (a) 8
  - (b) Nil.
- (2)
  - (a) Nil.
  - (b) \$163 816.92
  - (c) \$198 131.00
  - (d) \$94 089.25

## WORKERS COMPENSATION, FRAUD COSTS

2926. Mr KOBELKE to the Minister representing the Minister for Finance:

- (1) Is the claim made in current radio advertising by the Western Australian Insurance Commission, to the effect that fraud in workers' compensation is probably costing each one of us more than \$100 per year, a true statement to the extent that it could be rationally justified on the basis of facts?
- (2) If so, will the Minister table the justification for this claim that workers' compensation fraud is costing each one of us more than \$100 per year?
- (3) If not, will the Minister have the advertising withdrawn as being false and misleading?

Mr COURT replied:

The Minister for Finance has provided the following response:

- (1) No, as the advertisement refers to fraud involving insurance companies, workers' compensation and third party insurance, not solely workers' compensation.
- (2) Not applicable. See answer to question (1)
- (3) The Minister will not have the advertising withdrawn as it is neither false nor misleading. This is supported by a recent letter from the Commissioner, Public Sector Standards, sent to you confirming that the Insurance Commission of Western Australia had complied with the *Western Australian Public Sector Code of Ethics*.

## QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

## EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT LEGISLATION

**816. Mr GRAHAM to the Minister for Emergency Services:**

Does the minister intend to introduce emergency management or emergency services legislation and, if so, when?

**Mr PRINCE replied:**

Some time after becoming Minister for Emergency Services in late July or early August last year, and after a number of extensive briefings, particularly from the State Emergency Management Advisory Committee, I came to the conclusion, as a result of what they told me and representations that made to me, that it was time this State had emergency management legislation. The evolution of the State Emergency Service over the years has benefited by not having legislation, because it has had a number of iterations over that time. However, it is now time that we have the legislation for a number of reasons. The first, and perhaps most important, reason is that the powers should be in the hands of people like the SES and local government officers in times of emergency. The second reason is that any question of liability that would otherwise be sheeted home to emergency service volunteers who are doing their best in trying circumstances should be addressed, so they are not personally liable.

In October last year I directed that legislation should be progressed, and officers of the Fire and Emergency Services Authority are working on that now. I have yet to bring a formal submission to Cabinet, but that is not far off. As far as I am concerned, the matter will progress as quickly as it can, but the necessity is to get the legislation right.

## EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT LEGISLATION

**817. Mr GRAHAM to the Minister for Emergency Services:**

What will be the difference between the legislation that the minister will bring to this House and the legislation that his predecessor promised in 1996 that he would introduce into the House?

Mr Marlborough: It will have his signature and no other bloke's.

**Mr PRINCE replied:**

The member for Peel is most perceptive.

Mr Marlborough: And it will be finished when it is finished.

Mr PRINCE: In the fullness of time, when all considerations have been taken into account, when consultation is complete and all the other "Yes, Minister" phrases of which one can think.

I cannot answer the question until I have legislation in front of me and can compare it with that which was promised in 1996.

## NATIVE TITLE, IMPACT ON EMPLOYMENT IN THE MINING INDUSTRY

**818. Mr BLOFFWITCH to the Minister for Employment and Training:**

When the minister raised the issue of the impact of native title issues on employment in the mining industry the Opposition denied there was impact. Does the minister have further information on the reality of this appalling situation?

**Mr KIERATH replied:**

I will inform the House about the effect that native title is having on employment in the mining industry. Currently, Australia-wide 35 per cent of drilling rigs and 1 200 drillers are lying idle, and no water boring is occurring on mining land because of native title. I thought the Opposition would understand that. Some members of the Opposition understand this fact. A meeting was held recently, and I will inform the House what was said by a member of the Australian Labor Party. Before I do that I advise the House that currently no greenfields exploration is occurring in this State. If that continues, mining will decline. Currently 89 per cent of all overseas expenditure by Australian companies is on exploration. The actions of the ALP is responsible for exporting jobs overseas.

On 9 April, the member for Eyre, to his credit, acknowledged those points. He went further to say that native title was responsible for land shortage and caused a price inflation effect; however, nobody in the ALP was listening or speaking on behalf of the mining industry. Some might say they were too busy galloping after the latest populist bandwagon. I might even be tempted to say they cannot see the out-of-work men and women for the trees, but I will not. By the admission of ALP members, nobody in the ALP is speaking for the mining industry. That has resulted in minority issues dominating its parliamentary discussions.

The member for Eyre and Hon Mark Nevill are in a difficult position. They want to support the mining industry, but they are constrained by the limits the ALP puts on its members. They have only two choices: Either abide by the party line, or resign. One day the ALP will start to represent the working men and women in this State whom it has pledged to represent. Instead, through its own actions, the ALP is happy to see jobs of Western Australians going overseas.

**HOMESWEST, TENANT INFORMATION****819. Mr RIPPER to the Minister for Housing:**

- (1) Does the minister accept that he and the agencies for which he is responsible are obliged to abide by the law no matter how inconvenient or aggravating the specific application of the law may be?
- (2) If so, what action will the minister take following the tabling today of a report by the Commissioner for Public Sector Standards which found that Homeswest had breached the Public Sector Management Act and the Western Australian public sector Code of Ethics by releasing confidential tenant information?
- (3) Did the minister express approval of Homeswest's actions either before or after the event?

**Dr HAMES replied:**

- (1)-(3) To the last question in particular, yes I did give approval prior to this happening and I still approve of it. I am aware that the report was tabled today. I was surprised that it became public yesterday when a letter was sent to Mrs Martin prior to its being tabled in Parliament. Nevertheless, I support the actions of the chief executive officer Greg Joyce in this matter. Greg Joyce is one of the best chief executive officers in government.

Mr Ripper: Have you read the report?

Dr HAMES: I have read the report of the commissioner.

Mrs Roberts: It is a shame you are not an excellent minister.

Dr HAMES: That is very kind of the member; she surprises me! Prior to that, I had discussions with the commissioner in which he expressed the opinion that he was outside the rules of the Public Sector Management Act in releasing that private information. I think, and so does the board for that matter, he did not adequately take into account the fact that all the information released by Greg Joyce was already public information through the Equal Opportunity Commission process. We require three things of Homeswest tenants: They must look after the property, pay their rent, and get on with their neighbours. If people do not do that and go to the media and parade their problems, trying to get publicity to make others feel sorry for them, Homeswest has the right to go out and give the other side of the story to taxpayers. The amounts of money owed are taxpayers' dollars.

Dr Gallop: Does the end justify the means?

Dr HAMES: I do respect -

The SPEAKER: Order! We had this problem yesterday: Once again, many members want to get into the act. At least, some interjections have something to do with the question that was asked. If members want to ask questions, they should wait their turn, and I will give them the call.

Dr HAMES: As I was about to say, I respect the privacy of all Homeswest tenants. We would never think of publishing a list of the names of Homeswest tenants who owe money. Once people go outside the rules for what we regard as being normal and reasonable, and go to the media to parade one side of the story, I support Homeswest 100 per cent in putting the other side of the story. This is not done just in Western Australia. We started doing it when the Labor Party was in government in Queensland. At a housing ministers conference, I spoke to the then Queensland housing minister and ascertained that this is exactly what was done in Queensland. It is also what is done in America. I am very happy for the Homeswest staff to speak out in this case. Some people have said that this is an Aboriginal issue. There is no way that is the case. Homeswest has more than 8 000 tenants including Aboriginal families who are very good tenants. This is about whether people are good tenants or bad tenants, and these were bad tenants.

## HOMESWEST, TENANT INFORMATION

**820. Mr RIPPER to the Minister for Housing:**

What guarantees can the minister give Homeswest tenants that this agency will abide by the law and keep the private information of tenants confidential, especially when they have the temerity to criticise this agency?

**Dr HAMES replied:**

We will keep information private.

Mr Ripper: Even if they criticise Homewest?

Dr HAMES: In this case some people went out - we see quite a few of these sorts of stories and pictures in the newspapers and the other media - and gave a bleeding-heart story about a family and children whom Homeswest were kicking out onto the street. We did not get the other side of the story; that is, the police had been around to that house 20 times, or that there had been stabbings or fights there, or that these people have disturbed their neighbours, or have not paid their rent. I repeat: This is not an Aboriginal issue.

Mr Ripper: Is it an issue of the law passed by this Parliament?

Dr HAMES: It has nothing to do with that. The commissioner has given an opinion. Frankly, I do not think he did the right thing when he released that information publicly, before I tabled it in Parliament.

## JARRAH AND KARRI YIELDS UNDER AUSTRALIAN LABOR PARTY POLICY

**821. Mr OSBORNE to the Minister for the Environment:**

Under Labor Party policy what will be the expected jarrah and karri yields following the year 2004?

**Mrs EDWARDES replied:**

I thank the member for this question because it is important, given that members opposite have not let us know about their reserve design, or the expected yields or the impact that it will have on jobs arising from their policy. Do they know what the impact of their policy will be? What are the yields?

Dr Gallop: We know what our policy is, and that it is different from yours.

Mrs EDWARDES: They do not know. Yesterday we heard that those opposite did not know about their reserve design. They could not tell us which 5 000 hectares of old-growth karri would be logged to meet the contracts leading up to 2003. What about the yield? We have done an analysis, and the jarrah -

Dr Gallop: Which forest will you start logging in the next six months?

The SPEAKER: Order! I must rise once again. There are several interjectors. People are keen to ask their questions, but let us not do that through interjections. I allow a certain amount of interjecting, but it is getting beyond what is acceptable.

Mrs EDWARDES: By way of comparison, from 2004 the jarrah yield will drop to 187 000 cubic metres and under the Regional Forest Agreement from 2004, it will be 286 000 cu m. Karri is a critical area, particularly in respect of jobs. In 2004 it will drop to 54 000 cu m. That will be the figure for 20 years. From the graph I am holding up, members will see the figure drops to 54 000 cu m and it will stay there for 20 years. What sort of jobs will be provided for the industry when the proposal of the Opposition will not gain investment for value adding for karri? It is an absolute disgrace. It is incumbent on the Labor Party to tell us about its proposed reserve design, about the yield levels and the impact that will have on jobs and when its reserve design will be independently and scientifically verified, as we have.

## NATIVE TITLE ACT, IMPACT ON THE MINING INDUSTRY

**822. Dr GALLOP to the Minister for Resources Development:**

Does the acting Premier agree with his ministerial colleague the Minister for Planning that the Native Title Act, as amended by the Howard Government, is the cause of the downturn in the mining industry in Western Australia?

**Mr BARNETT replied:**

I do not think that is an appropriate issue to direct to me in the absence of the Premier who has responsibility for it.

Dr Gallop: You are the acting Premier.

Mr BARNETT: I will comment, but I do not think this is the sort of question which normally would be dealt with in this way. Native title is certainly having a significant effect in the mining industry and it is retarding exploration activity, although not so much in the existing or newly commissioned projects. Whatever exploration activity is taking place, it is occurring on existing tenements, rather than new tenements. That is the difficulty.

## JAMES POINT PORT, METROPOLITAN REGION SCHEME AMENDMENT

**823. Ms MacTIERNAN to the Minister for Planning:**

Has the Government received advice that a metropolitan region scheme amendment will be required to give effect to the proposed James Point port; that is, that the Government cannot build this port until there is an MRS amendment?

**Mr KIERATH replied:**

I ask the member to put the question on notice, and I will provide an answer for her.

#### DRUGS, SALVATION ARMY REPORT

**824. Mrs HODSON-THOMAS to the Minister for Family and Children's Services:**

I refer to a report released by the eastern territory division of the Salvation Army in March this year called "The Drugs Menace: Whatever It Takes To Stop It". What is the relevance of that report to government policy on drugs?

**Mrs PARKER replied:**

The Salvation Army is a highly valued and respected organisation throughout Australia. It makes a significant contribution to the welfare of Western Australians, and that includes our response to the problems of addiction. In March 1999 the Eastern Territory Division of the Salvation Army released a report entitled "The Drugs Menace: Whatever It Takes To Stop It". I certainly commend that report to all members. In part, the report states that moves towards the liberalisation of drug laws will encourage the use of illicit drugs, and that there is growing scientific evidence that no illicit drug can be dismissed as harmless, and that includes cannabis. The report states -

Research shows that if young people think it is normal to use drugs, use goes up; conversely, if they see the health risks and perceive a social risk, use goes down.

Drug abuse certainly harms individuals, the family and the fabric of our community. The Western Australian Labor Party's message on cannabis certainly is that it is okay to have five plants and that it is okay to possess 100 grams of cannabis. A broader, blanket message will go out - that is, that it is okay to use cannabis. In contrast, the Government will continue its three-year, \$4.5m commitment to provide comprehensive best-practice instruction in every school on the effects of drugs. We will also continue our public education campaign on the harms of cannabis. I table a copy of the report and a summary of it.

[See papers Nos 959 and 960.]

#### AUSTRALIAN LABOR PARTY, PRESELECTION SYSTEM

**825. Mr BAKER to the Minister for Parliamentary and Electoral Affairs:**

I refer to the decision at last week's Labor Party state conference wherein its preselection of candidates will now be decided upon by only 15 per cent of the Labor Party's branch members. Can the minister please advise us how this percentage involvement of the grassroots of the Labor Party compares with that of the Liberal Party in preselections and also as to whether the percentage accords with any arrangement in respect of elections held in accordance with the State's democratic Electoral Act?

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: I think that the question was to the Minister for Parliamentary and Electoral Affairs. There was a little bit of noise so I did not hear the full question.

*Point of Order*

Mr RIPPER: I was also hampered in not being able to hear the full question, but it seemed to me not to relate to the minister's responsibilities, which are not for electoral affairs outside his control.

The SPEAKER: I have not heard the question fully, so I will ask the member for Joondalup to let me have a copy of it.

I have considered question 825 asked by the member for Joondalup. It relates to preselection matters of parties, which is not within the bounds of the minister's province. Sometimes ministers give all sorts of answers that may get to the point to which members want to get in any event. I rule the question out of order.

*Questions without Notice Resumed*

#### EDUCATION, SECONDARY ASSISTANCE SCHEME

**826. Mr RIPPER to the Minister for Education:**

I refer to the minister's threat in question time on Tuesday to the future of the \$4.9m secondary assistance scheme which assists health care card holders to pay school charges. Why is the minister now threatening to deprive schools of that money, which would surely flow through to them, in addition to his previous threat not to make up any revenue lost to schools once fees become voluntary?

**Mr BARNETT replied:**

I thank the member for the question. It seems to me that the Labor Party is having some difficulty with the issue. There is no doubt that all secondary and primary principals in this State strongly and publicly support compulsory charges without equivocation and they have written to members strongly supporting them. The people who do not support compulsory charges are Labor members and the Western Australian Council of State School Organisations, which is not representative of individual P & Cs. For the president of WACSSO to have moved that motion at the Labor Party conference has forever compromised WACSSO as an organisation.

Mr Ripper: Why will you deprive schools of the \$4.9m? You don't need to - it's just pique.

Mr BARNETT: I have not threatened schools with the loss of the \$4.9m that is made available through the secondary assistance scheme. That money -

Mr Ripper: That is what you did on Tuesday night.

Mr BARNETT: No, I did not. That money will still be available. I said that it brings into doubt the operation of that scheme, and it certainly does, because at the moment the scheme is allocated to health care card holders. I am not at all sure at this stage whether that would still be equitable; it may be more on a pro rata basis among schools, who knows? We do not know because in future the criteria will not necessarily be the proportion of students covered by health care card holders. It may equally, clumsy as it is because of the Labor Party, be on the proportion of parents who pay their fees.

Mr Ripper: So now you are going to make up the money?

Mr BARNETT: No. I have \$5m to allocate. I have done it. It has been done historically by both Governments on the right ground - that is, on health card status. Now it will have to be done on some proportion of parents paying. I do not know what sort of equity or inequity that will create, but that is the Opposition's problem. It created it. We will treat schools as fairly and equitably as we can, but we will not say to parents, "Don't pay your charges", which is what the Labor Party is saying to them.

### CRIME STATISTICS

#### **827. Mrs van de KLASHORST to the Minister for Police:**

Can the minister advise all Western Australians, including my Swan Hills constituents, of the good news in the March quarterly crime statistics and table that information?

Mr Marlborough interjected.

Mrs van de KLASHORST: I did, but I could not read my own writing.

Dr Gallop: Does the minister remember Colin Cowdrey facing Dennis Lillee in 1974? You remind me of him.

Mr Omodei: Who, Dennis Lillee?

The SPEAKER: Order! I have not even given the minister the call, but I must say that I have given the Leader of the Opposition an extraordinary amount of latitude, both yesterday and today. Although his interjection had some humour, it had little to do with the question that the minister will attempt to answer. My eye is starting to wander towards the Leader of the Opposition and his interjections.

#### **Mr PRINCE replied:**

I thank the Leader of the Opposition for a great compliment. I am sure that all members would regard Colin Cowdrey as one of the most courageous cricketers ever.

In the past couple of weeks we have debated several so-called matters of public importance - they have been dismal, to say the least - about crime figures in this State. Most of them have been ill-researched and reliant upon old information. It is an indictment of opposition members that whenever there is good news, we cannot see them or hear them because they just do not want to know. All that they are interested in is purveying bad news. I have the figures for the first quarter of this calendar year. They show volume crime in this State. I table those figures and I appreciate that some members of the Opposition, notwithstanding the best efforts of the education system, cannot read, so information has been produced as colour graphs for them to see in pictorial form.

Perhaps now members of the Opposition will be able to understand that in virtually all areas of volume crime in this State, the trend has been down for nine months and the clearance rates are increasing. This is a tremendous seal of approval on the Delta program, the activities of our police, Safer WA, community crime prevention in all its various forms, local government, and security patrols; in other words, the community policing problem-oriented philosophy of dealing with crime. It works. The figures prove it. Members of the Opposition should look at the pictures if they cannot read it.

[See paper No 960.]

### CANNABIS, DECRIMINALISATION

#### **828. Mr CARPENTER to the Minister for Family and Children's Services:**

I refer to the minister's assertion that the ALP's decision to support the decriminalisation of cannabis would lead to an influx of organised crime figures, just like South Australia. Can the minister tell us how many South Australian crime bosses have moved into the Mirrabooka and Bunbury police districts since her government effectively decriminalised the possession of small amounts of cannabis in those areas?

#### **Mrs PARKER replied:**

The member for Willagee has made an interesting assumption and I am happy to have the opportunity to respond to it. The Government's trial of a cannabis cautioning system did not decriminalise the use of cannabis and possession remains an offence. We have introduced one opportunity for offenders found in possession of less than 50 grams of cannabis to attend a mandatory intervention session during which they have the opportunity to assess their cannabis dependency and to have

information put to them regarding the harms of cannabis; including the social harms, the medical harms, the links to mental illness and the real scientific evidence that cannabis is a drug that causes dependence. We have not decriminalised the use of cannabis. If people who have been caught in possession of cannabis choose not to attend the mandatory intervention session, a charge will be laid. The feedback that we have received during the course of this trial is that, firstly, a great majority of people are taking the option to attend the intervention session; and secondly, the people who have attended those sessions have found it helpful and informative. It is also important to note that if that person is found in possession of cannabis again, criminal proceedings will occur.

#### DOOR TO DOOR TRADING ACT 1987, REVIEW

##### **829. Mr JOHNSON to the Minister for Fair Trading:**

Can the minister advise whether the Government plans to review the Door to Door Trading Act 1987 with a view to altering the hours at which salespeople can contact householders?

##### **Mr SHAVE replied:**

I thank the member for some notice of this question. I am pleased to advise that the Door to Door Trading Act 1987 is timetabled for review by the Ministry of Fair Trading in 2000-01. This issue will be considered as part of the review.

#### HOMESWEST, MR R. BROWN

##### **830. Ms MacTIERNAN to the Minister for Housing:**

- (1) Can the minister confirm that he has appointed Mr Rob Brown to the board of Homeswest?
- (2) How was Mr Brown selected for this position?
- (3) Did the minister consult with his chief executive officer, Greg Joyce, before making this appointment?
- (4) Does he consider that Mr Brown, as the manager of a Keystart retailer, may have a conflict of interest in sitting on a board which supposedly supervises Keystart?

##### **Dr HAMES replied:**

- (1)-(4) Yes, I appointed Mr Rob Brown to the board of Homeswest recently. He has a great deal of intellectual capacity and knowledge of the business of Homeswest. He is a tremendous acquisition to the future of the board. To a degree, there is some conflict of interest with his involvement in Keystart. Because of that, Mr Brown takes no part in debates regarding Keystart. He does not participate on any items that relate to Keystart. The knowledge that he has about the housing industry on a whole range of issues - he has sat as chairman of a community housing representative group in the past - will make him a great acquisition to the board of Homeswest. I am pleased to have him on the board. The chief executive officer was consulted and knew that the decision was coming.

#### HOMESWEST, MR R. BROWN

##### **831. Ms MacTIERNAN to the Minister for Housing:**

As a supplementary question, did the minister examine Mr Brown's business record before he appointed him, or simply his Liberal Party credentials?

##### **Dr HAMES replied:**

When Mr Brown was appointed, I did not examine his Liberal Party credentials. I do not know what are his Liberal Party credentials. I examined his business credentials. His curriculum vitae was an excellent recommendation for his appointment.

#### GREAT EASTERN HIGHWAY-STONEVILLE ROAD, TRAFFIC LIGHTS

##### **832. Mrs van de KLASHORST to the minister representing the Minister for Transport:**

Can the minister advise of the progress in the attempt by the Mundaring community to have the much needed traffic lights installed at the intersection at Great Eastern Highway and Stoneville Road?

##### **Mr OMODEI replied:**

The Minister for Transport has provided the following response -

Following a meeting in November 1998 involving the Minister for Transport and Shire of Mundaring and community representatives, it was agreed to defer proposed median modification at this intersection and to conduct an independent safety audit.

The safety audit will indicate the appropriate traffic control in association with nearby intersections taking into consideration the requirements of all road users and traffic problems in the area. The safety audit has been arranged and will be undertaken in March of 1999.

#### EDUCATION DEPARTMENT, ABORIGINAL EDUCATION BRANCH

##### **833. Mr RIPPER to the Minister for Education:**

I refer to the minister's plans to abolish the Aboriginal education branch of the Education Department in Perth and replace it with a powerless policy unit with no operational funding. Why does the minister believe that removing responsibility for

Aboriginal education initiatives from a specialist branch, and leaving it to the whims of individual schools, will improve outcomes for Aboriginal children?

**Mr BARNETT replied:**

There is no doubt that raising the educational achievement of Aboriginal children is probably the single greatest challenge our education system faces. That has been in spite of enormous expenditure of funds - about half a billion dollars - during the 1990s and an enormous effort by many people. The approach that has been taken is essentially one of devolving responsibility to schools.

Mr Ripper: You are destroying a specialist branch, with all that expertise and commitment.

Mr BARNETT: We are about having the programs that actually work in the schools. The philosophy is to have more responsibility, more decision-making powers and more financial autonomy at the school level. Although I am careful to ensure that we do not have an explosion in the number of different programs and waste a lot of overhead, which programs are run at the school level working closely with local communities and other local service providers in the area. Despite the good effort, we have not achieved the results in Aboriginal education that everyone wanted to achieve. We will devolve it to a school level and hopefully that will prove more efficient.

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