



WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Parliamentary Debates

(HANSARD)

THIRTY-FIFTH PARLIAMENT
FIRST SESSION
1997

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

Tuesday, 18 March 1997

Legislative Council

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THE PRESIDENT (Hon Clive Griffiths) took the Chair at 3.30 pm, and read prayers.

HANSARD - DELIVERY

THE PRESIDENT: I have received the following memorandum from the Chief Hansard Reporter -

Dear Mr President

Weekly *Hansard* - Delivery.

I advise that the State Law Publisher has notified me that Allwest, the contractor responsible for the printing of the weekly *Hansard*, has suffered a machinery breakdown which will delay the delivery of the weekly *Hansard*. At this point SLP is unable to estimate the length of the delay but is hoping it will be only a matter of hours.

Yours sincerely

N J Burrell
Chief Hansard Reporter.

Hon Graham Edwards: Privatisation.

The PRESIDENT: I knew you would be delighted to know that.

BILLS (17): ASSENT

Messages from the Governor received and read notifying assent to the following Bills -

1. Bank of South Australia (Merger with Advance Bank) Bill 1996
2. Appropriation (Consolidated Fund) Bill (No 3) 1996
3. Criminal Injuries Compensation Amendment Bill 1996
4. Home Building Contracts Amendment Bill 1996
5. National Environment Protection Council (Western Australia) Bill 1996
6. Sandalwood Amendment Bill 1996
7. Legal Practitioners Amendment Bill 1996
8. Mental Health Amendment Bill 1996
9. Mental Health (Consequential Provisions) Bill 1996
10. Criminal Law (Mentally Impaired Defendants) Bill 1996
11. Road Traffic Amendment Bill 1996
12. Valuation of Land Amendment Bill 1996
13. Parliamentary Commissioner Amendment Bill 1996
14. Licensed Surveyors Amendment Bill 1996
15. Civil Aviation (Carriers' Liability) Amendment Bill 1996
16. Transfer of Land Amendment Bill 1996
17. East Perth Redevelopment Amendment Bill 1996

MOTION - URGENCY

Neu, Mrs Janine

THE PRESIDENT (Hon Clive Griffiths): I have received the following letter dated 18 March -

Dear Mr President

At today's sitting, it is my intention to move under SO 72 that the House at its rising adjourn until 9.00 am on 25 December 1997 for the purpose of discussing the failure of the Government to provide funding from the Disability Services Commission under the Accommodation Support Program and the Attendant Care Scheme administered by the Disability Services Commission to assist Mrs Janine Neu of North Beach and the resulting difficulties this is creating for Mrs Neu and her family.

Yours faithfully

Graham Edwards MLC

In order to discuss this matter, it will be necessary for at least four members to indicate their support by rising in their places.

[At least four members rose in their places.]

HON GRAHAM EDWARDS (North Metropolitan) [3.43 pm]: I move -

That the House at its rising adjourn until 9.00 am on 25 December.

I thank my colleagues for the opportunity of bringing this matter before the House. This matter is of great urgency and importance to a family in my electorate. Last year, a woman who lives in North Beach asked me whether I would go to Royal Perth Rehabilitation Hospital at Shenton Park to speak to a Mrs Janine Neu, a quadriplegic. She told me that this woman and her husband were in considerable trouble.

I went to see this woman, who was about eight months pregnant. She had woken up one morning suffering severe pains in her back and shoulder, and within two hours she was in hospital and was paralysed. She spent some time in Royal Perth Hospital, and when the baby was due to be delivered she was transferred to King Edward Memorial Hospital for Women, where her son Adam was born. She was then transferred to the Sir George Bedbrook Spinal Unit, Royal Perth Rehabilitation Hospital, Shenton Park.

Mrs Neu and her husband Bernard are facing an uncertain future, given the disease that has struck her down. This disease is called acute transverse cervical myelitis. Not much is known about this disease. It comes on suddenly, and it might strike this woman down forever or it might pass within a couple of years.

It appeared that Mrs Neu would be discharged in March this year, but she was told that although the family was eligible for funding, no money was available and that rather than go home to her family she might have to take up residence in one of the paraplegic units; and that would mean that her husband, who had recently commenced a building contracting business, would have to cease work to look after the baby. The Neu family had recently bought a home in North Beach which they had hoped to renovate, and obviously they had big hopes and dreams for the future. While Mrs Neu was in hospital, the baby was cared for by Mr Neu's parents, who had come from the Eastern States and stayed as long as they could. They have now gone back home and Mrs Neu's parents have come from the Eastern States and are helping to mind the baby. Not long after I spoke to Mr and Mrs Neu, I contacted the social work department at Royal Perth Rehabilitation Hospital, and the social worker wrote to me to give me an update on Mrs Neu's situation. The letter states -

Dear Mr Edwards

RE: Janine Neu

I would just like to give you an up date on Ms Neu's situation.

I am in the process of trying to obtain a full time carer for Janine (and her young son) in the vicinity of 35 hours per week in anticipation of her return home as this is the most pressing issue for this young family.

I am hoping to obtain extraordinary funds from the Disability Services Commission . . . and have written a detailed letter to that effect.

Obviously, the Neu's cannot wait until the next round of offers is made available as this may not be until March or even September next year (with funding actually being made available during June-December 1997)! Janine's expected discharge should occur sometime in late January - February/March, so we need funding to be in place by March at the latest.

I have looked at other options such as Wanslea, Mofflyn, Ngala and Family/Children's Services - but these agencies seem to provide either emergency in home care for up to 2 weeks only or foster placement/residential type care, which obviously would not suit this family at all.

As you can appreciate, the Neu's are most anxious that services be in place so that the family can remain intact and independent. The Neu's cannot conceive of what they will do if such funding is denied by DSC. (It would ultimately mean, of course, that Mr Neu would have to leave the business he has built up over the past 2 years and the family would need to rely on social security as their main source of income.) We are hoping to avoid this situation at all costs.

The Neu's have indicated that they may need to rely on your additional support to obtain this funding in the event that it should be denied and therefore request that you remain in close contact with them, especially over the next few weeks.

This person then invites me to have further contact and to continue to see how I can help.

In January, I wrote to Hon Paul Omodei, Minister for Disability Services, in the following terms -

Dear Minister,

I write to ask for your review of the Disability Services Commissioner's rejection of funding for Mrs Janine Neu through the Attendant Care Scheme and the 1996/97 Accommodation Support Program.

Mrs Neu is currently an in-patient at the Sir George Bedbrook Spinal Unit, Royal Perth Rehabilitation Hospital, Shenton Park. I understand that without the funding Mrs Neu will be unable to become independent or to retain family unity with her husband and infant son.

I am absolutely appalled that the Disability Services Commission has rejected funding for Mrs Neu and I have been informed that all funds are committed for the next 18 months.

I also understand that Mrs Neu has been further advised that there is no point in putting her name down on the Attendant Care List as that service is likely to become amalgamated as the waiting list is in excess of three to four years.

Minister, I accept that you have just taken over the portfolio and that you will be flat out coming to terms with your new responsibilities. However, I urge you to look, not just at the circumstances of Mrs Neu, but at the unacceptable funding situation that confronts people in her circumstances.

I would be greatly appreciative of your sympathetic review of this family's situation and I would be grateful for your early advice.

On about 4 February, I received the following reply from the Minister -

Dear Graham

Thank you for your letter dated 10 January 1997 regarding the lack of accommodation funds available to Mrs Neu from the Accommodation Support Program and the Attendant Care Scheme, administered by the Disability Services Commission (DSC).

Please note that the Accommodation Support Funding Program subsumes the Attendant Care Scheme.

Mrs Neu was not an applicant for funding under the 1996/97 Accommodation Support Funding Round which approved funding in October 1996 for 167 people with disabilities at a cost of \$6.19 million. Applications for this funding closed on 24 June 1996 following newspaper advertising in May 1996.

It is worth noting that by the time this advertising period had closed, Mrs Neu was not aware that this disease would strike her down. The letter continues -

On 29 November 1996 however, the Royal Perth Rehabilitation Hospital wrote to the DSC describing Mrs Neu's circumstances and requesting an unspecified amount of funding. The DSC advised that its Accommodation Support and Attendant Care funds had been fully committed and it was unable to provide funding for a full-time carer for Mrs Neu.

I am most sympathetic to your concerns but unfortunately I must confirm that the DSC has no surplus 1996/97 funds available to assist Mrs Neu.

I have referred Mrs Neu's case to my colleague, the Minister for Health, and requested his consideration of her application for assistance following hospital discharge. As you may be aware, the Health Department provides both post-acute care and long term support services to people with disabilities through the Home and Community Care (HACC) program. HACC is jointly funded by the Commonwealth Department of Health and Family Services and the Health Department of WA.

I am hopeful that a satisfactory support arrangement can be put in place for Mrs Neu through HACC and I will advise you in due course about such arrangements.

I have had no further advice from the Minister. I think that a referral to the Minister for Health and the home and community care services area is not what the family wants. The Neus are genuine, good, ordinary Australian folk. They are young people. They have committed themselves to establishing a business and, as I said, they have all sorts of hopes and dreams for their future. All of that has changed as a result of this dreadful disease which has struck at Mrs Neu. This is the sort of circumstance that one can never plan for. It has come out of the blue, and it has devastated the family. It is most important for the Neu family, particularly Mrs Neu, that she is able to live at home with some attendant care, that she do everything she can to play her role as a mother, as a wife and as a caring family member. This will be very difficult, indeed impossible, without an attendant care allowance. The Neus are eligible for this funding. The difficulty of course is that no funds are currently available.

I bring this matter to the attention of the Parliament today because I know the process is that the Minister handling the matter will have been briefed and will have a response. I know also that it will, in a more personal way, bring the matter to the attention of the Minister. I am aware also that it certainly grabbed the attention of the department. By raising this matter I do not intend to attack the Minister, Mr Omodei, or the department. I am aware that Mr Omodei is a fairly caring sort of bloke. He is a family man who will be most concerned and sympathetic. I know also that Mr Haydn Lowe of the Disability Services Commission is a caring man who is trying to juggle all the priorities. However, it seems to me that despite the fact that there have been some cutbacks in commonwealth government funding, given all of its resources this State should be able to find some money in order to meet its responsibilities under the DSC funding, to which it contributes in part and which, in part, it administers on behalf of the Commonwealth Government.

I am aware that the Minister for Disability Services has attacked the Federal Government over its financial cutbacks, but it is not good enough to say that this is the responsibility of the Federal Government. This State Government has a responsibility to ensure that the attendant care scheme is fully funded. It is not good enough either to say that the funding application date is closed, or that no more funds are available for two years. What happens to people in this circumstance who come along after the funding date is closed? Are they locked out for this time frame? It is most important that people in this circumstance are given the funding for which they are eligible at the time when they most need it.

It would be dreadful to try to come to terms with this debilitating disease especially when this woman has just had a baby and is trying to look after that baby and look to the future. Funding is required now, and I hope the Minister will be able to give me some advice when he responds. I ask the House to take note of the matter. It is a very important one for the Neus. They are good people. They are needy people, and I hope the Government will be able to consider this issue in a sympathetic manner.

HON MAX EVANS (North Metropolitan - Minister for Finance) [3.56 pm]: This is an urgency motion which will end up being a good news story for the Disability Services Commission. Members may recall an article in the newspaper a few weeks ago in relation to Mrs Belinda Warlaw-Jones who suffers from muscular dystrophy, has a baby and needs intensive support and care at home, which is provided by the Disability Services Commission. I will refer to the remarks by Hon Graham Edwards. I am not sure whether the member has spoken to Mrs Neu in the past two weeks.

Hon Graham Edwards: I spoke to her before I came to the House today.

Hon MAX EVANS: Then the member should be up to date. However, I will elaborate on what has happened over the past two weeks. The Disability Services Commission was advised about Mrs Neu's need for home support services early in December 1996. The rehabilitation hospital advised the DSC that she was due to leave hospital in January or February 1997. At that time the DSC had already committed all its growth funds for both 1996-97 and 1997-98. This will provide accommodation support for 167 people with disabilities who have the most critical need for services out of the 353 applicants who were assessed as being in scope for this funding.

The "count us in" package of \$125.5m growth funding provides unarguably a very significant boost to disability services funds, but this Government has always said that this funding must be matched by the Commonwealth Government in order to adequately meet the high priority need for services. At the request of the Minister for Disability Services, inquiries were made to seek the availability of home and community care funds as an interim measure to assist Mrs Neu when she went home. The availability of HACC funding for Mrs Neu has been confirmed. The DSC has also arranged, in consultation with Mrs Neu and her family, a care package which will meet her needs and which will supplement the 12 hours of Silver Chain support she has been receiving each week since she left hospital. The DSC care package is worth over \$51 000 per year in addition to Silver Chain support. The full year costs are based on 12 hours' personal assistance for five days at \$15 per hour for 52 weeks, totalling \$46 800;

superannuation of 6 per cent, totalling \$2 916; and workers' compensation at 3 per cent, totalling \$1 458. Therefore, the total full year cost is \$51 174.

As Hon Graham Edwards probably realises, Mr Neu is very keen to look after his wife and child but still needs assistance for 12 hours each day. The matter has been discussed with Mrs Neu over the past two weeks. The arrangement has not been put in writing, but her needs have been thoroughly considered. This assistance has come through the Minister for Health and the home and community care program. I hope that the member will agree that the position has been covered adequately. Mrs Neu will be looked after in her own home and receive 12 hours' personal assistance time each day, in addition to services provided by the Silver Chain.

I expect that a television program will follow the raising of this issue. I hope the channel gets its facts right. The situation has been considered thoroughly, therefore Mrs Neu will be well cared for - just as she deserves to be - within the limits of the funds available.

Without trying to make some political mileage of this matter, I must say that the Labor Opposition during its period in government starved disability services funding. It left 400 people with disabilities in critical need of services. In the last three years of the Labor Government growth in this area was \$1.96m, whereas in the first three years of this Government that growth was \$9.31m. This financial year the growth in that area will be \$11.4m. This Government has committed \$125.5m growth funding to disability services over five years. We have added another \$3m per year to this amount for extra respite services. Disability Services got into a financial bind under the previous Government. Soon after I became Minister for Finance I was alerted by the Chairman of the Lotteries Commission that Hon Keith Wilson had made a special request for \$1.4m a year as recurrent expenditure. That sort of funding is not usually provided by the Lotteries Commission because it is ultra vires the rules pertaining to lotteries funding. I was told that the Lotteries Commission could not continue with the funding and that it would cease the following September. Hon Kevin Minson and I discussed it and the Government picked up the tab.

The Opposition had a harsh attitude to funding Disability Services during its term of office. It was not prepared to extract funds from its \$1b Health budget; it had to seek \$1.4m from the Lotteries Commission. This Government believes it has done a good job. I believe Mrs Neu, her husband and her child will be well looked after under this scheme.

HON CHERYL DAVENPORT (South Metropolitan) [4.03 pm]: The Minister said his comments were not intended to be political. It is all very well for him to cast aspersions on the previous Labor Government.

Hon Max Evans: I gave the facts.

Hon CHERYL DAVENPORT: That is fair enough. I draw members' attention to the fact that the Federal Government is about to reduce funding in the Disability Services area, particularly for attendant care.

Hon Max Evans: That will have no impact on this situation.

Hon CHERYL DAVENPORT: It may not impact on this situation; but 50 to 60 new people need this kind of care every year. These situations are unpredictable. All the submissions were completed before Mrs Neu's problem was diagnosed. Therefore a submission regarding the care she would need could not be made prior to her becoming pregnant.

Hon Max Evans: Are you not pleased the problem has been solved?

Hon CHERYL DAVENPORT: It has been solved in this instance. It is useful to appreciate that other people will end up in this situation and that a bucket of money will not always be available. As a result of his involvement in state-commonwealth negotiations Hon Max Evans will know better than anyone that when 100 000 hours of care for cases such as this are eliminated by the Federal Government, similar problems will arise in the future.

The Minister for Disability Services referred this matter to the Health Department for home and community care funding. Obviously a small amount of money can be utilised in instances such as these. Home and community care funding covers three areas: Funds are paid into a transitional care program for six weeks to enable people to rehabilitate in the community after they leave hospital. The normal HACC program provides home help for two or three hours a week. Most agencies that deliver services to people such as Mrs Neu are finding it difficult to provide new care.

Another facet of HACC is care aiding that provides limited personal care to assist people with showering, shopping or banking. The Silver Chain group provides the nursing component that will be used in this instance. I am told that this service has a waiting list.

Hon Max Evans: Mrs Neu gets that 12 hours a week and it is largely sponsored by state funds.

Hon CHERYL DAVENPORT: I realise that. It is part of the HACC program from the Commonwealth to the State. Silver Chain receives approximately 48 per cent of the HACC budget statewide. It has a large amount of money on which to draw.

Mrs Neu's situation highlights the fact that ordinary families do not know when they will be faced with a problem such as this. We, as legislators, must find some solutions to these problems. Although we may have solved the problem for this young family - I am very grateful that we have been able to - we do not know how often these situations will occur. As I said earlier, *The West Australian* of Tuesday, 11 March reported as follows -

. . . Mr Omodei said the cuts equated to 100,000 hours of attendant care or special independent-living housing support for 40 people.

"In addition, there are 50 or 60 more people coming into the system each year," he said.

"At \$60,000 per person to look after them . . . there needs to be more money, not less."

That is what we face. Over the next 12 months we can expect to be able to provide for not only those 50 or 60 people coming onto the system but also the 40 people still waiting for that service. It is great that we have been able to solve this problem. However, the Government must be vigilant in ensuring that similar problems do not occur too often in the future.

HON TOM STEPHENS (Mining and Pastoral - Leader of the Opposition) [4.08 pm]: I do not want to address the specifics of the case put before the House by Hon Graham Edwards and the response on behalf of the Government, but the context in which this situation arises. Nonetheless, I am a bit surprised at the tone of the Minister for Finance's reply. As has been pointed out by Hon Cheryl Davenport, he must remember that we on this side of the House know the difficulties facing this whole area. These difficulties, of which this case may be an example, are well and truly understood, at least by the Minister in the other place, and should be understood by members opposite.

A Minister is responsible for disability services and support for the non-government organisations operating in Western Australia to provide services for people who are absolutely cash strapped by virtue of the agreement with the Commonwealth that is due to expire in June this year. The non-government organisations that are trying to provide services to individuals such as this are not adequately responding to the needs of these people. Yet the Commonwealth is heartlessly talking about further slashing funding for services by non-government organisations. Not only comments in the newspaper, but also responses to questions asked of the Minister for Disability Services in the lower House indicate that the proposed new agreement to come into effect after June of this year -

The PRESIDENT: The member is getting off the track of this motion.

Hon Tom Stephens: I would not do that; I have been careful not to.

The PRESIDENT: I am suggesting that this motion is clearly about the difficulties created for Mrs Neu and her family. It is about nothing more than the effect on her. I am carefully reading the motion. It gives the member no scope whatsoever to go out onto the general thrust of the failure of anyone to do anything about disabilities. It is carefully worded by the mover to ensure that it discusses only Mrs Neu.

Hon TOM STEPHENS: Thank you, Mr President. In the context in which Mrs Neu is discussed, the motion is about the provision of services to individuals such as Mrs Neu. However, the treatment and services that Mrs Neu receives are made available to her through funding arrangements for non-government organisations and government departments that are subject to the agreements about which I am speaking.

The PRESIDENT: Unfortunately I must disagree with Hon Tom Stephens. It might be a good idea if he were to read the letter that was sent to me by Hon Graham Edwards.

Hon TOM STEPHENS: I read it before I came into this place.

The PRESIDENT: For the benefit of members of the House, I will read what it says.

Hon TOM STEPHENS: It is about the failure of the Government.

The PRESIDENT: Let me tell members what it says. It states -

. . . for the purpose of discussing the failure of the government to provide funding from the Disability Services Commission under the Accommodation Support Program and the Attendant Care Scheme administered by the Disability Services Commission to assist Mrs Janine Neu of North Beach and the resulting difficulties this is creating for Mrs Neu and her family.

The motion is not about funding for disability services or the accommodation support program; it is about the difficulty faced by Mrs Neu and her family. That is clear. There are many other opportunities to talk about the Government's failure to do this or that. However, the precise way in which this motion has been prepared indicates that it was intended to speak about only Mrs Neu. The member can carry on, provided he talks about the difficulties Mrs Neu is experiencing.

Hon TOM STEPHENS: Mr President, I will endeavour to abide by the advice you give to the House on the wording of the motion. Mrs Neu's circumstances are alleviated only by the provision of services to her from programs such as those that are referred to specifically in the letter the President received giving notice of this urgency motion; namely, the accommodation support program and the attendant care scheme, which are administered by the Disability Services Commission. Those programs might have been adequate for the needs of Mrs Neu if those agencies had been adequately equipped with resources. However, regrettably, the circumstances affecting Mrs Neu that Hon Graham Edwards drew to the attention of the House, ably assisted by the comments of Hon Cheryl Davenport, have come about as a direct consequence of two things. One is the funding level available -

Hon Max Evans: We put the funding up year after year.

The PRESIDENT: Order! We must get this straight. The motion does not refer to the lack of funding being available. The motion states that there has been a failure by the Government to provide funds to assist Mrs Janine Neu of North Beach. It is not about whether there is any money in the fund. It is not a matter of where the money comes from to get into the fund in the first place. In fact, it has nothing to do with the fund whatsoever. It has to do with the alleged failure of the Government to assist Mrs Neu out of that fund. I cannot let the member go on and on in a circuitous way endeavouring to defeat my ruling.

Hon TOM STEPHENS: I would never want to defeat your ruling, Mr President; I would want to work inside your ruling.

The PRESIDENT: Would the member not agree with what I am saying; that that is what the motion states?

Hon TOM STEPHENS: You know me, Mr President; I have no opportunity to do otherwise.

The PRESIDENT: Yes, you have.

Hon TOM STEPHENS: But I choose not to.

The PRESIDENT: Not to what?

Hon TOM STEPHENS: Not to choose any option other than to work within your ruling, Mr President. I will construct the case for why what I want to say fits within your understanding of the motion. We are talking about the need for assistance for Mrs Janine Neu. We are talking about that assistance being available for discussion only insofar as it comes within the program that is referred to as the attendant care scheme that is administered by the Disability Services Commission. There is only one context in which we can discuss that level of assistance; that is, whether that assistance can be provided by the commission and by programs that are strapped for cash. I put it to the House that the only way we can talk about the needs of Mrs Neu is in that context.

A substantial need is illustrated by the comments of my colleague Hon Graham Edwards on this matter that highlights the validity of the point made by the Minister for Disability Services, the shadow Minister for Disability Services and Hon Cheryl Davenport that the current agreement is inadequate. If that situation is not addressed, more cases will arise involving circumstances such as those impacting on Mrs Neu. There is no way of alleviating adequately the difficulties with which she is faced until a significant improvement occurs in the financial arrangements for those support programs that are referred to in the urgency motion - the accommodation support program and the attendant care program.

In 1997-98 the Commonwealth proposes to slash those funds by a further 4 per cent. A further 1 per cent cut is proposed for 1998-99 and an additional 1 per cent cut is proposed for 1999-2000. That is a 6 per cent cut over a three year period. No wonder the Minister for Disability Services is protesting his case on this issue! He must be ably supported by Ministers such as the Minister for Finance rather than their giving a glib response to this urgency motion. Without that level of understanding of these funding-deficient programs, many more examples will occur of cases like that which has been brought before the House today. They are tragic circumstances.

The PRESIDENT: Order! I do not want to keep going on, but it seems that every time I draw to the attention of Hon Tom Stephens the fact that he is deviating from the path that he should be sticking to, I have a long drawn out argument with him. Normally I give in because I cannot be bothered carrying on. However, I must be pedantic here because Hon Graham Edwards' motion does not suggest that the fund does not have any money in it, for example. He is saying clearly that the Government is not providing from that fund assistance to this lady. If he wanted to

suggest that there were insufficient funds and that whoever was providing the funds was not giving the funds, the motion would have been worded differently: It would have condemned someone for not ensuring there were sufficient funds in the support program so that Mrs Janine Neu could obtain assistance. This motion is clearly not about that; it is about the fact that the Government should be censured for not providing out of this fund support for this lady. I have no argument with Hon Graham Edwards' motion on that.

Hon TOM STEPHENS: I have completed my comments and am looking forward to Hon Graham Edwards' summary. I share his concern with regard to this funding program.

HON GRAHAM EDWARDS (North Metropolitan) [4.21 pm]: I am pleased with part of the Minister's response. I can assure him that I spoke to Mr Neu within 20 minutes of coming to this House. The Neus have received no offers; these matters have not been discussed with them. I spent quite some time last week and over the weekend at the Neus' house discussing these matters and their options. I know someone from the Disability Services Commission is going to see Mr and Mrs Neu at 5.30 pm today to discuss options. They have no idea what those options will be. If they are along the lines that Hon Max Evans has suggested I am most grateful and pleased, and I am sure Mr and Mrs Neu will be as well. Unlike Hon Max Evans, I do not want to turn this into a party political dispute - it is not that. There are always great demands on Governments. I understand - and it is one of the reasons I raised this issue today - that the Minister for Disability Services needs support around the cabinet table when he says that there is an incredible need in the community and that he needs more assistance. I take my hat off to him for being prepared to take on Canberra. I have referred to the article in *The West Australian* of 11 March, which stated -

State Disability Services Minister Paul Omodei has broken Liberal Party ranks and threatened the biggest campaign he can muster against Federal Government cuts to disability services.

I know there is not always enough money to go around; that is not the point. The system must be flexible enough to cater for people who are indisputably eligible for funding. If there are insufficient funds at the time then they should be drawn from other areas. We need look only at the incredible amount of money spent on consultants and advisers on the one hand and this funding shortfall on the other to see that it makes far better sense to divert money from them towards disability services. That is the sort of flexibility we need. As I said, I do not want to turn this into a party political dispute; it is a very personal situation. It relates to some very genuine people who are trying to make their own way in life. They are very self-sufficient and it is incredibly unfortunate that because of this debilitating disease they need assistance at this time. Hopefully, in a few years they will not, but we do not know that at the moment. I have already quoted the letter written to me by the Minister dated 4 February, in which he stated -

I am most sympathetic to your concerns but unfortunately I must confirm that the DSC has no surplus 96-97 funds available to assist Mrs Neu.

I am pleased that the Minister has been able to find some funds - if that is what Hon Max Evans is saying. I am also very pleased that he is bold enough and strong enough to take on Canberra. I will give him every support I can as far as that goes, and I hope all members will in relation to these funding cutbacks.

I thank members for their attention today and I hope that the result is appropriate. It does not matter whether we are comfortable or happy with the outcome; I simply hope that the Neu family will be happy with it and that it will help them stay together and address the future, living as normally as they can in our community.

[Motion lapsed, pursuant to Standing Order No 72.]

DEPUTY CHAIRMEN OF COMMITTEES

Appointment

On motion without notice by Hon N.F. Moore (Leader of the House), resolved -

That Hons Mark Nevill and N.D. Griffiths be appointed Deputy Chairmen of Committees.

COMMITTEES FOR THE SESSION

Appointment

On motion without notice by Hon N.F. Moore (Leader of the House), resolved -

That the following members be appointed to sessional committees -

- (a) House Committee - Hons Barry House, W.N. Stretch, Tom Stephens, and E.R.J. Dermer.
- (b) Library Committee - Hons Muriel Paterson and P. Sulc.

- (c) Printing Committee - Hons George Cash and Bob Thomas.
- (d) Standing Orders Committee - Hons W.N. Stretch, Derrick Tomlinson, Murray Montgomery, Mark Nevill and N.D. Griffiths.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY

Motion

Resumed from 13 March.

HON KIM CHANCE (Agricultural) [4.28 pm]: I am pleased to support the motion moved by Hon Barbara Scott to respond to the address made by His Excellency the Governor in this place. I take this opportunity to welcome the three new members in this place: Hon Paul Sulc, Hon Ed Dermer and Hon Alan Carstairs. I have indicated to my party colleagues - Hon Paul Sulc and Hon Ed Dermer - how much I welcome their presence, but I have not had the opportunity to do so in respect of Hon Alan Carstairs. While I have this opportunity, I also express my regret that I missed his first speech on Thursday last week because I was in Broome on parliamentary business. I welcome his presence. I have heard much about him without knowing him and everything I have heard has been very complimentary.

I take this opportunity to respond to a couple of matters raised by both His Excellency and Hon Barbara Scott.

I indicated to Hon Barbara Scott that, while I very much enjoyed her speech, something jarred with me in relation to her reference to His Excellency's speech. The honourable member indicated that the Governor's speech made it very clear that this is the best managed State in Australia, if not the world - that is more or less a literal quote. I listened intently to His Excellency's speech, and because I was not sure, I carefully read the speech, and I cannot agree that the Governor said anything of the kind. He did indicate that Western Australia needs God's help, and I am the first to agree with that sentiment. However, that is a long way from saying that this is the best managed State in the world - of course, it is not.

This State has immense natural resources, it benefits from stable government - it always has - and, by and large, it can look after its interests very well indeed. However, as always, it needs God's help. The Governor would not have said that it particularly needs God's help while the Court Government is in office, but I think we all took that to be implied - certainly I did, if Hon Barbara Scott did not.

Hon Derrick Tomlinson interjected.

Hon KIM CHANCE: Aside from that small point, I found much in Hon Barbara Scott's speech with which I agreed. Although her commitment to early childhood education is well understood by all of us, I was pleased that she used the opportunity to highlight some of the serious health issues challenging Western Australian children, in particular those in remote communities. I am delighted that in such a high profile speech, on which a lot of public attention is focused, she chose to isolate that as one of the key issues for her address to the people of Western Australia. The issue is easy to bury because it happens a long way away from the centre of attention in Western Australia. However, the fact is that one of the reasons this State needs God's help is the state of children's health in those isolated areas. Every one of us knows, I believe, without having to be told that the level of health in isolated and mostly Aboriginal communities is deplorable still, despite some very well intentioned efforts and some extraordinary individual efforts by health professionals in that area. It is an act we have to get very much into gear. So far, despite the attention placed on it, we have fundamentally failed to deliver good health outcomes for remote Australians generally and for remote isolated Aboriginal communities in particular.

Three issues were raised in His Excellency's speech to which I would like to respond. They were the death of my friend Hon John Panizza, electoral reform and industrial relations. I had known Senator John Panizza for more years than I care to remember. Long before joining the Senate he was a prominent member of the wheatbelt community and a person for whom I always had an extremely high regard. I do not know whether it is widely known, although John said he might just as easily have turned out to be a representative of the National Party, the Labor Party or the Liberal Party, but he used to attend meetings of the Rural Labor Association when they were held in Southern Cross. He always said he was there only to represent the interests of the Yilgarn Shire Council, of which he was then president. He always had a point of view with which those in the Rural Labor Association could identify. A mark of the way John saw public service as shire president was that he needed to be part of everything that was happening in the shire. It may seem trite to say that John Panizza was close to the people, but he was very much so. Although he was an extremely successful farmer and businessman, he knew what it was like to do it tough. He never forgot where he came from and never walked away from his roots. Perhaps few members will know that John was almost a member of this House. In the 1986 election John contested the Central Province electorate under the old Electoral Act; he was the Liberal candidate in that election, I was the Labor candidate and the successful National Party

candidate was the sitting member, Hon Mick Gayfer. It was a strange election because for the first time for many years a Liberal candidate had gone into an election of that nature with Labor preferences. Whether I had a personal influence on it or the Labor Party decided to do it anyway, I do not know.

Hon B.K. Donaldson: You did not give them to me in 1987.

Hon KIM CHANCE: Things had changed by then. It was very much personal. My recollection is that the Labor Party held John Panizza in high regard.. It felt that in the extremely challenging circumstances facing the wheatbelt, had he been successful he would have represented our province, as it was then, very successfully indeed. Just over a year after that, when John's political future seemed to have gone on the backburner, he was elected to the Senate. From 1987 until his demise he acted as a senator for Western Australia. During his parliamentary career John remained faithful to those values by which he had always lived. They placed his honesty and dedication above almost everything else. Loyalty to his family was first, second and third. He was extremely proud of his family. Even though we represented different viewpoints, I was always able to regard John as a friend more than an opponent. When we differed, it was not hard for me to understand where his point of view was coming from. I might add that we very rarely differed on matters in which we shared a mutual interest. I will miss John Panizza and I am sure whoever replaces him as a senator for Western Australia will be the first to acknowledge that he or she is following a path that was laid by an exceptional man, made more exceptional by the fact that John Panizza never pretended to be anything other than an ordinary man.

The Governor's speech raised another issue, one on which perhaps John Panizza and I might have disagreed; that is, the question of electoral reform. I certainly welcomed the advice from His Excellency that the Government will consider the issue during the current term of the Parliament. The question of one-vote-one-value is not an electoral plus for me. That sentiment is being rigorously beaten up by the National Party, which is its right. The National Party has written to every local government authority, certainly in my region, to urge them to oppose a basic tenet of democracy. No society can pose as democratic unless the structures of authority are elected equally by its citizens. It is true that benign government can take many forms, including forms based on a weighted democracy, and some of those benign forms need not necessarily be terribly democratic, assuming there is such a thing as a benign dictatorship. However, they are beside the point. As Australians we have chosen and fought for the concept of a democracy because we believe that in spite of its faults it represents the fairest and most accountable available system of government. While we continue to endorse a system which compromises the basic principles of democracy, we are being dishonest, not so much with the people we represent, but with ourselves.

The National Party letter I have referred to stresses the unarguable outcome of one-vote-one-value, which is fewer members of Parliament from the country. Flowing from that will be the loss of rural representation because of increased metropolitan based members. It should be fairly obvious to members that I am not very pleased about that outcome either. Whether I look at the issue personally or as an Australian Labor Party member of Parliament, the possibility that I could lose my seat or that my party could lose its representation in the north west, which has for so long been a Labor stronghold, is irrelevant in the consideration of the issue. What matters is that one-vote-one-value is the basis of democracy. Anything less than that is, ipso facto, a threat to democracy.

Hon George Cash: Does it make any difference to you that one-vote-one-value will cause a situation in the metropolitan area which favours Labor?

Hon KIM CHANCE: If that were to be an outcome, it would be irrelevant. I just said that.

Hon George Cash: You said that you would not be concerned if Labor's position was diluted in the country. It seems that the logical extension is that the only reason you are suggesting that is there will be an increase for Labor in the metropolitan area.

Hon KIM CHANCE: The member is reading something into my argument which I did not intend, because it could go either way. The most likely outcome under the current figures is that representation from the metropolitan Liberal seats would increase rather than the other way around. My argument is that that is irrelevant. The political outcomes, which will change anyway, are not important in the consideration of the higher things regarding one-vote-one-value; that is, everyone's vote should be, as near as damn it, equal.

Hon Bob Thomas: He is talking about the fairness principle.

Hon KIM CHANCE: It is not even fairness - it could be an unfair outcome, but it would be the more democratic outcome. The question of the fairness clause can be argued parallel with one-vote-one-value. I would be ready to look at the outcomes we would achieve from a fairness clause in terms of the mathematical difficulties. My advice is that if one-vote-one-value were compromised by a weighting of anything greater than 15 per cent, a fairness clause would become a very difficult concept. A fairness clause would work with a lower than 15 per cent weighting. That is something for the great minds of the major party strategists to ponder, not me.

Hon E.J. Charlton: Do you see any problem with the fact that in the Federal Parliament Western Australia has two members from the whole area represented by the seats of Kalgoorlie and O'Connor?

Hon KIM CHANCE: I am not necessarily thrilled by the outcomes. Again, they are less relevant than the concept of having a democratically elected structure. There are ways in which it can be balanced.

Hon Bob Thomas: What do they represent? People or trees, cows and sheep?

Hon E.J. Charlton: Those people who do not care about what goes on in country Australia would answer in that vein.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT (Hon Barry House): Order!

Hon KIM CHANCE: As members would imagine - we have just had a little example of it - of all the arguments, which could be called justifications for modifications of one-vote-one-value or vote weighting, put to me chief among them, apart from the one the Minister for Transport put which is a valid, cogent and perfectly logical argument and I will not decry it, is the argument concerning the comparative economic contribution of electorates. It is one argument which, certainly from local government, is thrown at me more than any other. The claim is that because of the huge economic contribution to the State from, for example, the electorate of Burrup, which is the largest income earner of any state electorate, that electorate, which is already heavily weighted - it is a Labor electorate as it happens - and carries a huge voting power per capita should have even greater vote weighting. If that argument is logically based, should Burrup's vote weighting be increased when the price of iron ore increases and the electorate of Wagin's vote weighting decreased every time the price of wool decreases? It is a foolish argument.

Hon E.J. Charlton: It is more about providing services to people. If there are few people in an electorate then obviously that electorate does not get very much.

Hon KIM CHANCE: The Minister raises a good point which I am coming to.

Of course, the economical argument is nonsense, but members must understand why it is nonsense. It does not make sense because in Australia we accept the broad view that it is people who vote and not dollars. That is what makes a democracy different from a fascist society. I agree it is an unhappy outcome of one-vote-one-value that rural representation will fall. Let us not argue about what is an obvious fact; but it does not mean that rural interests will be ignored, and I come to the point raised by the Minister for Transport by way of interjection: It will always be very difficult to win government without a strong rural vote, even with one-vote-one-value, just as it is difficult now to win government without a strong rural vote. The state of the parties in the Thirty-fifth Parliament is an indication of that. If we were to recount the last state election, in which Labor's rural vote was poor - no Labor Party member is running away from that - under the one-vote-one-value principle the outcome would have been about the same. This is not about giving a political free kick to one side or the other. What makes a difference in the delivery of, in the Minister's words, "services" to rural electorates is the marginality of rural electorates and not the sheer number of rural electors. Members should be honest with themselves in this instance: When we look at what services we will pour into a rural electorate, regardless of which party is in government, it will always be the marginal electorate which will be able to convince the Government that services are required. It would not matter whether there were a dozen adjoining electorates; if they were safe seats - whether they were safe seats for the Labor Party or the conservative parties is irrelevant - and those 12 seats were reduced to two, they would not get any more services than the bare minimum other than what comes out of a statewide plan, which, I concede, every party is at liberty to, and does, promote in an election campaign.

Hon E.J. Charlton: If we were to look at the last five years I could prove to you that that is not how we operate.

Hon KIM CHANCE: That is an argument for another time and I would be happy to debate it with the Minister because I am very aware of what is happening in the safe electorates.

Hon E.J. Charlton: Have a look at where the road funding went in the last four years. Most of it went to safe Labor seats.

Hon KIM CHANCE: Of course, that has been the case for a long time because of the development in the north and there is an economic requirement for it. Let us not get tied down with specifics, although I am happy to argue the specifics in another context. I simply do not have the time to do it now.

This is not something which is news to country people or local government in rural areas. It does not matter how many country electorates there are; unless there is a degree of marginality, nothing happens. It is a fact of life.

Hon N.D. Griffiths: The Minister might move an extension.

Hon KIM CHANCE: He may well do that and I hope he does.

It is also an absolute nonsense to talk about the rural vote as though it were a separate and homogenous thing. It is not a separate entity. Every rural member of Parliament in this Chamber and the other Chamber is also a member of either the Labor Party or one of the coalition Government parties. In the last election for the Agricultural Region, Liberals and Nationals stood on the same ticket; the same may have been the case in the South West Region. Each of those rural members, whether Liberal, National or Labor, comes into the Parliament and votes with his or her metropolitan colleagues on all except a fraction of 1 per cent of issues presented before this Parliament. We do that not because we are not standing up for our particular electorates, but because we are either morally or ethically bound to the issues on which we were elected. Those issues accord with our own party's policy; they are not issues that we might believe on the spur of the moment will curry favour with any group, either political or geographic.

There is no such thing as a specific rural vote. It is true that as rural members we can influence our metropolitan colleagues on issues which are relevant to our electorates.

Hon B.K. Donaldson: Which we do; I am sure that Hon Kim Chance does too.

Hon KIM CHANCE: That is absolutely acknowledged. It is also acknowledged that rural members can negotiate across party lines. That benefits our electorates, and Hon Bruce Donaldson and I have done that from time to time. However, at the end of the day it is the party room decision which has effect on what happens in this place. That is the case now. It has been the case in the past, and, as far as I am concerned, with or without one-vote-one-value, it will be the case in the future. I have more than a little sympathy for the fears that have already been expressed, particularly by local government representatives, that the quality and not just the quantity of our rural representation might fall as a result of larger country electorates that will result with the extension of boundaries following the introduction of one-vote-one-value. However, my view is that the limits on the quality of representation that rural members are able to provide are imposed more by each member of Parliament's individual resources than by either the number of electors within the electorate or the number of hectares within the electorate. Whether a member's Legislative Assembly district has 6 000 electors or 20 000 electors does not make an enormous amount of difference in respect of what that individual member is able to do for them. Similarly, given today's communications and transport, it does not make an enormous amount of difference - let us not argue about the margins - whether that electorate is 500 hectares or 500 000 ha. It used to be a problem. It is still a slight problem, but it is not a major issue any more. I can speak to my portfolio constituency in Broome as easily as I can to those constituents who live in my home town of Merredin, or in Perth.

Hon Bob Thomas interjected.

Hon KIM CHANCE: Even in Northampton Hospital! I do not see any difficulty with that form of access to and consultation with constituents. I have argued in support of my federal member of Parliament, Wilson Tuckey, when he was criticised by others for not living in his electorate. Wilson lives within five minutes of Perth Airport, straight down Fauntleroy Avenue. He is far more accessible to his electors from Bremer Bay, Geraldton or Mullewa than if he lived at Merredin or Katanning, because he is closer to transport. I am not suggesting that members of Parliament should go out of their way to live outside their constituencies. Provided members keep their sources of information from the electorate flowing, and as long as they are able to renew their first-hand experience of their electorate on a frequent basis, I have no problem with members living out of their electorate, or for a member to maintain an electorate office outside his or her electorate - although that argument is a touch more difficult to sell. What matters is not so much the number of electors or the physical size of the electorate but the access the member has to the necessary resources to service the needs of his or her electorate.

I am the single Labor member for an electorate of 271 000 square kilometres which contains almost 90 000 electors. My limitations are, firstly, a lack of staff in that I must rely on volunteers to carry out work and, secondly, a lack of research facilities and technology hardware. Those limitations would be no less real and no less inhibiting if my electorate were half the size or even twice the size. What matters is having the capacity to extend the service one provides to the members of one's electorate - the constituents.

I share the genuinely held concerns that have been expressed by local government. I am not being critical of those who present the other argument, whether that be the National Party or local government, because there is a danger that what they are saying could occur and rural representation could fall in real terms in quality as well as quantity. So those fears are not fulfilled, it is vital that we do not proceed with one-vote-one-value until such time as we receive an assurance that it will be accompanied by a genuine reassessment of members' staff and resource entitlements. Frankly, if we do not have that assurance I would find it extremely difficult to support the concept of one-vote-one-value, even though I would be committed to doing that. I would fulfil my commitment, but it would be without any real sense of support. We have an opportunity to get things right; however, let us not burn our bridges as we do it.

Hon N.F. Moore: This has a slight hint of heresy attached to it.

Hon KIM CHANCE: Not really. I have explained very carefully my philosophical commitment to one-vote-one-value. If the outcome of one-vote-one-value would be to reduce the quality of representation for country people we should put it off until we are able to do it properly.

Hon E.J. Charlton: That sounds like a good idea.

Hon KIM CHANCE: I am glad the Minister for Transport agrees. We must have a good look at the level of services which can be provided by country members when we face that question of reduced representation.

Hon John Halden: The rural rump is shaking in fear of one-vote-one-value.

Hon KIM CHANCE: Mr Deputy President, yesterday -

Several members interjected.

Hon KIM CHANCE: Mr President, you are back!

The PRESIDENT: I keep coming back.

Hon KIM CHANCE: Last week I attended part of the March meeting of the Western Australian Farmers Federation Grain Council at the invitation of the President, Mr Chris Moffat. Although I could attend only for a relatively short time the issue being dealt with by the council is one which deserves some discussion here. This matter has already been raised by Hon Murray Criddle. Even though this House contains at least six present or former wheat growers from all four political parties and even though wheat is the major agricultural industry in this State, we very rarely discuss this industry unless it is undergoing some trauma, as it did between 1989 and 1991.

[Questions without notice taken.]

Hon KIM CHANCE: That has nothing to do with any lack of attention to the industry either by me or by the other wheatbelt members of Parliament in this place. Wheat is a nationally regulated industry and does not often require the attention of the State Parliament. It is a major issue in the Federal Parliament.

The industry's regulation is via a very respected and successful statutory corporation, the Australian Wheat Board. The Australian Wheat Board has rarely put a foot wrong in its last 50 years of operation. What some members might not know, however, is that the very fabric of the Australian Wheat Board is close to disappearing altogether. This is neither the time nor the place to go into the detail of what threatens the orderly marketing of wheat, which, as I said, is a matter which falls within the Commonwealth's jurisdiction. However, I feel a need to raise the matter as did my Agricultural Region colleague, Hon Murray Criddle, not only because in the very near future we may be faced with the situation in which the marketing of wheat could become a State issue, but also because there is an expectation by our constituents that some elements of what is happening in the Australian wheat industry should be brought to the attention of this place.

As a result of that possibility, I will touch on the principal issues which are driving the winds of change. The Australian Wheat Board operates under two fundamental legislative advantages: Firstly, a form of public underwriting of the board's borrowings which are needed to pay the growers' initial advance; and, secondly, the monopoly power to export Australian wheat, a power which is normally referred to as the "single desk". For a number of reasons both of these legislative changes, which do not cost the Australian taxpayer one cent, are under threat. The threat is no different whether we have a federal Labor or a federal coalition Government. There are differences at the margin perhaps; however, effectively, both alternative Administrations are equally guilty in this regard.

In response to these impending changes at the commonwealth level, a working group which comprised the Australian Wheat Board, the federal Department of Primary Industries and Energy, and the Grains Council of Australia recently released a recommended structure for corporatisation of the industry's administration. The weekend before last, I received a copy of the working group's recommendation and if this is the wheat industry's future, I hold great fears for my region's welfare. Sadly, my information is that if Western Australia, which accounts for a majority of the nation's wheat exports, holds out against the recommended principles, it may well be the only dissenting State in Australia because all other wheat growing States seem to have crumbled. Whether it is politically sustainable for an Australian Government, either Labor or coalition, to impose this or any similar structure on the national industry without Western Australia's support or even against its specific wishes is a matter for the Australian Government of the day to determine according to its own political judgment. However, it is my feeling that the Western Australian industry will not accept either the proposed corporate model or anything remotely similar to it. I do not make that judgment by the seat of my pants. Two years ago I attended two of a series of four meetings attended by wheat growers. The two I attended were at Kalannie and Merredin, at which grower opinion was sought on the future direction of the industry. I was left in no doubt whatever from growers who attended those two meetings which I

attended, and from reports I received of the other two meetings, that Western Australian wheat growers overwhelmingly rejected the proposed change and recommended against any radical change to the Australian Wheat Board's fundamental structure. The attendance at those four meetings represented a majority of wheat growers in Western Australia and the meetings had very large attendances. It might be superfluous to repeat, but it needs to be made very clear, that the people who attended those meetings were wheat growers. They were not wheat industry politicians or people with an axe to grind, but people who made their living out of competing in the international grain market, which is probably one of the toughest ways of making a living that anyone can imagine.

If what I have seen so far of the dual class shareholding model which has been proposed is even indicative of the proposed replacement for the Australian Wheat Board, then members should have no doubt that wheat growers, at least in Western Australia, will reject the proposal out of hand. It is not my place to recommend to growers what they should and should not do. I might have had that right when I was a wheat grower, but because I am no longer a wheat grower I do not intend to tell growers how to run their industry. However, I do have the right to say, and did say, to the Grains Council of the Western Australian Farmers Federation that it will need to be entirely satisfied about the merits of the proposal before it takes it to the growers for their approval. I saw enough of the recommended corporate structure to make me deeply concerned about the merits of the current proposal.

I am pleased that in Western Australia at least there is a high degree of bilateralism on this issue so far. I have discussed the matter with my former Western Australian Farmers Federation colleague, Senator Winston Crane, who was also at that meeting; with my fellow members for Agricultural Region; and with the Minister for Primary Industry, Hon Monty House. I hope that the moral support of the Western Australian Government and Opposition will encourage Western Australian wheat growers to insist on a fair deal for Western Australia, the industry, and farmers generally.

Last year I raised the plight of rock lobster fishermen who held licences in the Windy Harbour-Augusta managed fishery. I am delighted to be the bearer of good news on this occasion, because I can now report to the House that this matter has been settled. The week before last week's sitting, I was briefed by the Director of Fisheries, Mr Peter Rogers, and Mr Ross Gould. The meeting was attended also by Mr Graham Lohman, who represented Windy Harbour-Augusta fishermen with such skill and tenacity that in the end no-one could ignore him. I appreciate the actions of the Director of Fisheries - never let it be said that I do not give credit when it is due, although obviously other Fisheries Department officers also played their part in this resolution - because he worked diligently through this complex issue and ultimately arrived at a conclusion which, although no-one is ecstatic about it, everyone believes is reasonable.

I asked Mr Rogers for an opportunity to discuss other fisheries issues which have proved difficult to resolve, and he said he would be pleased to do that, provided the Minister approved. I hope that is the case, and that there will be a more cooperative relationship between the Government, the Opposition and the Department of Fisheries during the new term of the Parliament.

On Thursday of last week, when I was absent from the Parliament, I attended a meeting in Broome between the northern demersal fishery participants and the Fisheries Department. I went to that meeting because I hoped that we could progress what had become a very sticky and difficult management situation. I did not think a resolution would be arrived at on that day, but I wanted to learn more about the process of establishing a management advisory group. The people at that meeting generously permitted me to play some small part in the day's proceedings, and I was delighted that we were able to progress several months with regard to a resolution for that fishery.

That fishery extends from roughly halfway up the 80 mile beach between Port Hedland and Broome to the Northern Territory border, and 200 kilometres out to sea. It is a big fishery for what is a relatively small number of participants. The nature of Australian fisheries generally, and Western Australian fisheries in particular, is that while they take place in huge areas of water, the resources are limited. That whole fishery in that huge area that I have described has, as far as we know with the limited scientific evidence available to us, a total sustainable catch of only 800 tonnes of fish per annum. Average wheat farms in established areas produce about 800 tonnes of wheat a year, and larger wheat farms produce in excess of 15 000 tonnes, yet that vast area of water produces only 800 tonnes of fish per year. That makes one wonder what potential exists for Australian fisheries generally, because we must bear in mind that that extreme north western corner of Western Australia is, in a sense, and many fishermen see it this way, effectively the last frontier to be developed by fishermen in Australia. This fishery takes in such famed fishing areas as the Rowley Shoals, and it is contested with our northern neighbours.

Hon Max Evans: What sort of fish do they catch?

Hon KIM CHANCE: The species that are under the greatest pressure are gold band snapper, red emperor, job fish and blue bone or baldchin groper. It is a typical mix of tropical fish, some of which are under more threat than are others. It is possible that this 800 tonne figure is on the conservative side; I have heard estimates of around 1 000

tonnes per year, and some people have suggested as high as 1 500 tonnes. One of the difficulties in imposing a limit and determining entry criteria to the new managed fishery is that the entry figures must be based on a fairly conservative level, because we do not know many things about the biology of the fishery. One matter which has concerned fisheries managers, particularly since the relatively recent release by Dr David C. Ramm from the Northern Territory of new scientific data, is that particular species of fish in that area are much slower to mature and do not reach sexual maturity until they are much older and larger than was first thought. That factor is important when we talk about what size species we can exploit. That is a problem, but the principal problem is that we do not have enough scientific data. When we compare what we know about that huge fishery and its onshore and offshore components which are biologically different, with the west coast rock lobster industry in which we must almost know each rock lobster's life history, and still feel short of science to solve such difficult or interesting problems as occur within the Big Bank off Kalbarri where we do not know what has happened or why, it is a little awe-inspiring how little we know about the area.

My point is that Australia's wild fishery is already heavily committed, in many places over committed. I understand the Minister for Fisheries, Hon Monty House, on television last night made the statement that there has never been a Western Australian fishery which has crashed. That is something to be proud of, and I would have said the same thing in the same circumstance. However, we know from what was said in this place that the Windy Harbour-Augusta fishery very nearly did crash, and that fisheries worldwide crash on a regular basis. It is a subject about which we sometimes sail close to the wind. I am the first one to acknowledge the skill of our fisheries managers in this State. However, we sail close to the wind on occasions and however one reads the information our wild fishery is fully committed now. We will not get a lot more out of it. We can go offshore a little way and look at new fisheries, but a significant amount of work has been done by foreigners, and by Russian and Japanese fleets in particular. We cannot learn a lot more in the deep, offshore waters that can sustain or give any room for improvement in the size of the wild fishery.

If we are to be able to continue meeting the huge demand for fish from other parts of the world we will have to rely on fish bred and grown in fish farms and in the aquaculture industry. I wonder sometimes whether we are putting enough effort into research. To be fair to Hon Doug Wenn, he has been keen for many years for us to inquire into and investigate this matter, but if we are to have a future as an exporter of fish our future will be principally in the area of aquaculture and not in the wild fishery, which increasingly will have difficulty sustaining current levels of demand.

In keeping with that, three weeks ago I visited the University of Tasmania's Launceston campus to have a look at what Launceston is doing with aquaculture. Without doubt, Launceston is Australia's leading research facility in aquaculture, and probably James Cook University in Queensland would lead in research on wild fisheries. I was impressed by a number of things, and I will report on that visit in writing, in more detail. I was impressed that even though the Launceston campus is large and obviously very expensive - I think it has an academic staff of 32, and 250 undergraduate and postgraduate students - and even though it is a very good institution by world standards, and obviously huge amounts of resources and money are being poured into research, in that specific area so little is being done. I was able to follow through a beginning-to-end type research project on flounder, a species which has a very effective application to the live export trade, which is about the only way Australian producers will make money from producing fish for the overseas market. It has now been three years, and a lot of money has been spent on that research. It will require another two years to reach a level where the faculty can say it has completed its work - providing that can be funded.

This moves me to another matter; that is, Austudy. Professor Nigel Forteach, who was able to take me around the facility, said that he has had a succession of students saying that they cannot complete what they were trying to do, because of the uncertainty about Austudy. That sets the whole process further back.

Having been to the Launceston facility I intend to have another look at this situation with Hon Doug Wenn, who is already familiar with the Western Australian research establishments. I want to see if there is any duplication or if we can do anything to help progress the industry. I am far from completing my inquiry in the area. However, it is fair to say that aquaculture has the potential to be the biggest industry that Western Australia has ever had, certainly bigger than the mining industry currently. Aquaculture has unlimited potential, partly because we have a huge and uncontested coastline. We do not have the problems faced in other parts of the world, in that divergent land uses are planned for large amounts of the State's coastline. That applies very much north of Port Hedland. We have the demand on the doorstep, and we have the means of producing relatively cheap input to the food needed to grow out the fishery. However, if we are ever to realise on even a fraction of that awesome potential we need to spend a great deal more money on research. I know how difficult it is for academic and research institutions to access funds to do this, and in the current scope of things it is not possible. We can never achieve those targets, but we need to be thinking laterally about how the funds are to be raised and what we can do to progress that industry.

A couple of other matters need to be touched on. One is unemployment. I will not speak on the issue itself, although reference to the aquaculture industry is perhaps an indicator that there is vast scope for employment in those, as yet, untouched areas. The matter of death duties was raised by a colleague, the member for Armadale, in the other place. I support the fact that Ms MacTiernan, in addressing the question of long term unemployment and youth unemployment, said that we must look a little further to find the means to fund programs to ensure employment for all Australians. In doing that, she went to the question of death duties. The Australian Labor Party generally has made it clear that death duties are not part of our agenda.

For my own purposes, I want to dissociate myself from the question of death duties. Perhaps because of my background where death duties are greeted with enthusiasm akin to that which communities in the Middle Ages greeted the plague, I am not keen on death duties. By anyone's standards it is a form of taxation which is unequal. It is not regressive, although it seems strange that at one time as an Australian Labor Party and as an Opposition we would be supporting government legislation which facilitated intergenerational transfer of assets in a couple of different Bills introduced by the Minister for Finance; but on the other hand we were talking about undermining intergenerational transfers. As a socialist I should probably oppose intergenerational transfer of assets but not by means of death duties because death duties apply a cost in an entirely selective manner. Coming from a rural community I saw the impact of death duties and the way they impacted on people who were making a very modest living and who had no way of getting around that form of taxation, whereas people who were also making income from capital - but in other ways - were able to easily avoid the impact of death duties. I certainly distance myself from the comments made by my friend, the member for Armadale.

Sitting suspended from 6.00 to 7.30 pm

HON J.A. SCOTT (South Metropolitan) [7.30 pm]: This Address-in-Reply is important because it is the beginning of a new era in this House. As people well know, the balance has swung away from the coalition for the first time and two new, progressive parties have been elected into this House. It is clear that the new parties were elected because the people of Western Australia had considerable concerns about some facets of the Court Government's management of this State.

Hon Derrick Tomlinson: All 5 per cent of them.

Hon N.F. Moore: That is why it had the biggest result in history.

Hon J.A. SCOTT: It was not necessarily concerned with its economic management, with which I think most people are reasonably happy.

Hon George Cash: Say that again.

Hon J.A. SCOTT: I think people are happy with the Court Government's economic management.

Hon George Cash: You can stop now; there is no need to continue.

Hon J.A. SCOTT: I know Hon George Cash would like me to stop now; he cannot believe his ears. However, clearly the Western Australian people have considerable concerns with other areas of the Government's program. It is for those areas that I will outline an alternative vision to that proposed by the Premier. One of the main reasons for the change in this House is people's concern that the Court Government is not carrying out the parliamentary reforms which would result in improved accountability. The Greens (WA) - and I understand the Democrats, who will speak for themselves when the time arises - want to see changes in that regard. We hope to introduce into this Parliament the idea of a code of ethics for members of Parliament similar to that proposed for members of the Public Service.

We also intend to introduce a private members' Bill to protect and regulate whistleblowers. Although members of the Greens (WA) will speak out strongly on matters of importance, we hope to develop a mature and cordial relationship with all parties in the Chamber. Although it is not my expectation, it is certainly my hope that this Chamber will become a House for the people, where its members put the people before their parties. I do not expect this to be an overnight change. We will be working in that direction. I urge all members to use this opportunity to ensure they do not make decisions in the corridors or the party rooms on crucial issues affecting the people of this State. I hope they will listen to the arguments in this House and speak and vote accordingly. Although that is rather alien to most members, it is what everybody in this Chamber was elected to do.

In addition to their concerns about accountability, I am sure the electors are concerned about the depletion of social capital in this State. They are concerned at changes which have degraded health, education and housing in this State.

They also obviously have the strong expectation that we will work hard to conserve the environment. If there is any area in which the Court Government has failed, it is conservation of the environment. Members of the Greens (WA) would like to leave this place in four years having given more muscle, resources and independence to the

Environmental Protection Authority. This crucial agency is in disarray. It obviously feels disempowered by the system in which it is reliant on the Department of Environmental Protection for its resources. If the EPA needs financial backing it must go cap in hand to the Minister for the Environment. That takes away its independence. That is not what was envisaged for the EPA when it was established.

We are also concerned that no real protection is provided for natural heritage or biodiversity in this State. The Government, and to a slightly lesser degree the Labor Opposition, have a multi-use objective for our national parks and conservation reserves. Although the Labor Party argues it allows only exploration, under both policies any part of the State is open to resource or other development. No area exists which the Government is prepared to protect and make sacrosanct in the light of its conservation or heritage values. This is not good enough. Eighty-six per cent of respondents in a poll indicated that is what they want.

We are also concerned about the difficulty of obtaining accurate information from the Department of Conservation and Land Management. We will seek a greater level of openness and accountability from CALM, which seems to spend more of its time on propaganda than on providing accurate, scientific information to people. In these days of electronic mail and the Internet much of CALM's data should be accessible, especially to members of this Parliament and researchers.

Also, considerable change has been made to the Environmental Protection Authority with regard to the planning legislation. Coinciding with the public voice being squeezed out of environmental regulation by the planning legislation, there is a growing tendency for self-regulation of environmental conditions imposed in Western Australia. If self-regulation is to be effective it must be done in conjunction with unannounced inspections by the Department of Environmental Protection to ensure companies are not tempted to manipulate their data or the time at which they carry out testing rather than comply with the conditions placed on their operations. There are plenty of examples of companies doing that.

A straightforward regulation should be put in place setting out the process by which breaches of environmental conditions are to be prosecuted. Under the existing system a company in breach of those regulations receives a warning from the DEP. If the company continues to breach those conditions, it is often let off because the matter is referred to the Minister who generally does not act on the information. I referred to one such breach in one of my first speeches in this Parliament when I complained about a company with a string of companies under its wing which had for eight years been receiving warnings from the department. However, no action was taken. The companies' actions resulted in incredible pollution of the Serpentine River system and they were the main contributors to the pollution in the Peel-Harvey Estuary. Vast amounts of money have been spent trying to fix that problem but it has more than likely become a real estate bonanza. We must wait to see whether that solution will work.

My colleagues and I are worried about the push not just to mine uranium but also to sell it to Indonesia. It is not just foolish but also is extremely dangerous. The area in which Indonesia plans to build the reactors is the most volatile volcanic and earthquake region on the planet. No-one can control that, no matter what new technology is used. A further problem is the lack of technical expertise in Indonesia. We hear people talk of what happened at Chernobyl, and that disaster is attributed to the ancient plant and the lack of technical expertise of the Russians who controlled the plant. In Indonesia the situation will be far worse. A third problem is that Indonesia is at a very dangerous point politically. President Suharto is coming to the end of his term because of his age, and the political situation in that country is extremely volatile. It is a very dangerous time at which to set up nuclear reactors in Indonesia and for Australia to be part of that program. Australia has chosen to ignore some of the less desirable behaviour in Indonesia in order not to lose trade. In doing so, it has put itself on the wrong side because eventually the Suharto regime will be swept away by new political forces in Indonesia. Australia must then work very hard to befriend the new regime because of its previous allegiance.

A further matter of extreme importance environmentally throughout Western Australia is water quality. I refer to underground water, rivers, wetlands and oceans. Currently building has been allowed on the Jandakot mound. Planning permission should never have been granted, because the building is taking place along the drawing line of that water. It was a crazy decision and I cannot understand why it was allowed, especially bearing in mind the recommendations of the select committee inquiring into these matters. I can only suggest that it must have involved great financial gain for someone. I do not know who.

A further activity allowed on the Jandakot mound is mining, although I understand the Cockburn City Council has successfully stopped that program. The removal of some of the sand is taking place below the water table and machines are running through the water table. Those machines use diesel fuel and they represent a great risk to the water supply of Perth. Ocean outfalls are a further problem. The Government has an archaic view of the handling of sewage in Perth. It is merely pumping the sewage problem out to sea, hoping it will somehow be beyond the environment! In fact, the sea is a very important part of our lives - socially, economically and environmentally. The large amounts of money spent on those pipes, which require much energy to push the material through them, would

be better spent on more modern technology, such as that being used in other countries. For instance, Germany has plants which use small amounts of energy and can be placed in strategic positions. There is no waste water because it is cleaned to the point at which it is potable and the residue can be used for mulch and so on for gardens. Those plants are operating in a number of German cities. It would cost approximately \$200m to provide a tertiary treatment system with no ocean outfall for a city the size of Perth. Some of the areas being used for sewerage plants handle sewage from long distances away. I refer, for example, to the Woodman Point plant in my electorate. It is situated on prime real estate with wonderful ocean views. If that land were sold, it would fetch practically all the money needed to build one of the tertiary treatment plants and would negate the need to pump sewage into the ocean. Perth is still witnessing the destruction of wetlands. Today's *The West Australian* contained an article in which the Minister for Transport is criticised in relation to the Government's promise that when it extended the Kwinana Freeway south it would expend moneys to buy wetlands currently in the hands of private owners to replace destroyed wetlands. Of course, that was not done; it was one of those promises that are made to present a proposal more attractively and after it is accepted the promise is forgotten.

Air pollution is another very important environmental issue in Perth. We do not need to undertake huge studies to solve this problem; we should simply take on board the Chinese approach. One identifies and tackles the prime sources of pollution - and they are often a couple of very heavily polluting industries or areas in a community. As a result, one immediately reduces the problem. That would be very easy to achieve in Perth, because about half of our photochemical smog is produced by private vehicles. What are we doing? Are we tackling the over-use of private cars? We are not; in fact, we are extending their use - we are building more freeways and spreading the city further so that it becomes less viable to put in place efficient public transport systems. That is extremely poor planning because the result is very energy inefficient and costly to the community, and people do not appreciate those costs. It would be very easy to tackle that problem, but we need a little forethought on the part of the Government. It should turn around this madness of catering to the needs of the road industry at the expense of the community. One-third of the metropolitan area is dedicated to cars - either roads or parking areas. That is a huge amount of space; in fact, more space is allocated for the use of cars than for houses in Perth. That is madness. We have more parking space per head of population than any other city in the world.

Hon Derrick Tomlinson: We have more cars per head of population than any other city in the world.

Hon J.A. SCOTT: We must tackle this problem; cars are responsible for half the pollution generated in Perth.

The other issue that has been ignored in relation to the smog study is the amount of pollution generated by the Kwinana strip - it produces about 44 per cent of our total photochemical smog.

Hon B.M. Scott: What about smoke from CALM burning?

Hon J.A. SCOTT: That is not picked up in the photochemical smog study but in the haze study, which relates to particles. CALM burning affects the city at times because when the smoke goes out over the ocean and is exposed to sunlight it becomes ozone and comes back over the city as photochemical smog.

One of the main problems in Kwinana is the two government-run, coal-fired power stations. They are two of the worst pollution sources in the whole of the Kwinana strip. This is an absolute disgrace: The Government is making people sick. Not only that, it does not need to make them sick; it can turn a valve and run those power stations with gas - they have gas-powered turbines. If they were run on gas they would create less pollution and would produce 260 megawatts of extra power. There would be no need to build Collie power station. I have told the Government that previously but it does not listen.

We should look at alternatives because we are wasting energy. The cheap energy we currently have in the form of oil and gas will not be available for very much longer. We must move to preserve our oil and gas supplies for use by other sectors. Quite clearly, we should move to another system of transport for people, because we will still need oil to fuel vehicles to transport goods. The best of those alternatives must be a light rail network, which would be extremely efficient in a city such as Perth.

As I said at the outset, the Premier has outlined the Government's vision, both in the Governor's speech and previously in an article on the front page of *The West Australian*. The basic premise is that our future is largely based on the extraction of minerals in the north of the State and the conversion of the iron into hot briquettes or steel. While Mr Court's vision might seem adventurous in some ways, it is also very one dimensional and economically, environmentally and socially risky. Everyone is aware of the benefits of these projects, but we are not sure to whom the benefits accrue. Sometimes these massive resource projects sound wonderful but the reality does not bear out that optimism. Occasional Paper No 197 entitled "Sustainable Energy Policy for Australia" produced by the Institute for Science and Technology Policy quotes the Australian Bureau of Agricultural and Resource Economics in relation

to the North West Shelf liquid natural gas projects such as Woodside Stage 2 and the Gorgon LNG proposal as follows -

... the NW Shelf Project had a negative net present value of \$11 billion.

... the State Electricity Commission of WA (SECWA) had to borrow \$330 million during the 1980's to pay for gas it had contracted to buy from Woodside, but could not sell.

That does not sound like a great benefit to me - \$11b negative profit. It is time we carefully analysed the benefits that are accruing to the people of Western Australia. We should also look at who is actually benefiting in a lot of cases, because I do not think the average citizen is benefiting all that much.

The problem with some of the huge resource projects is that massive amounts of capital are poured into them and very little employment comes out of them. Unless we stop being the minefield and the energy provider for other nations - and the self-polluters - and start using those resources through to the stage of manufacturing, we will be the losers in this economic battle. Economic rationalism and the market that drives the push to economic rationalism have a religious symbolism for many people in politics these days. However, for most people it means a reduction in services in areas like health, transport and education. It also means a greater destruction of our living environment.

The other problem with the current economic system in this State under which we are working is that it is very centralised. The profits from the wealth that are created in regions like the north west, the Pilbara, and the goldfields, in relation to which we are talking about introducing a gold royalty to bring it into line with other minerals, go to the shareholders of the major companies which extract it. Those shareholders live everywhere else except in those areas from which it comes; usually Sydney, Melbourne, Tokyo and London. Very little goes to Kalgoorlie and Port Hedland, although some comes to Perth. The royalties go to Canberra and Perth and the only money that goes back into the regions is the money to put in more infrastructure to extract more ore. Unless we turn that model around and start putting back into our regions some of the wealth created in them and give control to the people in those regions, decentralisation will not happen in this State. Over the last decade, the population in country areas has declined. More and more people live in the city and many of those who do not, live on the coastal strip in the south west.

The current model is unsustainable. We will not be able to keep it up because the underpinning of the current model is oil and gas, not people working. That energy will disappear in the next 30 years. We are setting up an economic system based on an energy supply that will not exist in the future. That is absolutely crazy. We are constantly told how wonderful are the new finds in oil; however, 90 per cent of the oil that we are using today comes from oil fields that were started 20 years ago. Even this country's gas supplies will run out in 30 years. Long before that they will have proceeded to a point where they will not, by any stretch of the imagination, cater for the further expansion of high energy use industries. When the Greens enter this Parliament, they will want to see a major study done on the strategic use of energy in this State because, if we do not, people who are in agriculture will have no fuel to drive their tractors around their paddocks; they will not be able to transport their goods to market.

Hon M.J. Criddle: What evidence do you have of that?

Hon J.A. SCOTT: I have a document put together by a combination of people. One of them is from the world's foremost petroleum supply experts, the people who work out how much petroleum and oil is left in the world. It is a company called Petroconsultants. The person who did this study was a Jean H. Laherrere. This paper is a submission relating to the Department of Primary Industry and Energy's Green Paper 1996. It addresses many of the problems in the Green Paper, particularly energy. These people are the most respected consultants in the petroleum industry. It is good evidence. It includes maps, graphs and information if the member wants to read it.

There is considerable information to show that not only will we run out of oil and gas in the next 30 years, but also in that time, as we went over the peak in the 1980s worldwide - in Western Australia we are about to reach the peak of our production - the price of oil increased because we were extracting it from smaller and smaller fields in more and more difficult circumstances and the cost of extraction went up and will continue to go up. As with most marketplace arrangements, we will find that once that becomes evident in this State, the price will skyrocket. We are faced with not only the running down of fuel, but also vast increases in the price of fuel in the not too distant future. We have to plan to use it wisely. If we do not we will be in big trouble. We can do that in the same way that we can cut down the photochemical smog in Perth. The figures relating to oil and gas use in our community indicate that the prime user is the private motor car. Petroleum products in 1994-95 totalled 1 620 petajoules. The transport sector, into which the private car falls, used 1 080 PJ of that 1 620 PJ; agriculture used 110 PJ; natural gas consumption used 800 PJ; and natural gas exports used 380 PJ. Unless we do something about providing alternative transport in our city, where most of the fuel is used, we will not have a lot of room in which to move.

Hon M.J. Criddle interjected.

Hon J.A. SCOTT: That is true; farmers have done that. Farmers are also using herbicides and pesticides which are largely petroleum based. Fertiliser is also produced by using fuel, and goods have to be transported to market.

We must plan properly if this State is to keep going beyond the next 30 years. By refusing to face up to the crunch, which will come if this State does not change, this State will be in a position where it will miss out on being at the forefront of the new technologies which take over from oil. Currently, the alternative fuel supplies are far more expensive and, in some cases - for example, ethanol - the energy production ratio, which is the amount of energy we get back after energy is expended to produce energy, is almost a 1:1 ratio. We get little back compared with what it costs to produce. Some of these measures are not as wonderful as some people think. Some types of ethanol are better than others.

This country must start investing in research that will provide renewable industries. One of the prospects on the horizon is hydrogen power, but the problem with that is that energy is required to produce it. It could be done by using photovoltaics. Unless this country invests in this procedure it will have to buy pre-made hydrogen from other countries. Australia will then be faced with another impost in import costs.

Another area is downside management; that is, reducing the need for energy. This State has done virtually nothing to achieve that end. The Government has made a few motherhood statements about it but has done very little else. Within Western Power is a unit which supposedly looks at reducing energy use - all it does is look at it, because it does very little else!

Many energy saving devices are available and could be used in this State. A very good example was an energy efficient refrigerator which was designed in Fremantle and won a national competition. It did not use any gas. It worked on a heat exchange principle using metals. A vacuum sealing device which was made out of cheap plastic and increased the efficiency was also designed in this State. The people who designed the energy efficient refrigerator tried unsuccessfully to have it manufactured in Australia. An unfortunate thing about Australia is that its conservative business people prefer to invest money in real estate rather than in something that is technologically advanced. That refrigerator will be manufactured in another country by Electrolux.

There is another reason for a change in direction of this State's economy. I am not saying that iron should not be mined or steel should not be produced in this State, but careful consideration should be given to the value of this State's energy resources over the next 30 years while it still has them. We must strategically plan to move in the direction that will bring about the greatest benefit in the medium to longer term, not the very short term.

Another area in which Australia will get into trouble is greenhouse emissions. The United States has already signalled that it will put trade embargoes on countries which do not fulfill their obligations. Australia is not fulfilling its obligations and Western Australia is leading the way. Over the last five years this State has increased its greenhouse emissions by approximately 30 per cent at a time when it should be significantly reducing them. This State is simply snubbing its nose at the rest of the world and it has little consideration for its northern neighbours who live on low lying islands. Some people from a country to the north of Australia were in this Parliament last year and one of those people - I do not remember his name and I could not pronounce it if I could - said that a small rise in the water level would be disastrous to his country. It would face the possibility of losing huge amounts of territory.

Hon Derrick Tomlinson: It already has.

Hon J.A. SCOTT: We must become a good neighbour to that country. We must think about those parts of the economy which are not reducing greenhouse gas and will be hit when the United States and the European Union put embargoes on Australian products because we have failed to comply with the greenhouse targets. This does not have to be a bad thing. Norway set itself very stringent greenhouse targets to meet by the turn of the century. As a result that country moved into the area of wind generation in a very big way. Currently it has an annual export profit of \$500m a year from the sale of wind generators. The whole situation does not have to appear gloomy. The Vice President of the United States, Al Gore, said that the number of jobs provided by green technologies had been greater than the number provided by the Industrial Revolution. If this State was to move into the area of new technologies, great opportunities would be created. It is the way forward. We cannot dig up rocks and melt them for much longer. We must change.

Another area of concern to me and my Greens (WA) colleagues is the treatment of Aboriginal people in this State. When Hon Tom Stephens made a speech in this place the other day he spoke about reconciliation and said he was pleased to see the Premier wearing an orange ribbon like the one Hon Paul Sulc is wearing. When I saw that picture in the weekend paper to which he referred I was appalled at the hypocrisy because, at the same time, the Premier is running around the country complaining about the Wik decision and is trying to get the Prime Minister and other Premiers to come together to overturn that decision. That had no effect on Western Australia; it caused not one iota

of change. That is because the conditions of our pastoral leases are different from those in the rest of Australia. Before the Wik decision Aboriginal people had no customary rights to enter pastoral leases.

Hon Derrick Tomlinson: It had no effect on our pastoral leases, but it may have had some effect on other aspects of the land.

Hon J.A. SCOTT: I did not hear the Premier say that.

Hon Derrick Tomlinson: It is because the member has not listened.

Hon J.A. SCOTT: The Premier did not say it. He was trying to beat up fear about the Wik decision.

Hon Derrick Tomlinson: I am afraid you are wrong.

Hon J.A. SCOTT: The Premier did not say that in the public arena. He did not spell it out in the newspapers.

Hon Derrick Tomlinson: He does not write the newspapers, unfortunately.

Hon J.A. SCOTT: Not yet.

Hon Derrick Tomlinson: We are working on it.

Hon J.A. SCOTT: The State Government passed native title legislation to remove any native title rights of Aboriginal people. Native title did exist in Western Australia. The Federal Government did not grant native title; it made legislation after the fact. This Parliament passed legislation which was deemed to be racially discriminatory. That law was subsequently struck out. The Premier is a hypocrite. He was happy to sell out the rights of Aboriginal people. The legislation that he put forward showed no respect for the customs or spiritual beliefs of Aboriginal people.

Hon Derrick Tomlinson: That is not true. It was the Land (Titles and Traditional Usage) Bill, if you remember.

Hon J.A. SCOTT: I remember it well, because it contained some particularly hypocritical sections. I remember the conflict over land that could be a sacred area being traded for another area or some money. The Premier admired integrity so much that he was prepared to pay for it!

Hon M.D. Nixon: That was not sacred land.

Hon J.A. SCOTT: It related to traditional usage areas. It did not define whether they were sacred areas, so it included sacred areas. It is about time the Premier started to stick up for the rights of Aboriginal Australians and became serious about reconciliation. He should not wear an orange ribbon that signifies racial harmony and social tolerance until he deserves to wear it.

I am also concerned about the treatment of youth in the community, particularly the Government's attitude to youth. The impetus of the Government's legislation is to control and suppress young people. One of the first Bills that passed through this House that concerned young people was legislation to combat graffiti. What a great step forward for young people! This State implemented street sweeps, where young people were legally apprehended by the police and taken to police stations because of their age.

Hon Derrick Tomlinson: Is this the Fremantle curfew?

Hon J.A. SCOTT: It was in Fremantle and Northbridge. The Government is now putting in place legislation and constructing more gaols to incarcerate more young people, rather than dealing with the root causes of the problem. The reality is that young people of today are no better or worse than young people of earlier times. They are equally as wild and as worthy as they ever were. What has changed is the community's attitude to young people.

Hon B.M. Scott: That has not changed.

Hon J.A. SCOTT: It did change for a period when I was younger. Young people were given too much high quality treatment. They are not now ready to pass that treatment to their children.

Hon Derrick Tomlinson: Not like when I was a boy.

Hon John Halden: It did not have the right effect on Hon Derrick Tomlinson.

Hon J.A. SCOTT: Over the past 20 or 30 years we have experienced great social changes. A large proportion of families now have both parents working and young people are left to their own devices or to the television.

Hon B.M. Scott interjected.

Hon J.A. SCOTT: It is not a matter of there being more work. One of the major problems is that many people are in part time employment, where they have little control over their hours. They must work at all hours of the day. Under the Government's lovely new workplace and individual contract agreements they no longer have the choice of being at home with their children when they want. Also, many very young people work in all-night shops from midnight to six o'clock in the morning in very dangerous circumstances. They should not be there. We should look at the social effects of some of those government measures.

The other important aspect on which I might get some agreement from Hon Barbara Scott is that the single linking circumstance of young people who end up in prison is their lack of success in fitting in with society, or, to put it in another way, the failure of the school system to adequately educate these people and keep them in society. They have been alienated by the system through a mixture of their social circumstances and the failure of the schools to provide the proper background to properly and adequately train these people.

Hon B.M. Scott interjected.

Hon J.A. SCOTT: That is linked with the problems of lack of jobs for young people today. The sorts of jobs that were available to us when we were young are not available to these young people - if members can remember that far back.

Hon Derrick Tomlinson: Working in coal mines is now illegal.

Hon J.A. SCOTT: I was not talking about coal mines. I had many jobs that were not in coal mines. The reality is that those jobs do not exist any more. If these people had the ability to go into these jobs, I do not think they would be in prison today. We should be looking to achieve for them better education, more jobs and early intervention programs in our schools to ensure they do not go off the rails at any stage. We would save an absolute fortune and have a much better society for that, one in which we respect young people and allow them to grow as human beings, rather than locking them up because they are a problem. We can do much more and I hope we can achieve some of that over the next four years. I am looking forward to that opportunity and I hope others are, too.

HON CHERYL DAVENPORT (South Metropolitan) [8.30 pm]: I will deal with several issues, but before I begin I take this opportunity to welcome the three new members to this place since their arrival at the last election - Hon Alan Carstairs, Hon Ed Dermer and Hon Paul Sulc. Of course, two of those members will be with us for just a little while and, from the contributions they have already made to this place, it seems a pity that they will not be here longer. I will comment briefly about the recent election and then I will concentrate my remarks particularly on issues relating to the portfolios for which I am the shadow spokesperson.

I refer specifically to seats in the South Metropolitan Region, those in the south western corridor of the metropolitan area. Although the election results were not a great success for the Labor Party, we can certainly take some pride in the fact that we now hold six of the 10 seats in this region. That suggests a corridor in the metropolitan area is voting Labor and, provided we can translate those results to other areas in this State, the result at the next election might be largely different.

I had the privilege of directing the campaign in the new state seat of Willagee for Alan Carpenter. It was a great team effort for a candidate who never took his eye off the goal. Even though two weeks before the election the Channel Seven news poll had the Labor Party with a base primary vote in Willagee of 28 per cent, we took no notice of that and continued the work Alan Carpenter had done for the previous seven months following his endorsement - and worked harder. The result that was achieved on election night proved that our strategy was correct and all our hard work was rewarded. The election pundits and party polling pre-election had the seat of Willagee at anywhere between 51 and 54 per cent for the Labor Party. That seat is now almost 58 per cent Labor. I am very proud to have been associated with the campaign and the people who worked very hard with Alan Carpenter to achieve that result.

I will touch briefly on a sad result; that is, the loss of my very close friend Judyth Watson from the seat of Southern River. It was a loss not just for the Labor Party, but for the State. She was one of the special people who had a fine policy mind and never stopped pursuing what she believed in philosophical terms to be the right thing, making sure social justice policies were advanced to make things better for those who are less fortunate in our community. Her friendship to me over the past eight years has been very special. We have seen some pretty tough times one way or another in the Labor Party. We shared an office and, as a single person in the Parliament, I valued her support and her wise counsel, which I will miss; of course, our friendship will be as strong as it ever was. I wish her well. Of course, she will no longer have to attend the more tedious functions that we do as members of Parliament, such as attending dawn services, local government dinners and the like which, if we had our choice, we might not always want to attend.

I am disappointed that the representation of women in the Legislative Council will drop after May. In the two seats that had Labor women, they were preselected at the No 3 positions on the ballot paper, and those seats were lost by

Labor at this election. Having said that, I am delighted that after 21 May we will see the arrival of four new women members in this Chamber. That will increase our numbers from five in the old Parliament to seven, which can only be an improvement. The major parties had a pretty poor showing at the last election. The Labor Party reduced its numbers and the coalition parties did not increase theirs. We need to look at ourselves and to lift our games.

Hon Peter Foss: We have improved in the lower House.

Hon CHERYL DAVENPORT: Indeed, and I congratulate those opposite for that. However, there were not too many in safe seats.

Hon Peter Foss: Not in safe seats?

Hon W.N. Stretch: Southern River was not safe.

Hon CHERYL DAVENPORT: I said that not too many were in safe seats.

Hon Derrick Tomlinson: Perhaps we should have more women in safe seats.

Hon CHERYL DAVENPORT: That is a great idea.

Hon Peter Foss: Carine is a safe seat.

Hon CHERYL DAVENPORT: Yes, it definitely is. I said not too many; I did not say not any. Obviously I have struck a nerve.

Since the election the Labor Party has adopted the policy of appointing all its members of Parliament, with one exception, shadow spokesmen and women. I am delighted to have the responsibility for the status of women and seniors portfolios. My remarks in this debate will centre on issues affecting people in both those groups. For those who do not know, Saturday, 8 March, was International Women's Day. This day evolved from strikes held by female textile workers in New York in 1908 who were demonstrating for higher pay and safer working conditions. I thought it was very interesting that way back then the textile industry was involved. I am a member of the Women's Electoral Lobby. In its latest news sheet in January we were provided with information that came out at the Senate inquiry last year into the outwork in the clothing industry in Melbourne. I am sure members will be interested to know this -

Outworkers, mainly women from non-English speaking backgrounds are working in Australia for as little as \$1 to \$2 an hour. They make up clothes for well-known companies in Australia.

I have a few names to share with members, who might think twice before buying these brand names in the future. The Textile, Clothing and Footwear Union of Australia submitted this list of 146 labels in good faith on the basis of information provided by outworkers who contacted it to report their working conditions, the labels they were sewing and their pay rates. I am happy that since the start of the campaign at least Target Australia Pty Ltd, Ken Done, Country Road Clothing Pty Ltd and Australia Post have entered into ethical sourcing agreements with the women and are taking positive steps to address exploitation in the industry. Companies behind some of the brand names with which we are familiar - not in 1908, but in 1997 - are paying rates of \$1 to \$2 an hour; namely, Adidas, Big W, Cherry Lane, Exacto, Nike, Jag, JeansWest, Just Jeans, Kmart, Katies, Myer, Perri Cutten, Sportscraft and Sussan. In the government and corporate sector areas where uniforms and the like are produced the following are listed: Ansett, Australian Department of Defence Industries, Australian Defence, Australian Navy, Qantas and the Queensland Police Department. The practice is not concentrated just in the retail outlets, but occurs also in areas in which government contracts are involved. I wanted to share that with members because it is important to recognise that fights that were being fought in 1908 - fights that led to the creation of International Women's Day - are still being fought today.

International Women's Day was first celebrated in 1910 by a conference of socialist women in Copenhagen. It did not evolve in Australia until 1928, and the first recorded celebration in Western Australia was in 1936. Members will be interested to know that as recently as 1978, when 50 women sought to march in Western Australia to celebrate International Women's Day, seven were arrested under the infamous section 54B of the Police Act. I am pleased that Act was finally amended by the Labor Government during the 1980s.

Hon Derrick Tomlinson: What happened to the rest of them?

Hon CHERYL DAVENPORT: I suppose they marched, or were dispersed. That was 1978; not very long ago. Nevertheless, nothing like that happened here on 8 March and many celebrations were held on the days leading up to that Saturday and on the day itself. I attended a range of functions, but I found a couple particularly inspiring. The first was the Edith Cowan University lunch, which was attended by 200 people - generally women, but some men - drawn from management and academia. The speaker was a woman by the name of Stella Axarlis. She is the Managing Director of Bilcon Engineering Pty Ltd in Victoria, a small to medium size engineering firm that works

specifically with Holden in Victoria. She is also a board member of the Australian National Training Authority and numerous other state and national training and standards authorities. Her address was entitled "Daring to meet the Challenge". Stella Axarlis went into this management area in only 1990. She came from an opera background and was a major performer on the European circuit for many years. I was impressed with her speech. She said that we should not be fooled; that there is not only a glass ceiling out there for women, but glass walls as well. She said there was a backlash to women going forward in management and in many other areas in life. However, her message to all of us was to meet the challenge head on with the goal of changing the prevailing orthodoxy. This woman in her late fifties, who in seven years turned around a male dominated, failing engineering company and has it on track, was an inspiration to many of us.

The second event I attended to celebrate International Women's Day was the annual Unifem breakfast, hosted by Zonta Clubs of WA and Soroptimist International. It was attended by 200 women, with one token bloke - the Minister for Health, Kevin Prince.

Hon Derrick Tomlinson: He's not a token bloke; he's a real bloke.

Hon CHERYL DAVENPORT: He was; he was the only male there. He saw fit to join us and was welcomed accordingly. The tremendous thing about that breakfast is that it was attended by a number of young women. Many high schools were represented. It was tremendous to see those young women wanting to take part in that celebration. The Unifem breakfast celebrates our solidarity with and understanding of our sisters in developing countries. As people will know, many of those women spend many of their waking hours collecting water and firewood and growing food to feed their families. It is always a tremendous breakfast and we hear from international speakers from countries in the developing world.

The final event I will touch on was the relaunching of the Western Australian Women's Fellowship, which has been renamed the Edith Cowan Western Australian Women's Fellowship. That was done by the Minister for Women's Interests at the Kings Park pioneer women's monument. That fellowship has a long history. It was first developed in 1975, which was International Women's Year. Each year since then a Western Australian woman has won the fellowship to study various aspects of life that could improve policies and participation for women. In 1997 we see a restructure and upgrade of that fellowship. I congratulate the Government for expanding the fellowship to \$25 000 per annum, which is a realistic figure for anyone wanting to conduct major research.

The one thing that offended me was that the Government saw fit to jointly launch the fellowship with Sir Charles Court. Frankly, I felt offended that we would have to celebrate a women's function with Sir Charles Court participating. If the fellowship were to be relaunched, it should have been done with one of the previous recipients and the Minister rather than by wheeling out a former Premier. I do not understand the reason behind that.

Hon B.M. Scott: It was his initiative in 1975.

Hon CHERYL DAVENPORT: It was a government initiative. The original recipient still could have carried out the joint launch.

Hon B.M. Scott: Fair enough, but there was probably a reason for his being there.

Hon CHERYL DAVENPORT: Yes, but some women felt offended that it was done by a male.

Throughout this century women across the world have fought hard for, and won, many rights. International Women's Day each year is the opportunity for women to celebrate those victories. It is not what some unenlightened men chose to carp about in the letters page of *The West Australian* in the lead-up to the day. However, despite those hard fought victories, we must remind ourselves that in 1997 many of our sisters in developing countries, and to a lesser extent in Australia, do not enjoy the freedom of opportunity that some of us enjoy. As we move closer to the twenty-first century, the feminist movement remains as necessary and relevant as ever.

I now highlight a couple of instances in our State in which women are fighting hard for services. The first of those examples is the funding application of the organisation known as SANDS - the Stillbirth and Neonatal Death Support Group. Many members will no doubt be aware of the escalation of this group's campaign for funding. I will highlight some historical facts and figures regarding this organisation, which deserves support as all the lobbying, coordination and service provision is carried out by women. The only government funding for SANDS is \$7 700 for the 1800 telephone number which was established about two years ago. The figure indicates the level of telephone counselling currently provided. The organisation is seeking a maximum of \$108 000 to enable the employment of a full time coordinator and a full time support worker/advocate - that position would be split between two people. SANDS' very professional business plan was prepared for its submission in 1996 and was not greedy or unrealistic. As long ago as 1995, this group was asked by then Health Minister Foss to make a submission to the Health Department for funding.

Hon B.M. Scott interjected.

Hon CHERYL DAVENPORT: The member raises an option for the group, which works primarily out of King Edward Memorial Hospital for Women. Counselling is provided solely by volunteers, who are generally bereaved women. They are carefully selected and trained, and know when their level of counselling expertise is insufficient and a clinical psychologist is required. SANDS' mission statement on page 1 of its submission reads -

SANDS provides support, understanding and information to those affected by the death of a baby by parents who have experienced a similar loss.

SANDS' volunteer philosophy reads -

SANDS until now has functioned almost entirely on a voluntary basis. SANDS has the philosophy that volunteers should get on with their lives, therefore, SANDS has a continuous turnover of volunteers. This philosophy makes running the organisation difficult.

The cover sheet of the funding submission commenced with the following two sentences -

The death of an infant before, during or shortly after birth creates a personal crisis of major proportions. The emotional trauma has a significant impact upon the parents, siblings, extended family and wider community.

I have thought about those words a lot since the meeting I had with this dedicated group of community workers. Governments and the community have taken their contribution to the State very lightly, and I am prepared to work very hard to assist them in their funding bid.

Members should be aware of the following statistics: Western Australia has approximately 26 000 births per annum, but approximate 200 babies die between 20 and 40 weeks' gestation and in the first four weeks following birth. Approximately 700 babies die between 16 and 20 weeks' gestation, and approximately 2 000 pregnancies fail between conception and 16 weeks.

Hon B.M. Scott: That include abortions.

Hon CHERYL DAVENPORT: No. It includes -

Hon Derrick Tomlinson: Spontaneous abortions.

Hon CHERYL DAVENPORT: The first-term abortion numbers could be added, but they do not fit this category of counselling.

Hon B.M. Scott interjected.

Hon CHERYL DAVENPORT: No, because it is an illegal procedure in this State. The only counselling for women who have terminations is, if they are lucky, through the Family Planning Association, the funding for which was cut back by the former Labor Government.

The 2 920 babies or pregnancies which fail have an effect on 5 840 parents. By comparison - but not to diminish the trauma - in Western Australia last year only 27 babies died of sudden infant death syndrome. We are talking about a major contrast in areas of expertise and counselling, but the SIDS organisation, as a result of the nature of that trauma and the necessary research, has a greater capacity to raise funds through public donations than does the SANDS organisation.

Hon Derrick Tomlinson: That is only because it is a volunteer organisation; but, in spite of that, its members are very dedicated.

Hon CHERYL DAVENPORT: They are, and they continue to be. The organisation has a philosophy that people should not be involved forever. A turnover should occur because it has a traumatic effect on people's lives and they should not become bogged down with that trauma.

In February 1995, Hon Peter Foss invited SANDS to make a submission, and it was almost finalised when Mr Kierath was replaced as Minister for Health at the end of 1995. Subsequently, in May or June of last year, SANDS was again invited to submit a proposal, and was virtually assured of success by Bill Simpson, the Director of Financial Services at King Edward Memorial Hospital for Women. However, it seems that Health Department bureaucrats have now convinced Minister Prince that the money should come from the hospital budget rather than from the Health budget. I disagree. This is not an issue which should be picked up out of the hospital's budget. This is a community health problem which relates to women when they return to their families and must deal with the trauma of that loss. I see

it as a community health problem which should be funded from Health Department funds, not King Edward's. I have some sympathy for King Edward's view about not providing the funding.

The Health budget is around \$1.3b, and SANDS is asking for \$108 000. The current Minister told the Legislative Assembly last week that, although he supported the work of SANDS, funding was not possible because money offered to it might be taken from some other organisations.

An offer was made to SANDS of a Health Department redeployee. In the view of SANDS - I agree - that is not good enough.

Hon B.M. Scott interjected.

Hon CHERYL DAVENPORT: No. They want somebody with the experience of other SANDS women to hold that position; namely, somebody who has lost a child. They want the empathy for the issue to be provided through the coordinator. It is incredibly ironic that this concept grew out of Western Australia in 1979 and has been adopted by all other States. In fact, the programs in New South Wales, Queensland and Victoria have been funded for the past four years.

Other States have taken our good idea and run with it and been able to get funding. On the morning of the opening day of Parliament, I attended the SANDS special award ceremony with Minister Prince and the member for Churchlands. We were all almost reduced to tears when we heard the contributions of acceptance of some of the award winners. It brought back to my mind my own loss of a child at 27 weeks' gestation some 18 years ago. I wish that I had had access at that time to some of the services that this organisation provides.

The message from Anne Marie Robertson, who was one of the women counsellors from SANDS who received her award, was felt by everybody when she said -

SANDS is not just about our dead babies. It's about healing and helping families to cope.

On Tuesday of this week I met with a mother of triplet girls who were born and died in January this year. The first born triplet lived for a few minutes, the second born lived for eleven days and the third born lived for 36 hours. The grief and trauma this mother was experiencing was immense. Twice she had to make the decision to withdraw life support. She proudly showed me the photos of her triplet girls and I noticed that there were none of the three girls together. I mentioned to the mother that KEMH took photos of all the babies that go through their pathology department. She had not been told that this was done. I offered to enquire on her behalf about obtaining the photos. I contacted Elaina Smithers and she informed me that a number had been taken including five photos of the triplets together. I arranged with Elaina for the negatives to be developed and mailed to the mother. When the mother heard that there were photos taken of the triplets together she was overcome with emotion. She cried tears of joy and relief - it meant so much to her. From the time she was told she was carrying three babies she had always referred to the girls as the 'triplets' and now she would have a photo of them together. These photos were something for her to treasure for the rest of her life.

This highlighted to me now well SANDS and KEMH work together to ensure that a bereaved parents journey through grief is made a little easier by creating as many precious memories as possible which will last families a lifetime.

This young woman herself had lost two babies. The first had been born with X-linked hydrocephalitis and had lived 17 hours; her second loss was in early pregnancy. I reiterate that this is a funding policy decision which primarily discriminates against women who provide a service to women who suffer the primary loss when a child dies or a pregnancy miscarries. Any members who have some influence with the Health Minister must convey the message from SANDS, because it would be tragic if it were to withdraw its services - and many counsellors are at the point of suffering burn out because of their counselling and the lobbying they have had to undertake in order to get the funding over the last two years.

My second issue of concern is the commonwealth and state funding decisions which will affect the health and wellbeing of seniors, who are also predominantly women. In November of last year during the debate on the Appropriation Bill I spoke to the Minister for Finance about my concerns with the agreement which was then being negotiated, and still is, with the Commonwealth to transfer the aged care programs, particularly the home and community care program, to the States. It is intended that 20 per cent of HACC funding be raised through fees for services in the next three years. The agreement is still not signed, but fee for service is being progressed through Western Australia's HACC network. A letter to agencies outlining the proposed HACC national fees policy was forwarded on 5 February to agencies, which were asked to respond by 22 February. That gives very little time to consider a response for such a major reform in a policy such as this. It has been clearly articulated at meetings by

Health Department HACC management that any future growth in HACC funding will not come from government funds but from fee for service.

I have quite a lengthy history in this area, as some members will know. I have seen the growth occur and chaired a committee which has grown from a very small agency to quite a large one over the last seven to eight years. We must spend more than three weeks in consulting and relaying our concerns. Nevertheless, it is important that I acquaint members with the sorts of things that we are up against. The department has provided us with a paper called "Home and Community Care (HACC) Program National Fees Policy". It attempts to give an overview of the sort of fees policy we might be looking at. It reads -

Client fees play an important role in the ability of the HACC Program to respond to the needs of its clients by supplementing the already substantial financial contribution to the costs of community care made by Commonwealth and State/Territory Governments, local governments and community organisations.

I certainly do not have any difficulty with that, because they do. However, we have usually been able to get money from a voluntary request rather than an imposed fee for service. It continues -

The HACC National Fees Policy takes account of both the level of income and the amount of services used by HACC clients in considering the user's capacity to pay. In doing that, the Policy acknowledges that more than 90 percent of all HACC clients are dependent upon some form of pension or benefit for income support, and that a large proportion of HACC clients need high levels of services, often from multiple sources.

That is certainly right. As it indicates, 93 per cent nationally of people who consume the program are pensioners, of whom 60 per cent are full pensioners. To break that down a little further to a local organisation, our program currently has 283 consumers of whom 278 are on some form of pension, such as the aged, disability or veterans affairs pension. Of those 278 people only two are not full pensioners and the other five are self-funded retirees. Of the total of 283 about 70 per cent are women. When considering the client base we are talking about and the imposition of a fee for service, we can see the sorts of people who will be hit. As I have said in the House on other occasions, one of my real fears about this is that the problem with the HACC program is that people go onto it and do not really go off it until they either move into hostel or nursing home care or die.

Hon B.M. Scott interjected.

Hon CHERYL DAVENPORT: They still can in hostels, I think the member will find, and certainly in retirement villages. There is a program under community options under which packages of respite are taking place in hostels.

Hon B.M. Scott interjected.

Hon CHERYL DAVENPORT: That is right. I am trying to say that the vulnerability of those people is significant. Although many of them come onto programs for only the odd hour or two a week, the level of care needed escalates. Funding increases are never made to meet that demand and so it always works at capacity and the amount has to be stretched further and further each year.

I am concerned also that the Federal Government is talking about a safety net of \$30 a week per person for this program. Many people on full pensions will find it difficult to pay that fee. My program deals with people who are in their eighties and nineties, many of whom migrated here after the Second World War, lived through the Depression and are very proud. They would rather not access the program than not be able to pay. Therefore, those people will either go into nursing home care earlier or will not use the service and will be found very ill or even dead at home. We should not take that lightly.

There are many pitfalls that suggest we should have a consultation period of more than three weeks. Hon Paul Sulc reminds me that we are now looking at a threshold payment of \$26 000 for nursing homes. Many people fear that development, which is part of the aged care package proposed by the Federal Government.

Principle 1 of the policy is that we must impose a fee, and it states -

Inability to pay cannot be used as a basis for refusing a service to people who are assessed as requiring a service.

Our first concern about that principle is that if an agency is unable to assess a person's financial situation, it may discriminate against other consumers. An agency is not allowed to access Department of Social Security records to assess a person's ability to pay, because that is an invasion of privacy, and I have no difficulty with that. However, if a person was not truthful about his or her circumstances and we waived the fees for that person, and Joe Blow next door, who knew the circumstances of the person for whom we had waived the fees, was accessing the same service but paying the levy, that would have the potential to discriminate against him and other consumers.

Our second concern is the time cost to existing agencies of assessing people's financial status. At the moment, it takes one person 19 hours a week to do our administration and accounts. We will now need to move to a more sophisticated accounting system. Who will provide the money to enable us to do the assessments and the extra work that will be involved in rendering the costs?

Principle 2 states -

All clients assessed as having capacity to pay are to be charged fees. This should be done in accordance with a scale of fees appropriate to their level of income, amounts of services they use, and any changes in circumstances.

The first concern is, who will pay for the administrative costs of the service providers in rendering those charges so that they can assess and obtain equitable outcomes? The second concern is that a graduated fee scale is an accounting nightmare. Because of the problems we were experiencing with such a scale, after only 12 months our program moved to a modest fee for service of \$25 a month for more than two hours of services, and \$10 for services below that amount.

The third concern is that a high number of consumers who are on full pensions will not be able to afford the cost and will not access the service. We have no problem with principle 3.

Principle 4 states -

Clients with similar levels of income and service usage patterns should be charged equivalent fees for equivalent services.

If someone could tell me what that means, I would be grateful, because we had great difficulty understanding that and that has still to be clarified.

Principle 5 states -

Clients with high and/or multiple service needs are not to be charged more than a specified maximum amount of fees in a given period, irrespective of actual amounts of services used.

We then have the problem that I mentioned earlier of the safety net and the fee of as much as \$120 per month that these people will have to find.

Principle 9 states -

The fee charged for a service should be all inclusive and cover all material used in delivery of the service.

That is not particularly clear, because when we offer a service we provide things such as vacuum cleaners to enable carers to clean a consumer's home, lawn mowers to enable carers to mow a consumer's lawn, and garden tools, but if we were expected to provide the cleaning materials as well, that would be a greater impost on the funding we are receiving.

Principle 10 states -

Fees collection should be administered efficiently and the cost of administration should be less than the income received from the fees.

That will not be a problem, because we have costed our service on a hourly basis, and the fees that are being charged are nowhere near that amount. The other problem is that current funding provides for one coordinator, and an administrative assistant for 19 hours. The coordinator will also have the increased workload that will be created by the need for extra assessment on financial status, and I am sure there will be no move to provide us with extra money for additional help.

Principle 13 states -

Procedures for the determination and collection of fees should take into account the situation of special needs groups.

That is fine in theory, but its application in practice will need further definition. How can we assess the capacity to pay of people who have Alzheimer's disease, dementia or mental illness? People from non-English speaking backgrounds may be easier to assess because we can get an interpreter, but many of the people in those other categories do not have family members to whom we can turn for assistance in assessing their capacity to pay.

Principle 14 states -

Assessment of a person's capacity to pay fees should be as simple and unobtrusive as possible, with any material obtained treated confidentially.

That is fine, but what will happen if a client refuses the agency access to his or her financial information? Privacy provisions mean that the agency cannot obtain that information from any other source. This could discriminate against other consumers. Many questions remain unanswered about those principles.

Currently, no HACC management policy exists relating to a decision by an agency to withdraw services. This could arise in certain circumstances, and I will provide two examples: The first is the need for more specialised and constant care, which means that the consumer would need to move into hostel care and would require far more supervision than can be provided under this scheme. It is all very well to say that the service will be cut and that the person must enter a hostel, but for many people in their eighties and nineties it could almost be the signing of a death warrant. It is a big responsibility to place on a coordinator, especially if there are no family members with whom one could negotiate.

The second policy relates to the withdrawal of a service when carers are abused and experience threatening behaviour by consumers. It does not happen frequently, but with the integration of people with mental illness into the community it could be a factor. We have experienced such a problem recently when we withdrew services. I made contact with WorkSafe Western Australia to see if any provisions existed under the Occupational Health and Safety Act which provided the agency the ability to withdraw the service if our employees were abused when they visited a particular consumer. That is another area in which HACC management at the state level has no policy, and that is the case with most HACC agencies. With a move to a fee for service arrangement where one cannot withdraw services on the ground of payment alone, we must consider the situation and make sure we have some clarification prior to the policy implementation.

Another matter of concern is the fact that baby boomers, of which I am one, are approaching the age when this service will be necessary for their quality of life. No doubt, as we have done all the way through our lives, we will have developed a policy so that it will be okay when we reach that stage. However, many people in the community at present are very vulnerable and need different approaches to provide an appropriate quality of life.

At present, the majority of consumers of the HACC program are women, mainly owing to longevity and a lower previous earning capacity. It is also true that the majority of people employed in providing care for HACC consumers are women. The government policy makers at both state and commonwealth level are generally male bureaucrats. I highlight this as another very subtle form of discrimination against women in the aged care health field. Ultimately the inequity will impact on the entire community. It is important that policy makers more readily understand the human cost, and look beyond the limited budgetary calculations of individual services when determining policy which affects very vulnerable consumers and low paid employees.

This evening I have tried to deal with this area because if we do not, we will create a real problem for our community. As I said earlier, these people are very vulnerable. Many of them are women, and as policy makers and legislators we need to know these things. We need to take steps to try to limit the effect on that group of people in our community before it is too late.

HON JOHN HALDEN (South Metropolitan) [9.25 pm]: I join with other members in congratulating the Governor on the delivery of his speech on opening day. I also wish to congratulate members opposite for winning the election. I am pleased to have met a number of new members, some of whom will be here for only the short term. I hope they enjoy their time with us, and that it will be a rewarding time for them. If it is the desire of some members, I hope they have the option of coming back to this place.

I turn now to a specific part of the Governor's speech. I was very pleased to note that the Governor has given me the opportunity to make a few comments. When reading the Government's prepared speech the Governor went through a round of self-congratulatory nonsense regarding various economic matters. He then turned to a statement relating to commonwealth-state financial relationships. He stated -

The Federal Government raises 73 per cent of all revenue but the States, which are allowed to collect only 23 per cent revenue, have to provide more than 40 per cent of all services.

We could all argue about the percentages that the Governor used in his speech. However, to the writer of the speech I say that I am not sure of where this State Government or any other State Government is restricted to collecting only 23 per cent of revenue. That restriction does not exist, and I can provide a number of examples in recent history where State Governments have been given options to collect far more revenue. Members opposite might recall that it was Malcolm Fraser who provided an opportunity for income tax to be collected by state governments. In 1978

the Commonwealth Government passed the Income Tax (Arrangements with the States) Act which allowed the States to add an income tax surcharge to the income tax collected by the Commonwealth or to provide rebates geared to them. Not one State took up the opportunity. Despite claiming that they were deprived by the Federal Government, that there were problems of vertical and horizontal fiscal imbalance, not one State, after all the posturing, took the opportunity to use that piece of legislation to assist with any fiscal problems. In 1989 the Federal Government repealed that legislation because none of the States was prepared to consider the issue of how to increase its taxation base. It is probably fair to say that the commonwealth-state financial relationships have been typified by posturing by both sides. At the same time as the States bleat poor, the Commonwealth endeavours by a range of circuitous routes to gain compliance by the States to its social, political and economic agendas by using that commonwealth-state financial relationship.

The words that typify some of the problems in the area - indeed a century of problems - were uttered by the infamous Joh Bjelke-Petersen in 1981 when he said that there was only one good tax and that was a tax levied by the Federal Government. It was a situation where the States continued to complain but there was no pain. There was no responsibility on the States to act in a mature way to develop fiscal policies and to gain some independence from the difficulties experienced with commonwealth-state relationships over the years.

I highlight that comment in the Governor's speech because it is blatantly wrong. However, it typifies the attitude of State Governments. The words "allowed to collect only 23 per cent of revenue" are nonsense. If state-commonwealth financial relationships are to be a rewarding experience for both sides some basic honesty and maturity should be inherent in negotiations. Until that happens the relationship will be difficult and of great complexity for everyone involved.

Having said that, it is not just the States that have played that game. As I said before, the Federal Government has used its powers to influence political, social and economic policy. The posturing of both sides has not been of any assistance in developing an appropriate mechanism for the needs of the States or the desires of the Commonwealth. If that continues it will be an unrewarding process for everybody involved.

I remember the Premier making many virulent attacks and Hon Ross Lightfoot in this place from time to time attacking the "Canberra centralist, socialist Government", to quote the words he often spouted before engaging what is behind his eyes.

Hon P. Sulc: Which he so desperately wants to join.

Hon JOHN HALDEN: Yes; never forgetting that. When a Labor Federal Government was in power, it was the centralist socialists who were evil and nasty. In press release upon press release the Premier attacked that Government. Now that the Government's mates are in power in Canberra members opposite are a bit quieter. What has happened to Hon Eric Charlton's Fix Australia, Fix the Roads campaign? It has hit the ground. State funding for that has dried up to nil. It was considered appropriate to use taxpayers' money in a fraudulent and wrong way -

Hon E.J. Charlton: The campaign is full on. As a matter of fact they are starting in South Australia in a couple of weeks.

Hon Kim Chance: But in reverse.

Hon JOHN HALDEN: He used taxpayers' money to attack a Federal Labor Government. My comments must also show balance. I noticed last Friday night that Hon Peter Foss was most aggressive in his opposition to cuts to legal aid. I did not hear the Premier on the front foot demanding that the Prime Minister, his Liberal mate, change that inequitable situation. He has two standards. That is the great difficulty with commonwealth-state financial relationships. It is a litany of double standards on both sides.

I refer to the 40 000 Western Australians who will be deprived of state assisted dental care as a result of a funding cut announced by the Commonwealth Government in its last Budget. I have not heard the Premier on the front foot demanding that funding be reinstated or talking about the nasty, centralist conservatives in Canberra.

Hon E.J. Charlton: Have you heard him say anything about native title or the loss of income? Where have you been - trying to do the numbers?

Hon JOHN HALDEN: I am delighted that the Minister for Transport has entered the debate; he always assists my argument. I had the privilege of reading a document prepared by the Department of Premier and Cabinet which the Premier presented to the Premiers' Conference in 1995. It referred to native title. It was again a waste of taxpayers' money. It was nothing but a piece of political jargon, not designed to fix commonwealth-state financial relationships, but to present what was then the image of a wimp as someone who could stand up and fight for something. He did not know what he was fighting for. The document was an appalling piece of nonsense.

Hon Bob Thomas: Fighting for a mythical backyard.

Hon E.J. Charlton: Did you know that now even freehold land around the nation is under threat?

Hon Kim Chance: You do not seriously believe that?

Hon E.J. Charlton: Of course it is.

Several members interjected.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT (Hon Barry House): Order! Let Hon John Halden make his own comments.

Hon JOHN HALDEN: The matters raised by the Minister for Transport can be used to muddy the waters. However, they cannot be muddied for too long. The reality is that the Commonwealth has made some significant cuts to state funding. I thought it appropriate to acquaint the House with the extent of those cuts. I do not wish to be anything but fair, so I will include the Federal Labor Government's cuts. Is it any wonder the States are having a difficult time? In 1988-89 the financial assistance grants pool was reduced by \$650m; in 1989-90, \$550m; and in 1991, \$400m. In those three years the States lost approximately \$1.6b. Of course, they complained about the belt tightening and about having to examine their financial and revenue raising capabilities.

As a result of that the Commonwealth Government agreed to maintain financial assistance grants for the next three years at real terms. The Commonwealth Government also transferred the debit tax to the States, but at the same time reduced the financial assistance grants pool by an equivalent amount. I remember Hon Bob Pike, supported by members opposite, including the Leader of the House, telling us about the evil socialists who wanted to demolish the States by cutting off their sources of revenue, thereby ending their independence and sovereignty. I remember the lecture after lecture we received.

I refer now to what his mates did about the last federal Budget without even a whimper. They sat there and copped it because they are full of double standards. The figures make interesting reading. In the 1996-97 commonwealth Budget the financial assistance grants pool was reduced by \$619m.

Hon E.R.J. Dermer: They agreed to that.

Hon JOHN HALDEN: Indeed. In 1997-98 it will be reduced by \$640m. Nasty centralists! It is a shame they are not socialists. In the third year, 1998-99, the financial assistance grants pool is to be reduced by another \$300m. That will amount to a \$1.55b reduction and members opposite are not making a whimper. We have not seen a press release on it. The press releases from the Premier when the Federal Labor Government was in power were vitriolic and full of the right stuff, but while members opposite are having their throats cut by their mates not a word is being said.

Hon Bob Thomas: They think they got a good deal out of it.

Hon JOHN HALDEN: Yes; it was a great deal and a very entertaining spectacle. At the same time this State has faced the spectre of a cut in specific purpose grants. We have heard from Hon Cheryl Davenport of the funding cuts in the home and community care program. That is not the only program to have been affected by the recent round of federal government cuts. It is possible that news will be announced this Friday of further cuts in specific purpose grants. If the Ministers agree, there could be further cuts to the financial assistance grants pool. That suggests a significant problem exists.

The problem lies not just with this, or any, conservative Government; it lies in the history of these matters. Instead of the States working together and trying to form a workable partnership with the Commonwealth - a partnership of equals - the States foolishly have quarrelled about the distribution of a steadily reducing amount from the financial assistance grants pool. All the time they have argued about which States should get more than others, but at the end of the day the pool is getting smaller and there is no resolution of the central problem. As the Governor said in his speech, this State has a significant financial problem. Although the State can experience 6 or 7 per cent growth, its revenue raising capacity cannot keep pace with that level. Western Australia is lucky if its revenue raising capacity can be increased by half that percentage. Growth brings demand for further infrastructure, so the State Government is on the back foot trying to balance an ever shrinking pool of money. Alternatively - this is clear from the budget papers over a number of years - it can increase taxes, charges and state fees to a disproportionately higher level than they should be. The problem is that state revenue is indirect and regressive, and much of it has an enormous cost for business. Although members opposite say they are pro-business and we must all work harder, the Government has not proffered a solution to assist business to remove some of those burdens. It could be done because there is an obvious equation.

I have carried out some preliminary work on the extent of taxes and charges. I refer to a novel area of the state Budget, which is agents' licence fees. There is a plethora of such fees, including fees for auctioneers, credit providers, land valuers, motor vehicle dealers, real estate and business agents, secondhand dealers, security agents, settlement agents, travel agents and so on. All these people must comply with a range of requirements under the licensing process, all of which are annual, expensive and time consuming. What does the State raise in revenue from this plethora of fees? An amount of \$2.9m. God knows what it costs the State to administer and collect the fees, and ensure compliance with that broad, diverse area of fee charging or taxation. The net gain is a paltry \$2.9m. Why bother?

Of course, one of the other classic problems of state revenue is the current reliance on a narrow base. States collect their revenue from areas such as payroll tax - a tax on employment - property tax, financial duty, excise levies, gambling, insurance, motor vehicles, franchise fees and other areas. According to page 12 of the document "Refocussing Commonwealth-State Financial Relationships: Tax Powers, Microeconomic Reform and Intergovernmental Relations" Western Australia receives 23.9 per cent of its state revenue from payroll tax. This tax has a significant impact on the number of people a company might employ. It definitely is an incentive for companies to be capital rather than labour intensive. In spite of comments by members opposite prior to their assuming government that payroll tax would be removed, and in spite of the concessions at the bottom end of the scale, the State's reliance on this tax has increased substantially during the term of this Government. This burden must be moved and the nonsense that has continued in this area for too long must be stopped. The property tax, financial duty, excise, insurance, motor vehicle and franchise fees place an impost on business at a time when this Government should create an environment in which employment opportunities are increased. The Government is not seriously addressing the issue. It will not address it by introducing a gold royalty. Of course, it will pick up \$74m and will not have a discounted factor in the commonwealth grants commission funding, but at the end of the day it is tinkering at the edges. When will this Government decide what is a fair, progressive and direct form of taxation for State Governments?

At the moment the States are in unison with regard to a challenge in the High Court on section 90 dealing with excise tax. Do the States want to clear up the matter to allow for a consumption tax to be imposed? I am glad the Attorney General is not in the Chamber at the moment because I do not want to hear from him that it is simply a legal argument that must be resolved. I would hate to think that taxpayers' money was being wasted on such nonsense. Should the Government believe it has an opportunity to introduce a state consumption tax, let it be placed on the agenda and discussed. If not, why waste money on the High Court challenge? Let us know the truth. The whole area of commonwealth-state relations has been a nonsense from the beginning because people have not been truthful. Will there be a state-based income tax? That opportunity was provided by both Federal Governments - first by Fraser and then it was on the Hawke agenda until it was scuttled by Keating. Where were the States in that process? There was no great desire on their part to come forward and say that we needed to look at these issues. One is tempted to hark back to the old Joh Bjelke-Petersen line: There is only one good tax, a federal tax, because the Federal Government suffers the pain. The pain will come to State Governments.

While it is true, as the Governor said, that States must provide 40 per cent of the services - this State particularly; we collect about 23 per cent of the revenue - the Commonwealth, which collects nearly 80 per cent of the revenue, spends only 55 per cent of its own funds.

Hon Derrick Tomlinson interjected.

Hon JOHN HALDEN: It is not blurred at all. We could go back to the Fraser legislation tomorrow if that is what we want to do. I am not suggesting that that is the answer. There should be a process that allows us to know what is going on.

We have lost money as a result of the Grants Commission's relativity process, and we always knew we would. We were doing very well as a State; that is fairly obvious. At the same time, by virtue of the new realities of the Grants Commission, the States will do reasonably well as long as they adhere to certain guidelines - principally the competition policy guidelines. By 2005-06, the States will receive \$829m in competition policy payments - admittedly that must be divided. However, on a per capita basis, we will receive \$2.35b in the same year. Because of the per capita arrangements - the greater the population the more money the State receives - and our growth and interstate migration, Western Australia is doing relatively better each year and some States are doing relatively worse.

In spite of all the rhetoric from members opposite over the years, the situation cannot be too bad, because the Government will not put a solution on the table to solve the problems. It will not entertain a debate or tell us the agenda.

The situation will get worse, because as the Commonwealth withdraws the specific purpose grants and the State Government continues to say that it will not pick them up, it will come under significant political pressure. The Court

Government can keep doing this for just so long, and it will probably get away with the cuts to dental health care and the HACC funding. At this stage, it will probably also get away with the child care cuts it made last year. However, it will not get away with it for much longer. Eventually it will attack a very significant proportion of the community, affecting quality of life and expectations about what people should or should not have. It will then have a political problem.

The answer to that political problem is not to adopt the Sir Charles Court "We hate Canberra" line, which is very convenient, but to come up with a constructive process and to involve all parties in that process. I have heard some nonsense in this place, predominantly from Hon Ross Lightfoot. I have heard him go on at some -

Several members interjected.

Hon JOHN HALDEN: The Minister for Transport has a good go, too; I must concede that. Members opposite have regaled us with the secession arguments of the 1920s and 1930s. We have heard about how much better off we would be outside the tyranny of the Canberra centralists. Interestingly, history does not bear out that view. From 1915 to 1930, the States received particularly low grants from the Federal Government. After the generous first decade of grants provided to the States until 1910-11, the Federal Government introduced per capita grants. In the 1920s and 1930s, the States received about 14 per cent of their total income from the Federal Government. They were screaming and yelling; they wanted to secede because they were not getting a fair share. The Grants Commission was established in 1933 to introduce some fairness and to guarantee that all citizens in each State had access to the same services - bearing in mind that they all paid the same taxes and had the same obligations. That process led to the States being allocated money appropriate to their needs and individual circumstances. Of course, that also led to significant vertical fiscal imbalance. I have heard a member opposite telling us that Australia has the worst vertical fiscal imbalance in the world. That is wrong; as I understand it, that label now belongs to South Africa. Vertical fiscal imbalance does cause problems, and in any discussion such as this we should identify those problems. The Grants Commission's processes, which were designed to equalise what the States receive, have also resulted in a very long period of sustained social, political and economic stability in this country - far greater than that experienced in many other countries.

The United States of America has no grants commission process, but, of course, its vertical fiscal imbalance is not as great as ours by any means. However, the USA has certain localities and States which are enormously deprived and which are wallowing in that deprivation. There is no process likely to get them out of that situation, and any such process would be enormously expensive.

Hon Kim Chance: What about the local government scenario and the City of New York?

Hon JOHN HALDEN: I intend to raise that issue. The USA does not have an independent process, such as the Grants Commission, that would direct money to its urban ghettos. Hon Kim Chance suggested that we consider New York, but the classic example is the ghettos of Chicago. That city has enormous social, economic and political problems and a history of violence, riots, racial tension, hopelessness and medical problems unheard of in this country, and the USA does not have the ability to equalise the distribution of funds throughout the nation.

Before we all run off at the mouth about the Grants Commission and problems of vertical fiscal imbalance - and there are problems - we should remember that since 1933 the Grants Commission, along with many other institutions in this nation, has provided us with a particularly stable political and social climate - nationally and locally. When it is compared with the nothingness that exists in the United States of America, it has been a particularly successful process. From time to time, that has resulted in the States which have the largest populations and contribute the largest share of taxation revenue to the Commonwealth complaining. In any process of equity, the wealth must be moved around. This year and in past years, Western Australia got less and less. This year its grants pull will be reduced by \$34m.

Hon Bob Thomas: That is because of our ability to generate our own income.

Hon JOHN HALDEN: That is right. The Grants Commission has determined that, because of the various considerations and variables that it takes into account, our situation has improved. That is obvious. We have only to read the Governor's speech and listen to the Government's propaganda from the media unit about how well we are doing to know that. There is always a cost associated with equity and we must be prepared to accept that cost. The cost in this case is that we will be \$34m short this year. We knew that last year. We did not know the exact amount; however, we knew it would be \$30m and a bit.

It is fair to say that the Grants Commission has provided this nation with a self-regulating equity mechanism that has proved it can work. The criteria under which it assesses matters have changed.

Hon Bob Thomas: When?

Hon JOHN HALDEN: Regularly. They are changed every five years, and the amount each State receives is reviewed every year. It has been different in its history. There have been problems in commonwealth-state financial relations. We all know about those; however, they should be addressed so that we can work towards a solution. There is no doubt that public resources have been wasted and that duplication creates inefficiencies in the use of taxpayers' money. Why, in 100 years, have we not been able to work out the significant areas of duplication between the Commonwealth and the States? Whether I am a centralist conservative or a socialist does not matter in this debate. Surely commonsense suggests that in a century we could have worked out who should have what. That nonsense is evidenced by the Family Court fiasco. In the halcyon days of Sir Charles Court when we were so self-righteous and self-important that we could not possibly give away our legal rights in that area, we had to have a state court funded by the Federal Government and we had to have a different name on the title of the Act. A period of nonsense developed; Western Australia was the only State that went that way. That typifies some of the nonsense that has gone on. There has been nonsense on the Federal Government's side also.

That is not the beginning and the end of the problems. Not only have services been duplicated, but also delays have occurred in the provision of services because of the lengthy and protracted negotiations and ego massaging that goes on between State and Federal Governments so that people can receive a service from the tax dollars they pay. It is a travesty. There have been difficulties in achieving uniformity in the provision of government services. How many more committees can look at this issue? We are getting through some of those matters, but not quickly enough. Further, constituents are confused about what services are being provided by whom. Accountability has been made more complex and difficult. Litigation has increased, as Hon Eric Charlton pointed out, because of this mad, petulant posturing on issues such as Mabo. It does not have to be Mabo; it can be a range of issues.

Hon Bob Thomas: Industrial relations.

Hon JOHN HALDEN: Exactly. We are keeping a fleet of lawyers in every capital city and the national capital, Canberra, in jobs because of that.

Hon E.J. Charlton: No more than in the native title situation where there is a waste of lawyers and courts. The Aboriginal people are the losers.

Hon JOHN HALDEN: There is some validity in the Minister's comment. However, I do not know how far I am prepared to go along with the Minister. I am prepared to concede there is -

Hon Bob Thomas: Some need for fine tuning?

Hon JOHN HALDEN: I think there is a need for a bit more than that.

It does not end there. Economic management is made more difficult because of the complexity in conducting fiscal and monetary policy. In one nation six or seven competing fiscal and monetary policies are operating at the one time, all fighting with each other over an ever diminishing pool. That is smart! We have all done well on that front! We successfully confuse trading partners, potential trading partners and investors, because they cannot work out which policy is appropriate for whom and why, and they cannot work out why we cannot work it out. That is understandable.

Taxing powers have become the epitome of buck passing. Politics plays a greater role in the process than does sound, sensible economic management. Policy decisions are often based more on parochial considerations and on stupid history misrepresented by stupid people - I can think of one in this place, but I will not name him - than in the national interest. That has happened in a century of this debate.

What has happened in 100 years of debate on fiscal and monetary policy in commonwealth-state relations is typified by vagueness, uncertainty and a lack of direction. To this day we still do not know what to do about it. We do not know what the Government proposes to reform this process. The Premier has told me and the people of this State on many occasions that it must be fixed, it is hurting us and we are getting a bad deal! What is the solution? I am happy to discuss it and be open-minded about it. However, I am not happy to allow this double-standard nonsense to continue. It is about time we addressed the issue upfront and stopped mucking around.

Hon E.J. Charlton: The first thing is to change the taxation system.

Hon JOHN HALDEN: We agree on that.

Hon E.J. Charlton: It seems that the Federal Government, besides not wanting to cut some of its activities, has a reducing tax base. It says the black cash market is growing all the time.

Hon JOHN HALDEN: That is more than likely. The Minister is right. We must look at our taxation base. What is the Government's proposal for that area? Let us have that debate in here and in the community so that we know

what we are about and the Government knows what the community thinks. Will we have a state income tax and a state consumption tax? Let us put them on the agenda. Will we go to some other forms of taxes and charges? It is also incumbent upon the Government to tell us what taxes will drop off or be diminished and what will be the benefits from that. The Government has told us a hundred times how difficult it is for business. It has an opportunity to provide us with a package that we can openly and honestly discuss with the community. This Government has had four years and is going into its fifth year in office and it still does not know the details. I have heard the bleatings, clichés and nonsense from members opposite, but there have been no results - of course, I must be referring to the Premier!

The taxation base of both the Federal and State Governments must be reviewed. It is the subject for a long debate, and the sooner it starts, the better. There is some commonality between the States, and the first thing they should recognise is the need for specific purpose grants to be freed up. The States must be given more latitude in how they spend their money. In 1993-94 - I presume the situation has become worse - the specific purpose grants made up 54.8 per cent of the total commonwealth funds allocated to the States. The figure has increased significantly since the first grants in about 1915. I understand that the first specific grant came to Western Australia for road construction.

Whatever amount this State is receiving from the Federal Government - I think it is \$3b - half of it is a tied grant and the Commonwealth tells the State how it is to be spent. If the State had a greater degree of independence in how it wished to spend the total pool of specific purpose grants, it would be much better off. The Commonwealth's argument is that basically it cannot trust the States. There is a litany of examples of why it could not trust the Bjelke-Petersen Government in Queensland with how it spent its money. It either spent it in the wrong area or chose not to spend it.

Hon E.J. Charlton: It is a State which has enjoyed the best financial position of any State in Australia.

Hon JOHN HALDEN: That is true.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT (Hon Derrick Tomlinson): Order! That is the fourth time the member has agreed with the Minister. The member should put an end to that sort of thing.

Hon JOHN HALDEN: I will endeavour to do that.

Basically, the Commonwealth is saying that the States cannot be trusted with how they spend the specific grants. I agree with members opposite that this State is independent and that if any party in government makes a mistake and does not spend the grant the way the electors believe it should be spent, it faces the ultimate arbiter; that is, the voters. That happens once every four years, and the voters will ultimately make the Government accountable. If it has acted stupidly, naively or improperly, they will hold it accountable. On the other hand, they will reward the Government if it has behaved properly. However, the voters will demand that the Government behave in a reasonable fashion and not succumb to excesses. The Commonwealth will eventually have to accept that the States have a degree of maturity. For the fifth time I will agree with the Minister for Transport, because what he said is true; that is, the Commonwealth has not been cutting its public sector funding to the same extent it has been cutting the States' funding. It has cut funding in all sorts of bizarre ways. It is symptomatic of the paternalism of the process through which the States go. It has been described as similar to children asking for their pocket money. The posturing by the States and the nonsense that has taken place throughout the last century must stop sooner rather than later. The States must stop blaming somebody else for the problems they face and fix the problems. The States have not made much of a fist of it in the last century. In fact, they have made a mess of it.

Hon E.J. Charlton: We have suggested that the States get together and come up with a process of changing the way the financial system works in this nation.

Hon JOHN HALDEN: For the sixth time, I concede this Government has done that. However, the Opposition and the broader community want to know what the proposition is. The commonwealth-state financial history has been dominated by the States getting together and coming up with a paper. They never agree on one issue, because there are always winners and losers. The Commonwealth picks them off one by one and at the end of the day no progress is made.

Hon E.J. Charlton: That is right.

Hon JOHN HALDEN: The community must be involved in this debate. It must be made aware of the arguments and what the benefits will be. The business community, the taxpayers and the families want to know what the system will mean to them. While the States continue to hold meetings in back rooms to deal with complex issues to work out how much each State will receive from the Commonwealth and how the States can tinker with the formula, the game is being lost. In essence, there will not be a winner because the States are in a vulnerable position. They have been in that position because they got themselves there, in large measure.

Hon E.J. Charlton: It is not very far away because the nation will not survive financially if it continues this way. This State and other States cannot continue to take the cuts the Federal Government is forcing on them.

Hon JOHN HALDEN: I agree with the Minister for the seventh time. Since 1986 the figures indicate that in financial assistance to the States, excluding capital, they are \$3b worse off. Western Australia, over that time, has been \$300m worse off. It is an enormous amount of money and is approximately 5 per cent of the State's current Budget. That money has had to be found from other sources and I know from where it has come. One has only to look at the state Budget to find that out.

The situation must be given careful consideration because, at the end of the day, this State's survival will come not from the political process, but from economics. Basically, the States are mendicant States and are dependent on our Rome. The States go cap in hand to the Federal Government to get what money they can. The process is not good for this State, but it could be a lot worse. I said earlier that the per capita arrangements work in favour of this State. This State receives the compensatory competition policy funding, which is not as spectacular as the per capita grants. This State's relative position is not as bad as that of other States. This State is doing okay today, but it could be on the other side of the equation tomorrow. The States do not put forward a united position because they are too worried about being \$2m better off today. They do not know what the future holds - it is one of uncertainty.

I put it to Hon Eric Charlton, as a Minister of the Crown, that the State has had to cope with some significant reductions in commonwealth financial assistance grants. Western Australia was fortunate that this last round of cuts was in a time of significant economic activity. If those cuts had been asked of the State in a downturn, we would be seriously up the creek without a paddle. We would have had no plan available to us to manage the State's economy without savage cuts everywhere.

Hon E.J. Charlton: Since we have been in government, this has been the most difficult year we have experienced to deliver services to the people of Western Australia.

Hon JOHN HALDEN: I can imagine why, and I will be interested to see the budgetary figures. One can read the Chamber of Commerce and Industry's report on the economy and the areas that are down, such as the real estate market - from where the Government gains tax - and the retail sector, which is generally down, so money is lost there. That is with the State's growth at 4.2 per cent, which is down from 6 per cent and 8.25 per cent in the previous years. If we had 2 per cent or nil growth, the State would have an enormous problem. The problem can be resolved by some consistency in commonwealth-state financial relations. We cannot have the situation that occurred last year, where the Commonwealth said, "We have a black hole and you must pay for it." I do not know if there was a black hole, but that was the argument used, and the States had to pay for it. That is an enormous and continuing impost on the State. The arrangement is for the loss of \$1.5b over three years. Until such time as we can rectify this problem, and work out a long term solution, the States will continue to bleed. There will be no security for Governments or constituents, because there will be no continuity or guarantee of ongoing services. That is not only bad politics, but also the most bizarre form of sound economic management of which I have heard. It should not continue. This debate must be opened up, so that people can see who will be the winners and losers.

I return to the issue of duplication. A survey of State Governments and the areas of overlap they see between the States and the Commonwealth shows a large number of areas including health, community welfare, home and community care, child health, income support, ethnic employment, English as a second language, isolated patients' travel and accommodation assistance, disabled persons, vaccinations, pharmaceuticals, residential care, repatriations, pathology laboratories, employment, education - primary, secondary, TAFE, and tertiary - Aboriginal affairs, resources and the environment, occupational health and safety, housing, agriculture, arts, roads and transport, local government, trade promotion, tourism, sports and recreation, legal aid, industrial relations, company securities, consumer affairs, and exploration development and environmental legislation.

Hon Bob Thomas: It is everything.

Hon JOHN HALDEN: Basically, there is an overlap with everything that opens and shuts. We will have to work that out. The annual cost of that duplication must be billions of dollars. I have heard the Minister for Transport complain about it. He is right to complain. I have not heard him come up with a solution or a process to achieve a solution. Where is the Government's agenda for reform? The Government has a responsibility. Members opposite told us that was our responsibility when we were in government. They said they would fix it if they were elected. They have been in government for four years. When there was a Labor Federal Government in Canberra members opposite whinged, screamed and yelled and told us what was wrong. Members opposite are now a lot quieter because their mates are in Canberra.

Hon E.J. Charlton: I do not agree with that. I do not think anything has changed in Canberra.

Hon JOHN HALDEN: I think the Minister is right; that is the ninth time!

It is now incumbent upon the Government to bring forward its agenda for reform in this area, and a positive suggestion that can be debated in the broader community in this State or across the country. To date members opposite have postured, whined and whinged and continued to play the centuries old game. They must do better, and we should debate the issue.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Hon Bob Thomas.

House adjourned at 10.25 pm

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**HEALTH - DEPARTMENT***Services and Contracts - Cost*

40. Hon JOHN HALDEN to the Minister for Finance representing the Minister for Health:

- (1) The cost of services and contracts for the Health Department increased from \$22.744m in 1994/95 to \$45.104m in 1995/96. What was the reason for this increase?
- (2) What, as of 1 March 1997, is the outlay for services and contracts of the Health Department?

Hon MAX EVANS replied:

The Minister for Health has provided the following reply -

It is noted that the figures which are the subject of this question have been taken from the 1995-96 annual report of the Health Department. It is important to highlight that this report is prepared in accordance with Treasurer's Instruction 1101A and as such does not include specific hospital information. The report is framed around "controlled" and "administered" expenditure/revenue with the "controlled" component relating to departmental cost centres funded from consolidated fund. "Administered" information relates predominantly to hospital type expenditure but the detail is at a macro cash level. Each hospital prepares its own accrual based annual report.

- (1) The increase from \$22.744m to \$45.104m for the services and contracts item between the 1994-95 and 1995-96 financial years is as a result of a refinement in the department's interpretation of the accounting standards. During 1995-96 several cost centres within the department which had previously been classified as "administered" were reviewed in conjunction with the Office of the Auditor General and reclassified as "controlled" cost centres in accordance with Treasurer's Instruction 1101A and Australian Accounting Standard AAS29. 1994-95 was the first year of reporting on an accrual basis and these adjustments were as a result of a "fine tuning" process. This change accounts for \$19.322m.
- (2) An accrual figure, comparable with the published report data, is not available for 1 March 1997. As a result of devolved accounting systems, this level of information is consolidated in corporate office for the annual reporting process.

HEALTH - HOSPITAL FUND*Cost Overruns*

41. Hon JOHN HALDEN to the Minister for Finance representing the Minister for Health:

- (1) Is the contribution to the hospital fund likely to require additional revenue above the budgeted estimate this year as a result of unbudgeted cost overruns by providers of health services?
- (2) If yes, what is the estimated revenue required by 30 June 1997?

Hon MAX EVANS replied:

The Minister for Health has provided the following reply -

Health has recently been granted \$11m in supplementary funding; however, due to the fact that this amount was covered by revenue, there was a neutral effect on the consolidated fund. Considerable planning has taken place within Health to manage within the 1996-97 funding allocation. As part of this process, productivity improvements have been developed which have contributed towards an offset of activity increases.

HEALTH - HOSPITAL FUND*Revenue*

42. Hon JOHN HALDEN to the Minister for Finance representing the Minister for Health:

- (1) Is the contribution to the Hospital Fund likely to require additional revenue above the budgeted estimate this year as a result of higher than budgeted activity increase?
- (2) If yes, what is the estimated revenue required by 30 June 1997?

Hon MAX EVANS replied:

The Minister for Health has provided the following reply -

Health has recently been granted \$11m in supplementary funding; however, due to the fact that this amount was covered by revenue, there was a neutral effect on the consolidated fund. Considerable planning has taken place within Health to manage within the 1996-97 funding allocation. As part of this process, productivity improvements have been developed which have contributed towards an offset of activity increases.

HEALTH - DEPARTMENT

Legal Fees

77. Hon JOHN HALDEN to the Minister for Finance representing the Minister for Health:

The Health Department has incurred an estimated \$1.6m expenditure for legal fees in 1996/97. What is the reason for this unanticipated expenditure?

Hon MAX EVANS replied:

The Minister for Health has provided the following reply -

As a result of the reference to "unanticipated expenditure", it is assumed that the context of this question is framed around "legal settlements" rather than legal fees. Earlier this year, provision was made in Treasury documents for a legal settlement related to Royal Perth Hospital, which was expected to settle for \$1.6m. This is no longer applicable and the only legal settlement currently provided is for an amount of \$155 000.

COMMERCE AND TRADE - INDUSTRY INCENTIVE PAYMENTS

Expenditure

84. Hon JOHN HALDEN to the Leader of the House representing the Minister for Commerce and Trade:

- (1) Has there been an increase in industry incentives payments that were not announced in the 1996/97 Budget?
- (2) If yes, what is the estimated increased expenditure?

Hon N.F. MOORE replied:

The Minister for Commerce and Trade has provided the following reply -

- (1) Industry incentives payments are not usually included in budget estimates until details of assistance packages are finalised. Once known, payments for future years are included in budget estimates and, if incurred in the current year, are funded through supplementary allocations or agency savings. To date no payments, other than those announced in the 1996-97 Budget, have been made as industry incentives. Since the formulation of the 1996-97 Budget, Cabinet has approved, or finalised the structure of, industry incentive assistance packages for the following companies - Imtech Rubber, Nobel Merak Holdings, Joe White Maltings, Oceanfast Marine Group and National Jet Systems. However, these are still subject to final negotiation and performance requirements and no payment has yet been made. In the case of National Jet Systems, the incentive offer is to be withdrawn as the project is no longer proceeding.

All industry assistance packages over \$50 000 made under the investment incentives program must be approved by Cabinet and those above \$250 000 are announced by the Minister in Parliament. Additionally, a report is tabled annually in Parliament by the Minister giving information on all financial assistance to industry.

- (2) See (1) above.

HEALTH - DEPARTMENT

Commonwealth Funding

88. Hon JOHN HALDEN to the Minister for Finance representing the Minister for Health:

- (1) Is the Minister in a position to advise the House as to how much money the Health Department will received from Commonwealth specific purpose grants in 1996/97?
- (2) If yes, how much money will the department receive?
- (3) If no, when is this figure likely to be available?

Hon MAX EVANS replied:

The Minister for Finance has provided the following reply -

- (1) Yes.
- (2) The department is expecting commonwealth funding of \$604.024m for 1996-97; however, this estimate could still vary slightly. The estimate compares with the estimate of \$603.672m provided to the Legislative Council Estimates and Financial Operations Committee in response to questions on notice supplementary information for 14 October 1996. While there is little variation to the overall estimate, there is some variability to individual programs.
- (3) Not applicable.

GOVERNMENT CONTRACTS - BUILDING MANAGEMENT AUTHORITY

Cost of Functions

105. Hon JOHN HALDEN to the Minister for Finance representing the Minister for Works:

- (1) Has furniture purchase and warehousing formerly conducted by the Western Australian Building Management Authority been contracted out?
- (2) If so, when?
- (3) What is the estimated cost of this function to the Government in 1996/97, under the new contracting out system?
- (4) Are individual departments now responsible for any of the functions previously undertaken by the WABMA under this sub-program?
- (5) If yes, what departments and what responsibilities have they accepted?

Hon MAX EVANS replied:

The Minister for Works has provided the following reply -

- (1) No.
- (2)-(5) Not applicable.

COURTS - COLLOCATION

Contracts

112. Hon N.D. GRIFFITHS to the Minister for Finance representing the Minister for Works:

With respect to the Co-located Supreme and District Courts project referred to on page 20 of the 1995/96 Annual Report of the Western Australian Building Management Authority -

- (1) Have the briefs to Spowers Architects been completed?
- (2) If not, why not?
- (3) What is the cost to date of the briefs?

Hon MAX EVANS replied:

The Minister for Works has provided the following reply -

- (1) No.
- (2) The importance of this project has meant that extra time was dedicated to ensure that the needs and requirements of all stakeholders were met.
- (3) The accepted contract sum is \$298 500 of which \$238 500 has been incurred to date.

RECYCLING - RUBBER

Imtech Rubber Ltd

160. Hon J.A. SCOTT to the Leader of the House representing the Minister for Commerce and Trade:

- (1) Did the Government make an offer of assistance to Imtech Rubber Limited on 14 November 1996?

- (2) If yes, was this offer accepted?
- (3) Did the Government agree to phase out the land filling of scrap tyres suitable for processing under Stage 1 of Imtech's project?
- (4) If yes, has this been done?
- (5) Has Imtech commenced construction of Stage 1 of its rubber recycling facility?
- (6) If yes, when will it be in operation?
- (7) If no, why not?
- (8) How many people are employed by Imtech in its rubber recycling operation?

Hon N.F. MOORE replied:

The Minister for Commerce and Trade has provided the following reply -

- (1) Yes.
- (2) No. See (7) below.
- (3) The Government has put in place a process for the phasing out of land filling of scrap tyres in the Perth region to complement the possible development of Imtech's project.
- (4) See (2) and (3) above.
- (5)-(6) No.
- (7) The company has not been able to meet some of the conditions of support, and is in the process of re-negotiating some arrangements.
- (8) The project proposes to employ 13 people in stage 1 and a further 13 people in stage 2.

HEALTH - DEPARTMENT

Meetings - Contracts

184. Hon MARK NEVILL to the Minister for Finance representing the Minister for Health:

Further to question on notice 405 of 1996, which other groups or agencies does the Health Department bring to Perth to discuss contracts?

Hon MAX EVANS replied:

The Minister for Health has provided the following reply -

As stated in the answer to question on notice No 405 of 1996, the Health Department of Western Australia does not bring people to Perth solely to discuss contracts. The Health Department maintains ongoing contact with non-metropolitan organisations on health related issues. It does this through a variety of meetings held at different locations throughout the State, not only in Perth. The organisations and agencies involved include -

Non-government organisations based outside the metropolitan area
Community groups involved in health related issues

Meetings cover a broad range of health related issues, including health planning for the community and the development of health services. It would be incorrect to classify these meetings as being to discuss contracts; however, contracts may be discussed in the course of the business of meetings. Best value for money (for the Health Department and the other organisations) will influence the choice of location for the meetings.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

MINING - GOLD ROYALTY

Impact

74. Hon MARK NEVILL to the Minister for Mines:

- (1) Has the Minister requested his department to assess the impact of the proposed gold royalty on the industry?

- (2) If so, what was the outcome of that assessment?
- (3) In particular, what is the maximum royalty rate that has been used in any assessment?
- (4) What impact will the gold royalty have on direct employment in the industry, on employment elsewhere in the State and on the production of gold?

Hon N.F. MOORE replied:

- (1)-(4) No. I have not asked the Department of Minerals and Energy to give me an assessment of the impact of a gold royalty on the industry.

MINING - GOLD ROYALTY

Impact

75. Hon MARK NEVILL to the Minister for Mines:

Is the Minister intending to ask his department to seek to ascertain the impact the gold royalty will have on the gold industry in this State so that he is in a position to make a considered judgment on whether such a royalty should be brought in?

Hon N.F. MOORE replied:

I have already made a considered judgment. My views about a gold royalty are well known. The fact of the matter is that the Government has not made a decision about a gold royalty. As members will be aware, the matter is being assessed, but no decision has been made.

MINING - GOLD ROYALTY

Impact

76. Hon J.A. SCOTT to the Leader of the House representing the Minister for Resources Development:

This is a fairly similar question to the previous one, although it contains some differences.

- (1) Has the Government made any decision on the level of a resource tax to be applied to gold in Western Australia, irrespective of whether the Government decides to go ahead with this proposal?
- (2) What revenue will this return per annum to the State?
- (3) What percentage of this money will the Government return to the regions from which the gold is extracted?
- (4) How else will these royalties be spent to improve regional communities in Western Australia?
- (5) If royalties will not be allocated specifically to regional areas, where does the Government intend to allocate the money made from such a resource tax?

Hon N.F. MOORE: Mr President, there is some confusion concerning this question. Can the member indicate to whom he asked this question in writing, given that it has been directed to the Leader of the House representing the Minister for Resources Development and I have neither a question nor an answer of this nature. However, a question in writing has been asked of the Minister for Finance representing the Treasurer by Hon Jim Scott, which is the one that was read out. It is a little difficult for us to cope when the member asking the question does not know to what matter the question relates.

The PRESIDENT: Order! It is the responsibility of the member asking the question to check to whom he should direct the question. Members are supposed to take the questions to the Clerk, who will direct them about, firstly, whether the question has been correctly written and, secondly and more importantly, to whom the question should be directed. A question cannot be asked of one Minister with an expectation of getting an answer from a different Minister simply because that Minister picked up a member's mistake, if it was a mistake.

Hon J.A. SCOTT: I apologise, Mr President. However, as this question relates to resources I assumed it should be asked of the Minister for Resources Development.

Hon E.J. Charlton: When it was typed, it was addressed to the Treasurer.

Hon Peter Foss: It is a tax.

Hon J.A. SCOTT: This question is on the edge of the two areas.

The PRESIDENT: Order! Is the member directing the same question to the Leader of the House?

Hon J.A. SCOTT: Mr President, may I direct that question to the Minister for Finance representing the Treasurer?

The PRESIDENT: Order! I will allow the member to do that on this occasion, if the Minister for Finance has the answer.

Hon MAX EVANS replied:

I am glad the matter has been clarified and I thank the member for some notice of this question.

- (1) The Government is discussing with the gold industry a proposal under which a gold royalty would come into effect next year at a rate of 1.25 per cent, increasing to 2.5 per cent 18 months later.
- (2) The revenue from a gold royalty in a full year is estimated to be \$37m at the rate of 1.25 per cent, and \$74m at the rate of 2.5 per cent.
- (3)-(5) The Government is considering all expenditure areas in the context of its 1997-98 Budget, and those decisions are best left to be announced in the Budget.

ROADS - FREMANTLE BYPASS

Community Liaison Group

77. Hon TOM STEPHENS to the Minister for Transport:

- (1) Can the Minister list the names and contact addresses of the members of the community liaison group for the Fremantle eastern bypass and the organisations they represent?
- (2) How many persons nominated for these positions?
- (3) Who chose the members and what were the selection criteria?
- (4) Is the Minister confident this group is representative of the affected community?

Hon E.J. CHARLTON replied:

I thank the member for some notice of this question.

- (1) The membership comprises Gil Garter; Bryn Davis; Reuben Filsell; Logan Howlett; Hilary Johnston; Trevor Knowles; Graham Mackie; Les Moyle; Jim O'Neill, who was replaced by Rory MacTiernan; Bob Pokrant; Peter Schuman; Andrew Sullivan; and Alex Bajada.
- (2) Thirteen people nominated for these positions.
- (3) The members were chosen by ERM Mitchell McCotter Pty Ltd in consultation with Main Roads Western Australia. The selection criteria were not used as all 13 were accepted.
- (4) Yes.

DIETRICH FUNDING - APPLICATIONS

78. Hon N.D. GRIFFITHS to the Attorney General:

- (1) How many applications for Dietrich funding have been received by the Attorney General since 1 July 1996?
- (2) How many have been rejected?
- (3) How many have been granted?
- (4) What is the budgeted cost of those granted applications?
- (5) How many applications are yet to be processed?
- (6) What allocation has been made in this year's Budget for Dietrich funding?

Hon PETER FOSS replied:

I thank the member for some notice of this question.

- (1) Four applications have been received.
- (2) One has been referred to the Commonwealth.

- (3) Two have been granted.
- (4) The budgeted cost is \$162 750.
- (5) One application is yet to be processed.
- (6) Treasury advises that as these are individual ex gratia payments no budgetary provision is made.

DIETRICH FUNDING - APPLICATIONS

79. **Hon N.D. GRIFFITHS to the Attorney General:**

- (1) Can the Attorney General confirm that Anastasis Darcy Papas has applied to the State for Dietrich funding and that the funding has been refused?
- (2) Can the Attorney General confirm that the gentleman concerned is bankrupt?
- (3) Is the Attorney General aware that the federal Attorney General, Daryl Williams, has refused Dietrich funding to Mr Papas?
- (4) Is it the case that although the prosecution is being undertaken by the Federal Director of Public Prosecutions, breaches of State law are alleged?
- (5) Is the Attorney General aware that the matter is due to come before the District Court on 19 May this year?
- (6) Irrespective of the view of the federal Attorney General, can our Attorney General assure the House that funding will be provided so that Mr Papas can be properly tried on the matters alleged against him?

Hon PETER FOSS replied:

- (1) The case against Mr Papas has been referred to the federal Attorney General.
- (2) Yes; I believe he is bankrupt.
- (3) I was not aware that he had been refused by the Commonwealth.
- (4) I am aware that it involves state law, but it is a commonwealth prosecution as it is an area where the Commonwealth has taken over responsibility.
- (5) I cannot remember the precise date when the matter will come on for trial.
- (6) No.

People must understand this: At a time when the Commonwealth is seeking to cut legal aid on the basis of a matter being a state matter or a commonwealth matter, it is certainly not the intention of this Government to take over what we regard as a clear responsibility of the Commonwealth not only to fund the prosecutions for which it has taken the responsibility for bringing but also, if it is necessary, to meet its Dietrich obligations. That has been accepted by the Commonwealth as being a commonwealth matter. In discussions with the federal Attorney General he has made it quite clear that he regards Dietrich applications, where the Federal Government is bringing the prosecution, irrespective of the law under which it is brought, to be its responsibility and therefore a commonwealth matter.

The States are in no position to fund the commonwealth prosecution, which is virtually the case. I regard the Dietrich case and the obligation to provide money to defend it as an obligation of the government bringing a prosecution. The last body in this world I see myself providing funds to is the Federal Government in order to meet its responsibilities for the prosecutions that it must bring. Whether it is a state law that the Commonwealth is using to bring its prosecution or not, it is its responsibility and it is on the head of the federal Attorney General if he decides his prosecutions will fall in a heap because he is not prepared to put up the money. I certainly do not believe this State should subsidise the Commonwealth on anything.

PLANNING - APPEALS

Former Minister

80. **Hon J.A. COWDELL to the Attorney General representing the Minister for Planning:**

- (1) Will the Minister table details and supporting documents of all ministerial appeal decisions made by the former Minister for Planning, Richard Lewis, between the date of the commencement of the election and the swearing-in of the new Ministry?

- (2) Will he include all the recommendations of the Town Planning Appeal Committee to the former Minister?

Hon PETER FOSS replied:

- (1)-(2) The matter is still being considered by the Minister I represent in this Chamber. When I have an indication from that Minister, I will advise the House.

TOURISM - ELLE CAMPAIGN

Butler

81. Hon TOM STEPHENS to the Minister for Tourism:

- (1) Did the WA taxpayer pay for the services of the butler known as Brook who was deployed during the visit to WA of Ms Elle Macpherson?
- (2) If so, what was the total cost - including transport, travel and accommodation etc - to the taxpayer of Brook's involvement in this visit?

Hon N.F. MOORE replied:

I have yet to receive an answer to that question so I ask the member to place it on notice or to ask it tomorrow.

HOSPITALS - MANDURAH

Ownership

82. Hon J.A. COWDELL to the Minister representing the Minister for Health:

- (1) Can the Minister confirm that a private operator has received state and commonwealth approval to build a pharmacy on the Mandurah hospital site?
- (2) If yes, can the Minister confirm that the site of the Mandurah hospital is owned by the Government?
- (3) Can the Minister also confirm that the proposed new hospital will be paid for and owned by the Government?
- (4) Can the Minister confirm that as of today there is no contract with a private contractor to operate and manage the proposed new hospital?
- (5) Did the Government call for expressions of interest or tenders for a pharmacy facility?
- (6) If no to (5), can the Minister explain how a privately owned facility has proceeded to seek state and commonwealth approvals to operate on this site?

Hon MAX EVANS replied:

I thank the member for some notice of this question.

- (1) No.
- (2)-(6) Not applicable. However, there is a block adjacent to the Mandurah hospital site, which I am informed has been zoned for a medical centre for some time. I am also informed that the owners have planning permission submissions currently before the City of Mandurah to build a medical centre and a dispensary. This adjacent block is not part of the hospital site.

TOURISM - ELLE CAMPAIGN

Costs

83. Hon TOM STEPHENS to the Minister for Tourism:

- (1) Did the State Government cover any of the costs associated with the November 1996 visit to Perth by John Harvey of the Elle Racing syndicate?
- (2) If so, how much did this visit cost the Western Australian taxpayer?
- (3) What did these costs include?
- (4) Did the costs include accommodation at the Duxton Hotel in Perth?

Hon N.F. MOORE replied:

I thank the member for some notice of this question.

- (1) The Western Australian Tourism Commission did not meet with Mr Harvey in November; however, Mr Harvey visited on 3 and 4 December 1996.
- (2) An amount of \$475.40.
- (3) On 3 December 1996: Lunch at the Oriel cafe with John Harvey and Simon Walsh, General Manager, WATC National Sales and Marketing Department, to discuss the involvement of Elle Macpherson in the national tourism advertising campaign - \$43. On 3 December 1996: Dinner at Plantations Estate cafe with John Harvey, Shane Crockett, Chief Executive Officer of the WATC, Linda Wayman, General Manager of EventsCorp, and Beverley Ward, Project Manager of Whitbread round the world yacht race - \$155.80.

On 4 December 1996: Dinner at Matilda Bay Restaurant with John Harvey, Simon Walsh, Jo Walsh, Beverley Ward, Jim Ward and Anne-Maree Ferguson, General Manager of the Perth Convention and Incentive Department. Meeting to discuss the implementation of the Brand WA initiatives - \$276.60.
- (4) Mr Harvey stayed at the Duxton Hotel at his own expense. Mr Harvey also met his own costs for airfares, transport and associated costs.

PRISONS - PRISONERS

*Impact of Legislation***84. Hon JOHN HALDEN to the Attorney General:**

- (1) What has been the impact on the State's prison population since the proclamation of the Criminal Code Amendment Act (No 2)?
- (2) Has the Attorney taken advice from his department as to the cost implications to the State of the Act over the next five years?
- (3) Has the Attorney received any other advice as to the impact on bed numbers required in Western Australian prisons and/or the costs that must be met by the State as a result of the Criminal Code Amendment Act (No 2) being proclaimed?
- (4) If yes, from whom and what was the advice?

Hon PETER FOSS replied:

- (1) Five persons maximum. This is the number of people who fall within the provisions of that Act but some may have been gaoled or detained in any event. I suspect the actual number is three.
- (2) Yes.
- (3) No, but the Ministry of Justice has consulted private consultants.
- (4) Australian Corrective Services. This is being finalised.

TOURISM - ELLE CAMPAIGN

*Costs***85. Hon TOM STEPHENS to the Minister for Tourism:**

- (1) Did the Western Australian taxpayer pay for the costs associated with the participation of Mr Stuart Cameron in the visit to Western Australia of Ms Elle Macpherson?
- (2) If so, what was the total of these costs?

Hon N.F. MOORE replied:

I do not have an answer to that question. I ask the member to place it on notice or ask it again tomorrow.

HEALTH - ALCOHOL AND DRUG AUTHORITY

Detoxification Service - Statistics

86. Hon KIM CHANCE to the Minister representing the Minister for Health:

- (1) How many clients were in the Alcohol and Drug Authority's residential detoxification program in 1993, 1994, 1995 and 1996?
- (2) Have any of the clients in that program been admitted to hospital or died while in the program?
- (3) If so, how many have died or were admitted to hospital in 1993, 1994, 1995 and 1996?

Hon MAX EVANS replied:

I thank the member for some notice of this question.

- (1) In 1992-93, 546; in 1993-94, 564; in 1994-95, 716; and in 1995-96, 873.
- (2) No deaths have been recorded in the residential detoxification program.
- (3) The residential detoxification program is a full hospital service with medical and nursing staff 24 hours a day. The only clients transferred to a teaching hospital would be those whose care needs could not be met due to other serious medical conditions. No figures are kept on such transfers.

ADOPTIONS - ACT

Review

87. Hon CHERYL DAVENPORT to the Minister representing the Minister for Family and Children's Services:

The Western Australian Adoption Act 1994 has been operating for two years, and under section 146 of the Act requires review.

- (1) Has the review commenced?
- (2) Who will conduct the review?
- (3) Will the Legislation Committee's report No 27 of September 1994 be referred to the review, as promised by former Minister Nicholls following the completion of the report?
- (4) How extensive will the review be?
- (5) When will the review conclude and report to the Government?

Hon E.J. CHARLTON replied:

I thank the member for some notice of this question.

- (1) Yes.
- (2) A ministerial approved committee of officers from Family and Children's Services and external members.
- (3) Yes.
- (4) It will include distribution of an issues paper to facilitate public comment and written submissions, and consultation with key organisations including adoption interest groups.
- (5) End of 1997.

MINING - MINERAL SANDS

Royalties

88. Hon J.A. SCOTT to the Minister for Mines:

- (1) What percentage level of royalties does the mineral sands industry pay to the State Government, and how has this altered in the last five years?

- (2) Which mineral sands mining companies in Western Australia have received a royalty holiday from the State Government?
- (3) What is the value of these forgone royalties for each company?
- (4) How long will these companies continue to receive their royalty holiday and what is the anticipated value of those forgone royalties?
- (5) Will the Government rule out further royalty holidays for the mineral sands mining companies in the future?

Hon N.F. MOORE replied:

I thank the member for some notice of this question.

- (1) Five per cent - it has not altered.
- (2) Tiwest joint venture and RGC Mineral Sands Limited received partial royalty relief for the period December 1993 to December 1994.
- (3)-(5) In view of the time factor, I ask the member to place these questions on notice.

PRISONS - PRISONERS

Impact of Legislation

89. Hon JOHN HALDEN to the Attorney General:

Previously in question time I asked whether the Attorney had taken advice from his department regarding the cost implications to the State over the forthcoming years of the Criminal Code Amendment Act (No 2). He responded yes. Will the Attorney now detail to me and the House those cost implications over the next five years?

Hon PETER FOSS replied:

I cannot do so offhand.

TOURISM - ELLE CAMPAIGN

Costs

90. Hon TOM STEPHENS to the Minister for Tourism:

- (1) From what program allocation did the WA Tourism Commission draw the funds to meet the total cost of the Elle Macpherson contract and visit?
- (2) Have any programs undertaken by the WATC had to be cut back or experience reduced funding allocations in order to meet the costs associated with the Elle Macpherson contract and visit?
- (3) If yes to (2), what programs are they and what funding have they lost?

Hon Peter Foss: We had better give them an invite next time!

Hon N.F. MOORE replied:

Indeed. I thank the member for some notice of this question.

- (1) The Macpherson contract is part of two Western Australian Tourism Commission strategies, being the increasing of consumer awareness of Western Australia as a tourist destination, in the national and international markets, and the securing of the Whitbread round the world yacht race. Both strategies form part of WATC program 1; that is, "Western Australia is promoted as an attractive tourist, event and convention destination."
- (2) No. The funds provided to the contract came from the funds allocated to the strategy above, and did not reduce or cut out other strategies.
- (3) Not applicable.

ROADS - SPEED LIMIT

40kmh

91. Hon CHERYL DAVENPORT to the Minister for Transport:

- (1) Is it true that the 40kmh speed limit program announced by the Minister prior to the commencement of the new school year will be completed in four years and not one year as stated by the Minister?
- (2) Is it also a fact that the four year program has an estimated cost of \$8m?
- (3) What selection criteria have been implemented to choose the schools?
- (4) Will the Minister table a list of schools which will have signs completed this year and in 1998?
- (5) If no to (4), why not?

Hon E.J. CHARLTON replied:

- (1)-(5) The program has been identified to apply to all schools in Western Australia, but it is to be implemented on a priority basis. The time involved will simply be determined by the time it takes for Main Roads to identify, in consultation with the schools around the State, the priority and the planning for the implementation of that proposal. It is a matter of not only determining simply the priority from a safety point of view, but also considering the types of road network appropriate to the particular schools. I cannot confirm that figure off the top of my head, but it is substantial. The program is being well received and has gained overwhelming support. We look forward to establishing those facilities as soon as humanly possible. They are to be carried out by people specially contracted for such work. They are to be applied in both city and country areas, and in both private and government schools.

TOURISM -

Funding

92. Hon TOM STEPHENS to the Minister for Tourism:

- (1) How many tourist bureaus operate in Western Australia?
- (2) How many of these are funded:
 - (a) partly; or
 - (b) in whole,
 by the Western Australian Tourism Commission?
- (3) What is the total allocation by the WATC in 1996-97 towards the operating costs of the tourist bureaus operating across WA?
- (4) Have any tourist bureaus recently closed, or are any currently faced with closure, because of the shortage of operating funds?
- (5) If yes to (4), which ones?

Hon N.F. MOORE replied:

I thank the member for some notice of this question.

- (1) The Western Australian Tourism Commission has 99 tourist bureaus and information centres currently listed on its database.
- (2)
 - (a) Of the 99 tourist bureaus and information centres, 40 have received part funding directly from the WA Tourism Commission in the 1996-97 financial year.
 - (b) No tourist bureaus or information centres are funded wholly by the WA Tourism Commission.
- (3) For the 1996-97 financial year, the Western Australian Tourism Commission paid a total of \$449 692 directly to the tourist bureaus. It should be noted that the WATC also supports regional tourism associations as part of its support for regional tourism. This combined support was \$935 493 in 1995-96, and increased to \$1 086 766 in 1996-97. It is proposed that this funding will be further increased in 1997-98 to \$1 249 700. As part of an industry cooperative review of regional funding conducted in 1996, it was agreed

to fund these organisations through the regional representative bodies and not directly through the tourist bureaus. The decision making process would be undertaken at a regional level to determine how much each bureau receives in a region. In addition to this direct support to regional tourism organisations, it is estimated that the Western Australian Tourism Commission expends \$4.865m in regional tourism marketing and development.

- (4)-(5) The WA Tourism Commission is unaware of any bureau or information centre which has closed or is faced with possible closure.

ROADS - HEAVY HAULAGE VEHICLES

Impact

93. Hon P. SULC to the Minister for Transport:

- (1) Does the Minister accept that increased heavy haulage has a detrimental effect on the roads, increasing the need for, and monitoring of, major and costly repairs to damaged surfaces, bridges, spillways and so on?
- (2) If not, what evidence can he produce to justify this position?
- (3) If yes to (1), has any research or analysis been undertaken to determine the extent of these increased costs?
- (4) Further, will the Minister table the results of this research?

Hon E.J. CHARLTON replied:

- (1)-(4) The operation of heavy haulage on our roadways is determined not by government or research, but by the task involved. The amounts of product which must be moved from one place to another is determined by community demand and community decisions in that regard. That situation applies whether the product be in the form of export products, which must go from their place of production to a port, or retail goods taken to retail outlets. Those decisions are made by the community as a whole.

This Government is about ensuring that the task is carried out in the most efficient manner. So, it has no bearing on the damage to the road. The road is damaged by the amount of product taken over it. The amount of product per vehicle is simply determined by the weight carried per axle. A truck with 50 axles has no more impact upon the road than a truck with two axles; so one would simply need 25 times as many vehicles on the road to carry the same amount of goods as one large vehicle, probably more. Consequently, of course, roads are damaged by their use, although it can be said that a road not used at all will also fall into disrepair as a result of weather conditions. It is important that the member acknowledge that fact.

I advise him to do some research into this issue rather than ask me to provide information to him on feasibility studies, which are unnecessary because the task involved is determined by the community or the people who want to move the product. The only other issue involved is whether produce is carried by road or rail, and that is a separate matter. This Government has attracted as much product as possible to the rail network. In fact, as the member's colleagues would be aware, the Government has allocated \$250m for the upgrade of our railway lines in an effort to attract that traffic. Also, the first of the 30 new locomotives will come off the assembly line in June - one a week will follow thereafter.

CULTURAL AFFAIRS - THEATRICAL PRODUCTIONS

Regional and Remote Communities

94. Hon TOM STEPHENS to the Minister for the Arts:

What steps will the Minister be taking to ensure that regional and remote communities will have the benefit of tours of, and access to, the marvellous productions seen in Perth of *The Merry-Go-Round in the Sea* and *Corrugation Road*?

Hon PETER FOSS replied:

Obviously the member is not aware of the substantial change that I made to regional and country funding. One of the first things that was made clear to me was that people in country areas want to control the decisions on funding for country arts. They also asked for an increase in the funding. I respect that attitude. It is not easy for people in Perth to make decisions about funding for country touring and so forth. I arranged for an amalgamation of the Arts Council of Western Australia and what was then called the Performing Arts Touring Information Office into what is now called Country Arts WA. I devolved all the funding that was provided for regional and community arts in the

country to Country Arts WA and arranged for another three-quarters of a million dollars to be provided for its use. As a result, the decision making on where things go and how money is provided is now a decision for that group of country people. It has worked extremely well. There has been an increase in the product going to country areas.

I have done other things to encourage that. Through incentive funding, we provide incentives to groups to tour; a dollar spent on country touring counts for two dollars. Also I have arranged for all major agencies to have a country touring obligation. It is the responsibility of country people to decide what money will be allocated for country people for *Corrugation Road* and *The Merry-Go-Round in the Sea*. I understand that one of the problems with *The Merry-Go-Round in the Sea* was that there was no sufficient commitment from the local community about how many nights it would run. I have not had a report on that; I am relying on discussions I have had with managers in that area. It is all very well for people to ask for that production to be shown in their region; however, they have to turn up and watch it. We can provide through Country Arts WA for it to get there.

However, the touring company must have some sort of guarantee on how many nights the production will be on. There is no point in its turning up for one night when for it to be viable it needs to be on for three or four nights. The local people who want the production have to commit to people turning up. My understanding with *The Merry-Go-Round in the Sea* was that there was a difficulty in getting the local people to commit, in the time frame in which the decision had to be made, to the number of days it would be shown. I am following that up. I heard that informally at my attendance at *The Merry-Go-Round in the Sea*.

The moneys and the incentives are available. However, in the end the decision on priorities must be made by country people. Generally speaking, country people appreciate that they now determine their priorities and how the money should be apportioned. The people in Country Arts WA are all country people.
