

## **Legislative Assembly**

Wednesday, 23 August 1995

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

### **PETITION - GOOD START PROGRAM**

**DR GALLOP** (Victoria Park - Deputy Leader of the Opposition) [11.02 am]: I present the following petition -

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

We, the undersigned residents of Western Australia oppose the "Good Start Program" and the new school entry age levels to be implemented by the year 2000. We note that there was no community consultation in a decision that will have a major impact on our children's education. We believe that children are ready to commence primary school in the year they turn six years of age and we are angry that what we have expected and planned for our children has been changed.

We request the House to urge the Minister for Education to abandon the plan to change the school entry age for children.

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

The petition bears 63 signatures and I certify that it conforms to the standing orders of the Legislative Assembly.

**The SPEAKER:** I direct that the petition be brought to the Table of the House.

A similar petition was presented by Mrs Henderson (21 signatures).

[See petition Nos 113 and 116.]

### **PETITION - MOTOR VEHICLE LICENCES, \$50 LEVY; FUEL PRICES**

**MR D.L. SMITH** (Mitchell) [11.03 am]: I present the following petition -

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

We, the undersigned; demand the \$50 Government debt levy on vehicle licences be abolished immediately, and fuel prices be reduced to the cost of fuel in the Eastern States.

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

The petition bears 705 signatures and I certify that it conforms to the standing orders of the Legislative Assembly.

**The SPEAKER:** I direct that the petition be brought to the Table of the House.

[See petition No 114.]

### **PETITION - NUCLEAR TESTING, NUCLEAR REACTORS, RADIOACTIVE WASTE**

**DR EDWARDS** (Maylands) [11.04 am]: I present the following petition -

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

We the undersigned, say

NO to nuclear testing by the French or anybody else  
NO to any nuclear reactor, large or small, and  
NO more radioactive waste from any source including other states or overseas  
Your petitioners therefore humbly pray that you will give this matter earnest consideration and your petitioners, as in duty bound, will ever pray.

The petition bears 366 signatures and I certify that it conforms to the standing orders of the Legislative Assembly.

The SPEAKER: I direct that the petition be brought to the Table of the House.

[See petition No 115.]

### **PETITION - TRADING HOURS DEREGULATION, MOTOR VEHICLE DEALERS**

**MRS ROBERTS** (Glendalough) [11.06 am]: I present the following petition -

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

We, the undersigned, employers and employees and family of motor vehicle dealers of Western Australia, object to the trading hour changes imposed on our industry by the Minister for Fair Trading, the Hon Peter Foss.

The extension of trading hours added to the \$50 car levy and the four cent fuel tax is having a detrimental effect on our lives and industry.

We urge Premier Richard Court to intervene to stop this extra burden on car dealers, their employees and families.

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

The petition bears 33 signatures and I certify that it conforms to the standing orders of the Legislative Assembly.

The SPEAKER: I direct that the petition be brought to the Table of the House.

[See petition No 117.]

### **BILLS (3) - INTRODUCTION AND FIRST READING**

1. Loan Bill
2. Land Tax Amendment Bill
3. Land Tax Assessment Amendment Bill (No 2)

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

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

#### *Second Reading - Budget Debate*

Resumed from 22 August.

**MR BROWN** (Morley) [11.13 am]: This Bill provides us with an opportunity to review the social policy of the Court coalition Government over the last 12 months. When looking at what this Government has done for social policy it is important to consider the activities of the Government and particularly those of the Minister for Family and Children's Services. It is also important that we put matters of social development in a proper economic context. Recently in an address to the National Governors Association the President of the United States of America, President Clinton, spoke of indicators that should be used to measure the health of the nation. He referred to two types of indicators. In referring first to economic indicators he said if one had looked at them alone, one would consider that the United States was travelling very safely. He referred

in particular to the reduction in the number of bankruptcies, to the number of new jobs and to the increasing number of millionaires in the United States. He painted a fairly rosy picture of the United States' economy. However, importantly he went further and said that one cannot get a measure of society simply by looking at economic factors alone. One must look at the social structure in which a society operates. He looked quite critically at what was happening in the United States. He indicated there were real concerns about the way in which the United States was developing socially. He referred to the fact that a significant proportion of the middle classes had received no real wage increases for the last 10 to 20 years. He referred to the burgeoning underclass. He said to his fellow Americans that if the social fabric of the country continued in the same way for the next 20 years Americans would no longer recognise the society in which they lived. Equally, it is important for us in this forum to look not only at the economic indicators but also the social indicators of the State, and particularly to look at how this coalition Government has endeavoured to meet the needs of the less powerful, less affluent and those less able to have their voices heard in the corridors of power.

It is important, as I said at the outset, to put this debate in an economic context. One might claim that certain cutbacks in social measures around the world are taking place in the context of growing deficits of Governments with all sorts of revenue problems and, therefore, that Governments must make hard decisions on expenditure and cut social and other programs. However, in Western Australia we hear statement after statement by the Premier and his Ministers of improvements in the Western Australian economy. We have seen a glossy brochure delivered to every householder in the State extolling the virtues of the coalition Government and claiming that with a balanced Budget - in fact a Budget now in surplus - the Government has done very well for the taxpayers and citizens of Western Australia. We must look past that economic view and examine what the Government is doing on the social front. Has this coalition Government been sharing the benefits of an improved economy and budget outlook with those who are in need; in other words, has it been making a conscious decision to say that the economy is growing and that with the benefits of the economic growth we will have improvements in the social services provided by the State Government? In the short time available today let us look to see just how the Government has performed.

We might look at the Government's social policy through a number of tests. These tests will apply to the Government particularly in the community development area. First, we might look at the test of partnership. To what degree has the Government been able to work in cooperation and collaboration with the community in seeking to improve the lot of those Western Australians who are the less affluent and powerful in our society? Has there been a true partnership with the community? Has there been a true partnership with non-government organisations? Second, we might look at inclusiveness. Has government decision-making sought to be inclusive and involve the community or has it been from the top down? We might look at the question of openness. To what degree has the Government been prepared to be open about its decisions, to share information with members of this House and even to provide accurate information to this House on social policy issues? We might look at the extent to which the Government is setting clear and precise directions in social policy. Is it setting them or do we find maladministration and that people are simply scratching their heads and not knowing which decision the Government is about to make today, tomorrow or the next day on the social policy front? We might look at the test of whether the Government is sensitive to the views and aspirations of the non-government sector, which provides at the coalface most of the social services in this State. How has the Government been sensitive, or has it been sensitive, to the needs of that sector? We might look at the test of whether the Government is driven by hard research or ideology. Is it driven by public opinion polls or hard research on social issues which set the direction the Government follows? We might look at whether a commitment has been demonstrated to people in need. If we apply those tests, and I will go through each one if time permits, we will see the Government has failed. It has not met any of those social tests. I will demonstrate where that failure is and where we can see it glaringly in the past 12 months.

I will refer particularly to partnership. When the Government came to power in February 1993 a number of non-government peak organisations were operating which basically provided an advocacy service on behalf of those who are most in need. The peak organisations provide information to non-government groups and in particular develop policy papers on the types of measures that may be happening in the community and that may be proposed by the Government, but which will impact on those in our community who can least afford it.

Peak non-government organisations can be a thorn in any Government's side. Their role is not to make decisions difficult for government, but to advocate and express the views of those who are most in need. If government seeks to ignore and sideline those views, it will not want to hear from peak non-government organisations. Most importantly, if government wishes to ride roughshod over the non-government sector, it would hope that those peak non-government organisations cease to exist; it would like them abolished altogether, particularly when a Government believes that it alone has all the answers on the social development front and does not need the views of the wider community.

What has happened on this front? Last year the Minister made a decision to stop funding all the peak non-government organisations in this State. Who are these people and from where do they come? The Western Australian Council of Social Service is a branch of the Australian Council of Social Service - a well recognised Australian peak organisation that speaks on behalf of the less powerful and affluent in our community and is funded by Labor Governments and conservative Governments in other States and federally. The Government in Western Australia in its wisdom decided that it would chop the funding to that group; it did not want to hear from the group. The Government has chopped funds also to the Family Support Association, the Bunbury Community Group, the Youth Affairs Council, the Youth Accommodation Coalition, the Women's Refuge Group and the Council to Homeless Persons. Each of these groups advocates and provides advice, research and assistance for non-government organisations delivering services in the field; yet the Government, at a time of expanding Budget receipts, at a time of an expanding economy, and at a time when the Premier and his Ministers acclaim the virtues of the Government, takes this step to cut the funds to these organisations which represent those most in need.

This is an ideological decision by the Government. Last year in a media release the Minister said that the Government wanted to examine the funds it provides to these non-government groups. That is fair enough. One can have no objection to a Minister deciding to have a proper examination of the allocation of funds. Last year the Minister engaged consultant Shane Solomon, whom the Minister described in his media release of 23 February 1994 as a person with extensive experience in both the health and community service industries who had worked for the Victorian Council of Social Service. In defining what Mr Solomon would do when he was engaged as a consultant the Minister said that the study he was undertaking would define the relationship between these bodies and the Government, establish what services the Government should purchase from them, and ensure the best value for the money spent. The Minister engaged this professional person with standing in the community and experience who then delivered a report. The report said that the services should continue to be funded; yet the Minister decided to cut the funding.

My comment about the Minister's decision to cut the funding needs to be explained because initially the Minister, on receipt of this report, said that the Government did not like the configuration of existing non-government peak organisations, so it wanted to change that configuration. It would provide \$100 000 to WACOSS and \$30 000 to three other peak groups in the areas of youth, family and homelessness. After some lobbying from the sector - because the \$30 000 was plucked out of the air without any examination - the Minister changed his mind and said that the Government would give \$100 000 to WACOSS and \$50 000 to each of the other agencies. The non-government sector campaigning on behalf of the peak organisations for a continuation of funding prevailed on the Minister and held several public meetings. As a result of that the Minister said that the Government would not do any of those things now, but would take some of the



funds it allocated to the non-government sector for the peak organisations and distribute them to all the non-government organisations. If the non-government organisations then wished to give money to the peaks, they could do so.

Half the amount that was formerly made available to the organisations to which I referred was distributed across the range of non-government organisations, some of which face financial difficulty. This is government decision making based not on a report or an examination of the merits of the case, but on ideology. The ideology is: Look for ways to shut up the non-government organisations - the peak groups - that speak out whenever the Government makes a decision they do not like. The Government has decided that the best way to silence them is to withdraw funding. Consequently, this ideological decision has been made, contrary to the interest of non-government groups but, more importantly, contrary to the interest of the people of Western Australian who do not have the capacity to walk in the corridors of power and influence government decision making.

Another aspect of community development is partnership and the need to work in cooperation with the community. Let us consider how the Government has gone working in partnership with the community. Throughout this year major meetings were held collectively by non-government organisations. At those meetings the organisations have gone close to passing no confidence motions in the Minister. It is a question of how those motions are interpreted; however, they were certainly condemnatory of the coalition Government. The Government has failed abysmally to work collaboratively with the non-government organisations. The churches are fairly careful about what they say. They do not often go public on matters that might be considered too political; they carefully moderate their language. Earlier this year - I have previously referred to this matter in this House - the churches condemned the Government. The coalition Government is not travelling well when the churches speak out about it; not one church, and not churches on the periphery, but the mainstream religious groups in this community. The Government got the non-government organisations and the churches offside. Who else could it possibly alienate?

It alienated its own employees. Throughout this year Department for Family and Children's Services employees have met and expressed motions of no confidence in the Minister and the Government: The Government has alienated them as well. In addition, this Government has reached no agreement with the Commonwealth Government on a range of issues involving the Commonwealth and the State. The Government is fighting with the non-government sector, the churches, its own employees, and the Commonwealth. This State Government would have us believe that it is the only one with the solution; that everyone else is wrong. When the Government has so many people telling it that it is wrong, it needs to listen. The problem is that the Government has been refusing to listen. In considering the important ingredient of partnership we find that the Government has not worked in partnership with the community; it has rejected working in partnership. We can see from the decisions which have been made - decisions made at the top, decisions based on ideology and decisions in which the community has not been involved - that no attempt has been made by the Government to get the community onside or to work collaboratively. It is simply decision-making from the top which is imposed on the community. It is wrong so far as social policy is concerned. What about Government openness? The first test of openness is what can be revealed in this place. As members of Parliament we have a better opportunity than others in the community to extract information from the Government in this place. If we cannot get the information through questions on notice or without notice, people in the community have no chance of getting any information.

I come now to secrecy and I refer members to the questions that opposition members have asked in this place and which have not been answered properly. These questions are not complex. For example, I asked the Minister for Community Development - question 663 of 1995 - for information about non-government organisations. The fourth part of my question asked what selection criteria would be used to select non-government organisations. The answer was that selection criteria would vary in accordance with the requirements of each service. I asked the same question on six occasions and I still have

not received an answer. The Minister either knows the answer and does not want to provide it or he does not know the answer and he has taken a course of action simply because he does not know what he will do.

Mr Nicholls: I gave the answer; that is, a selection criteria will vary in accordance with the services provided.

Mr BROWN: Why did the Minister not set out the principles on which that would be based? Of course it will vary; however, certain principles will apply. The Minister says that he wants to measure the outcomes, but there are certain principles on which it will be based. It is not difficult, if he knows what those principles are, to include them in the answer.

Mr Nicholls: The principles are, firstly, we identify the issue we want to address; secondly, we identify the outcome we want to achieve; and, thirdly, we call for expressions of interest allowing the agencies to put forward the best services they believe will provide that outcome.

Mr BROWN: I will come back to that. I refer now to question 1432 which reads as follows and is not a difficult question -

- (1) What are the names of the 32 non-government agencies that the Department for Community Development wrote to to advise the department had recommended against such agencies receiving further funding through the department?
- (2) What did each of these agencies receive through the Department for Community Development in the financial years -
  - (a) 1992-93;
  - (b) 1993-94;
  - (c) 1994-95?

I simply asked the Minister to give me the names of the organisations he wrote to, what he told them, and what funding was available in the financial years listed. It is not a complex question, but the answer is as follows -

- (1)-(2) The department contacted all agencies included in the mapping exercise and each agency was informed of the departmental recommendations in respect of future funding.

The Minister's answer completely ignored the question. It was a total rejection of my question and it appears the Minister did not want to answer it. I have asked the Minister numerous questions and I am not referring to an isolated case - most of my questions have been treated in the same manner. Question 1790 reads -

- (1) Is the Department for Community Development district mapping of funded services document publicly available?
- (2) If not, why not?

Taxpayers' money was used on the mapping exercise and the Minister's answer was that the information is not publicly available. Question 1851 reads -

- (1) Which non-government organisations have been advised their funding has been extended until the end of the 1995 calendar year?
- (2) How much will each organisation receive for the period between 1 July and 31 December 1995?

The Minister replied -

- (1)-(2) All agencies will be individually contacted regarding funding. A comprehensive outline of each agency's funding in each Department for Community Development district will be publicly available at the completion of the process.

That was not the answer to the question. My question sought information which is available, yet the Minister made a deliberate decision not to give me the information. Talk about thumbing one's nose at the Parliament and completely ignoring what the Royal Commission into Commercial Activities of Government and Other Matters said. This was a refusal by the Minister to provide the information to the Parliament. The same applies to question after question. If I went to the wall at the back of the Chamber I would get more information than I get from this Minister. No-one needs to be a genius to answer these questions - a grade 1 clerk could answer them. I was not asking for the most sophisticated answers in the world; I simply want the information. The Minister made a deliberate decision not to give me the information. It appears he wants to keep it from me. How can that be justified on the basis of what the Royal Commission into Commercial Activities of Government and Other Matters said and what was outlined in the Commission on Government's report which was tabled in this place yesterday. It is a complete abrogation of his responsibilities and he has no regard for those principles.

The deliberate attempt by this Government not to provide information breaches any openness criteria. It says the Opposition can ask questions, but it will not provide the answers.

How well has the Government done with respect to administration in this area? It said it would undertake a review of the non-government agencies and the services they provide. The new Minister wanted to do that and I support it. The subsequent report was a good one and the Minister put out a press release to indicate the path the Government was taking. I can understand that the Minister needed time to consider the report. The Minister set out a timetable for the implementation of that proposal in his media statement on 13 June 1994, which is 14 months ago. The statement reads -

Mr Nicholls said that changes would not be rushed, and to ensure that there was a smooth transition he had decided to maintain funding to all recurrent programs and agencies at the same level in 1994-95 as it had been in the current financial year -

The Minister indicated that all agencies would be funded for the current financial year. The Minister also said in his statement -

The timetable for this change was that by January 1995 the majority of agencies would be able to clearly identify the services they were providing and the resources needed for them, and by March 1995 there would be an agreed evaluation process for each service and its resources.

It is now August 1995 and very few government agencies are clear about what this Government wants them to deliver. It has not been clearly articulated and they do not know what funding will be provided by the Government for the services they provide. They have been in limbo for 14 months.

Mr Nicholls: Are you saying that we have undertaken the process too slowly?

Mr BROWN: The Minister set a timetable when he said that agencies would be given 12 months, but what happened? We have been trying to extract the information from him and his department about what people want. What are the criteria under which the Minister will measure outcomes, and precisely what are the services that the Minister wants? Will the Minister provide that information? I have talked to people in the field. The non-government sector is not a militant sector; it is pliable and malleable. People in the field want to know what the Government wants them to do, and until they know that it is difficult for them to plan for next year, and to prepare the staff and develop the programs. They do not know what the Government wants of them.

Mr Nicholls: All the agencies were informed of the department's requirements. They have been through the process of identifying the services that they provide, and have been informed where changes are recommended. They have not been informed of the evaluation process. The member for Morley is right - the process took longer than I would have liked to get to that point, but that is the priority we are pursuing at the moment.

**Mr BROWN:** If it were just a question of time, people would be relaxed about it. This process took two years in Victoria or South Australia.

**Mr Nicholls:** Victoria and South Australia did not follow this process.

**Mr BROWN:** Wherever it was; if the people know there will be a long time lag, they can endeavour to plan during that transition period, as best as anyone can plan during a transition. The difficulty is that targets have been set, and then they have been extended at the last moment. The second difficulty is that organisations receive letters from the Government advising them that the result of the mapping exercise is that the Government recognises that their service is absolutely spot on, and although the Government has not decided what it will do next year, it will fund them until 31 December this year.

**Mr Nicholls:** That is not true. The reason they have been funded is to allow the new funding to be agreed to. They have six months.

**Mr BROWN:** The Minister has advised a number of organisations that they will be funded until 31 December this year.

**Mr Nicholls:** That is to allow the signing of new contracts.

**Mr BROWN:** Whatever spin the Minister wants to put on it, at least he has said that. A week later some of these organisations received another letter saying, "Sorry about the letter we sent you last week, but the Government has had another change of heart and it has decided now to cut your funding."

**Mr Nicholls:** That is not true. The only reductions were in financial counselling funding. The recommendations from managers were that funding would be maintained, but now letters have gone out from the department reducing funding where agencies were delivering financial counselling and other services so that all financial counselling services receive the same level of funding.

**Mr BROWN:** I have seen letters to agencies on official departmental letterhead that one week advise them that they will be funded to 31 December this year, and the next week advise that funding will be either reduced or finished.

**Mr Nicholls:** I think that the first letter from the department says that it has recommended to the Minister that the funding be approved, and that they can expect the Minister to extend their funding to December. I concede that that wording is not appropriate.

**Mr BROWN:** The Minister has a big problem with communication, because the impression in those organisations is that the Minister, in particular, is making decisions on the run. Even some of the Minister's senior officers say to the non-government groups that they do not know what is happening. They say that they will not make decisions, because they have seen what happens when someone makes a decision that the Minister does not like. They do not want to try to second guess the Minister, and they say, "Don't ask us to make decisions. When a decision is made in the big silver office, we will tell you, and until then, we do not know. It is all a mystery to us." The Minister's senior officers cannot tell their employees or the non-government agencies anything; it is a mystery to them.

**Mr Nicholls:** That is a lot of nonsense.

**Mr BROWN:** I am glad the Minister said that. This process is a confusion. In a press release of November 1994 the Minister said that the problem with the delivery of services was that they had not been based on needs at the community level. The Minister stated that he would fix that by allowing district managers to assess the needs at the community level. That is fair enough, but when they make recommendations on those needs, and in many instances they support those financial counsellors, the Minister disregards those recommendations. On the one hand, the Minister says that he will devolve the authority to district managers who are close to the community. On the other hand, when their recommendations come back the Minister does not like those recommendations, and he takes away their funding.

Mr Nicholls interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order! It seems that the member for Morley has been happy to take the interjections from the Minister, which are extensive, but it now seems it is getting close to the point where the Minister is being disruptive. I do not say that in a serious way, but it is up to the member for Morley whether he will allow that sort of interjection to take place. I do not wish the speech of the member for Morley to be interrupted in such a way that he is handicapped.

Mr BROWN: Mr Speaker, I am happy to take some of the Minister's interjections.

The Minister must decide whether everything is perfect. If it is not going perfectly, the Minister must face up to that. The people in the field who come to see me are not mad militants, or people from the left wing of the union movement. They are people who are thoughtful, who are concerned about providing services to the community, and who are not motivated by profit. These people, in many instances, work for very modest incomes; many of them have considerable qualifications and expertise, and if they wished to use that in the corporate world they would make far more money than they do in the non-government sector. However, the fact is that their motivation is different.

Mr Nicholls: I concede that we need to look at our communications and to get the messages out to people at the grassroots level. I concede the member's point: We need to look at our communications in getting our information out.

Mr BROWN: When one is dealing with social development, one must deal with it across government. That has been a failure of this Government. The timing of this could not have been more coincidental. Earlier this year the Attorney General supported a crime prevention seminar that was conducted by the Crime Prevention Council. About 300 people attended that seminar. A number of those who attended were employed by the State Government and a number of people were from government funded organisations such as community development, justice, health or whatever. Crime prevention is like any other area; there are many points of view. At the end of that seminar, which lasted two days and which was attended by a broad spectrum of people, Professor Richard Harding said that a few things had come out of the seminar to which everyone had agreed. He said that agreement had been reached on one point at this seminar across all political parties, agencies and the like; that is, if we are to have a proper crime prevention strategy, there must be a government as a whole approach. It must be on the basis that each department or agency must consider the decisions it makes - social or otherwise - which potentially impact on the causes of crime or the reparative stance that must be adopted after crimes have been committed.

Thousands of dollars was spent on that conference. At the same time, the Minister was making a decision to remove the funding for the Youth Legal Service and Arrest Express. That was done not on the basis that these were not good services; everyone agrees that both provide a good service. People like those services and recognise the wonderful job they do. However, it was decided that the services should not be funded from a certain pot but should be funded from another pot; that is the funds should come not from Family and Children's Services, but from the Ministry of Justice. When the Attorney General is asked about the funding, she refers people to the Minister for Family and Children's Services. When the Minister is asked about the funding he indicates that it cannot be scooped from his pot and asks whether the Attorney General has any funds left in her pot. Her response is that she has spent her funds.

Mr Nicholls: You do not think I should have supported the recommendation from the district manager of Arrest Express?

Mr BROWN: Did the manager recommend that the funding be discontinued?

Mr Nicholls: Yes.

Mr BROWN: On the basis that it did not provide a good service?

Mr Nicholls: On the basis of other youth services having higher priority for funding. Arrest Express took up the appeal mechanism to put its view on why it should continue to

be funded, and I supported the recommendation from the manager. It seems you are arguing one thing and then another.

**Mr BROWN:** No, I am not. I understand the decision made by the Minister or his department - his latest comment is news to me - was primarily based on funds simply being in the wrong pots. I understand that is the case with the Youth Legal Service. The department has changed its focus to family and children's services, and as Arrest Express does not fit neatly into the box, it is out, as was the case with the Youth Legal Service.

**Mr Nicholls:** The district manager of Arrest Express made that recommendation. The Youth Legal Service funding decision was made because it essentially comes under the Attorney General's portfolio.

**Mr BROWN:** I do not think it would make any difference to those agencies whether their funding came from the Ministry of Justice or the Department for Family and Children's Services. They do not care and neither are they very interested in where the cheque comes from, as long as it is a Reserve Bank cheque for \$150 000 from the State Government with the Minister's or Attorney General's signature. Their only worry is when the cheque does not arrive.

**Mr Nicholls:** Other services which are the responsibility of the Department for Family and Children's Services were not funded because the funds were used in these areas. That is the dilemma we face.

**Mr BROWN:** I recognise that, but the problem can be dealt with in a number of ways. The first is by prevailing on the Minister's colleague before making that decision and telling the Attorney General that the funds should come from her pot. I understand that all Ministers, under whatever Government, have their own pots of money and if Ministers are able to fudge funds from another Minister's pot, that is all very well. Everyone understands that is the way it works. It gives the Minister more discretion to spend the funds in his pot in the way he prefers. All Ministers, under whatever Government, recognise that they will not be in office for very long - it may be one term, two terms or 10. Therefore, they like to do something during their term which they can look back on with pride. However, they cannot do that without funding, and they cannot get the funding if the Treasurer does not increase their budgets. Therefore, they look for ways of cutting expenses to find the money to do what they want to do.

**Mr Prince:** When will you address the question of why we must have a certain amount of cost cutting?

**Mr BROWN:** I have addressed that. The Premier and Treasurer has said it is a balanced Budget, the economy is improving, revenue is increasing, and the State is doing well. I do not know how much it costs to produce the big glossy brochures that the Premier sends to constituents across the State. I could not afford that cost from my meagre electorate allowance. The Premier has no problem finding the funds for that, or for travelling around in a helicopter surveying sewerage works and telling people what a wonderful job the Government is doing. The Premier has no problem spending \$500 000 on an attitudinal survey for political polling. However, he has a problem with spending money on social services, and giving money to the Minister for Family and Children's Services. He does not tell the Minister for Labour Relations to decrease the propaganda on workplace agreements, even though the Minister thinks they are sweet and are the ants' pants. The Treasurer does not tell the Minister for Labour Relations that it is not necessary to spend \$400 000 trying to convince his fellow Western Australians of the merits of workplace agreements. That money could be given to the Minister for Family and Children's Services for allocation to non-government organisations which help people in need. It does not help people at all to watch a government advertisement on the television. It does not put food on their tables. They do not feel better spiritually after watching such an advertisement.

**Mr Prince:** You have not answered the question about the reason we spend more on interest on state debt than we do on the Police Force. Where did that problem come from and how do you solve it?

Mr BROWN: All Governments around the world have debts.

Mr Prince: Not of the size of the debt in Western Australia.

Mr BROWN: If the Government were really concerned about the debt situation, it would not give exemptions to family trusts for forgone revenues. The Government has taken money from the family crisis program, which services people in need, and has given revenue to people with family trusts. It is a great transference of funds from the poor to the rich.

[The member's time expired.]

DR WATSON (Kenwick) [11.57 am]: I shall address my remarks in the main to the Disability Services budget. Earlier this year a report was made of a survey by the Western Australian Research Institute on Child Health. It was a unique survey which randomly sampled 1 462 families, involving 2 736 children. For the first time in Western Australia an attempt was made to estimate the extent of disability among children and the extent of disability in the general population of children between the ages of four and 16 years. Those findings demonstrated that, for reasons other than age, 1 per cent of children between the ages of four and 16 years need help dressing, washing, toileting and feeding. For reasons other than age, another 1 per cent of all children in that age group need help with transportation, and 1 per cent need supervision in getting around their neighbourhood. When those proportions are standardised, the researchers conclude that in practical terms 2.5 per cent of all Western Australian children have a disability. Besides that, the researchers say this obscures the 4 per cent who are limited in their activities and their ability to play with other children; the 8 per cent who are unable to take part in vigorous activities; and the 8 per cent of all our children who are limited in the type and amount of school work they can do because of physical and learning difficulties. Altogether - I know the Minister is aware of this - a substantial proportion of our children have some kind of limitation because of disability.

Mr Minson: What do those percentages add up to for children?

Dr WATSON: Overall, in terms of the current legislation, between 2.5 per cent and 5 per cent of Western Australian children have some form of disability. About 2.5 per cent of all children, for practical purposes, are considered to have a disability. I can certainly provide that information for the Minister.

Mr Minson: I was interested in what the percentages added up to, that is all.

Dr WATSON: Yes. It is a higher proportion than any commission papers have established.

Those children grow up. At the moment, a vigorous campaign by the Developmental Disability Council has brought to the attention of the community and Parliament that at least 400 people with a developmental disability urgently need accommodation away from their parents, and accommodation support. Once the commitment is made to fund that support, of course the Government must provide recurrent funding.

The Premier pledged "millions". I have with me a newspaper headline and a very tender photograph of the Premier talking to an old woman and her daughter who is in a wheelchair. The woman is 80, but I am not sure how old her disabled daughter is. The Premier must have been moved by that person's story. At the front of Parliament House, in April, he pledged millions for accommodation and support. What did people with developmental disabilities receive? They received \$2m in the Budget. The campaign for \$20m, which was estimated as needed to support people with developmental disabilities, fell on deaf ears. In the Budget papers a mere \$4.2m extra, making \$100m, has been allocated to the Disability Services Commission, compared with last year's Budget allocation of \$96m. That is an increase of 4.4 per cent - compared with a 9.3 per cent increase for Commerce and Trade and 13 per cent for Family and Children's Services - but, when we allow for consumer price index increases, it is a real increase of only 0.65 per cent. I did not work that out, an accountant did - an accountant whom I should think has more sympathy with the Minister's side of politics than with mine.

Mr Minson: There is an amount of money that went into the system very late which the member can talk about in the Estimates Committee.

Dr WATSON: The Minister will be able to explain that to the Estimates Committee. No doubt that money was from the Commonwealth rather than from the State.

Mr Minson: No, it was from the State.

Dr WATSON: But there is no indication or any hope of any further increase when one looks at the forward estimates. The \$3.5m which has been allocated directly to accommodation and community support is at the cost of other programs. That should not be allowed.

Without rubbing it in, but it is an important part of the debate, last year the Minister sought and was refused almost \$4m to address the most critical and immediate needs of people with disabilities. He was refused that money by his Cabinet colleagues. Those needs have not gone away. What has the Disability Services Commission received in this year's Budget? It has received the skinniest slice of the cake - 1.6 per cent; that is all. It is the same as last year - a very half-hearted response to needs. I have met the Minister at various community functions, and I have no doubt that he is in touch with many of the agencies that are telling him of their needs. My concern is for his lack of Cabinet support to meet those needs. After all, I have sat in Cabinet meetings, and one has to trade -

Mr Minson: I must interject on the member because that is not true. I got the first year of the five year plan fully funded.

Dr WATSON: I have a copy of the five year plan. I shall refer to it in a minute.

Mr Minson: The member does not have the update. I got the first year of the five year plan fully funded, with no help from the Commonwealth and with no help from Auntie Carmen - none at all.

Dr WATSON: The extra \$4.4m that has been allocated this year is not an instalment. There is no indication of that in the forward estimates. Unless the Minister can bring good news to the Estimates Committee in two weeks, we know that there will be a substantial increase in the five year plan next year as next year is a pre-election year. What will the Minister do next year? There will be a little bucket of money, a little bit more will be found, and more people will be accommodated. It is so cynical that the Minister should be thinking of the election.

Before I deal with accommodation needs and support and the way in which they are being addressed, I shall refer to the needs that the Minister has established should have been met in last year's Budget, when he said that there were schoolchildren without access to school therapy services and people without access to local area coordinators. It is true that, although the population of Western Australia is increasing by 2 per cent per annum, the population increase among people with disabilities, for a range of reasons that each of us has canvassed here, is increasing by 6 per cent. That means that an estimated 108 therapists are needed to provide school-age therapy services. How many will be provided this year? Only 17. Five thousand people need local area coordination services. What will they have this year? They will have only another 800, mostly funded through the Commonwealth. There is probably now a 10 year backlog in meeting need, for a range of reasons.

I cannot emphasise enough that, as my colleague the member for Morley said and as my colleague the member for Nollamara pointed out last night, the Budget priorities are wrong. For \$20m, the support needs of people with developmental disabilities could be addressed. As the Government is mad on levies, for the people of Western Australia that would mean 3¢ a day for 365 days a year, 25¢ a week, just over \$1 a month, or \$12.50 a year. Western Australians would be prepared to pay that, whereas they were not prepared to have imposed on them the so-called WA Inc levy.

Mr Minson interjected.

Dr WATSON: I am just making that suggestion; I am talking about priorities.



The papers that were provided to me from the Federal Minister's office about the Commonwealth-State Disability Agreement make it very clear that the Commonwealth has fulfilled its side of the contract. In June this year, just before the recess, the Minister answered a question on notice and confirmed that no new accommodation support services or respite services were provided by the Disability Services Commission in 1993-94 or in 1994-95. No state moneys went into accommodation support during those two financial years, but additional net funds were made available for the Disability Services Commission's accommodation and community funds support program.

That came out of commonwealth moneys. It is true that when these agreements were signed, the Commonwealth agreed to transfer to Western Australia a base amount of \$21m a year for accommodation and related services that had been administered by the Commonwealth before that agreement was signed. The Minister goes around the community and obfuscates in regard to this matter. The Minister is responsible for providing the budget for accommodation support. The Commonwealth is responsible for providing the budget for employment services.

Mr Minson: That is not true. Read the CSDA.

Dr WATSON: I have read it. I was at the first meeting in June 1993, at which the Minister said he is responsible for accommodation support. In addition to accommodation support, the need for respite services is critical. I released a report a few days ago about the needs of people with disabilities, which expresses their concerns about the cost of respite services.

I turn now to the application process for the \$2.13m that will be divided between 400 people. An amount of \$2.13m will provide accommodation support for 40 people with moderate disabilities. It must be provided and adjusted each year, because those people will need that support for the remainder of their lives, so it is recurrent funding. I took up these matters with the Chairman of the Disability Services Commission, and no doubt he told the Minister about that. The advertisements that were placed in daily and community newspapers invited submissions and provided workshop formats which people could attend in order to learn how best to make a successful application. Those funds will be made available to incorporated and sponsored organisations which act on behalf of people with disabilities and not direct to individuals. Not all the people who require accommodation support belong to an organisation, and individuals who require accommodation should be invited to apply.

My concern, and the concern of the organisations and individual carers, is that the Government will judge how many people need accommodation by the number of applications that are made through organisations. But the organisations will have already sifted through their clientele in order to determine their priorities and will have advised people of what their chances will be according to those priorities. Mr MacKinnon told me that he intended to approach Mr Lowe and the Minister about the concerns which I had taken up with him during the parliamentary recess, and that he would contact me, but as far as I am aware, that has not been addressed. Therefore, the numbers that will go to the Government after this round of submissions has been completed, which I think was Monday, will be an underestimate of the need.

My second concern is that during the recess, when I went to see Mr MacKinnon for the triannual meeting, I found that people with a psychiatric disability were excluded from applying for accommodation support, despite the fact that the people who are most in need - those who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless - will be given priority for funding. My research indicates that the board of the commission decided that -

Mr Minson: I will tell you the reason for that, because you want to mislead the House. The Disability Services Commission pays an amount of money to the Health Department so that it can provide that service.

Dr WATSON: Absolute nonsense. I have papers which demonstrate that the new commission, on which the Minister has placed four accountants, has decided to not support people with psychiatric disabilities because the Health Department has the carriage of that matter.

Mr Minson: That is true, and we have given just under \$1m to the Health Department for that matter.

Dr WATSON: That is not demonstrated in the Budget papers. No money has been provided. For that reason, I made a complaint to the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission, and I made it very clear in the drafting of that complaint that I did not want to jeopardise any decision that had been made or was to be made on behalf of any person with a developmental disability. However, people with psychiatric disabilities should have exactly the same access to this funding for accommodation support, particularly when it was stressed that priority would be given to people who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless. I think members will agree that that criterion would be most likely to apply to people with psychiatric disabilities.

I asked the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission to make an interim order about this matter before the closing date for submissions was reached, but it was unable to do that. I will be interested to know how many applications have been made on behalf of people with disabilities and whether those disabilities are developmental, physical or sensory. I know there will not be any applications from people with psychiatric disabilities. That is a shocking indictment, and I believe the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission will agree that I have a valid complaint. Of course, the commission is overworked in looking at discrimination in regard to disabled people.

I turn now to the five year plan, which arrived at my office in a plain brown envelope and had fallen off the back of a truck. Some of the assumptions on which the planning has been based bear no relationship to the needs of people. I was pleased to see that the writers of this plan acknowledged the achievements of the previous Government, something that this Minister never wants to do. The achievements of the former Authority for Intellectually Handicapped Persons and the Bureau of Disability Services are laid out here. Some of the ways in which savings are to be made are a cause of great concern for members on both sides of the House, and certainly for people with disabilities if they know about the way in which restructuring is to be approached in order to save money. The last outburst by the Minister is related to my interpretation of the way in which the achievements of the Disability Services Commission have been listed in this report, which was produced a year after the commission was established.

Mr Minson: That is not true. It was done much earlier.

Dr WATSON: It refers here to 11 months.

Mr Minson: What is the date on it?

Dr WATSON: The focus on savings has come from workplace agreements, competitive tendering, computation of allowances, leave restructuring, shift and part time work arrangements, reduction of work force numbers, transfer of services to the non-government sector, benchmarking of services, the utilisation of staff other than social trainers, and demarcation between award groups. The way in which this money is to be saved is by utilising staff other than registered nurses and social trainers to provide, as they say, care to clients in commission facilities.

Mr Minson interjected.

Dr WATSON: The Minister must abide by various disability services standards. The Minister has told me that.

Mr Minson: That is not the problem.

Dr WATSON: I cannot help seeing that a lot of the so-called new money is being eked away from the kind of structures that have provided a quality standard care for people in Western Australia with disabilities.

Mr Minson: If you reckon we have quality standards why did I inherit this mess?

Dr WATSON: I will refer to the five year plan. In the business strategy, in year one, \$2.13m was provided for accommodation backlog. That is what the Minister is asking for, and he is now saying this is an out of date report. Next year \$3.35m will provide

accommodation services for 139 people. The following year, the year after the election, it will provide no people with accommodation.

Mr Minson: Cabinet has not accepted that.

Dr WATSON: It is a very valuable document.

Dr Turnbull: I do not see how you can continue this debate without revealing the date of the document.

Dr WATSON: I do not think that the member for Collie was present when I spoke about that.

This morning we heard from my colleague about people in the community who are disadvantaged by poverty - poverty that has been made worse over the past two years because of the reduction in services and the propensity of the Government to charge a fee for service in a range of agencies. It has been drawn to my notice that in the report prepared for the former Minister for Community Development - a survey of Western Australian families, the title of which I cannot recall - families in poverty receive a quarter page mention within a comprehensive look at Western Australian families. I am sorry that the Minister has left the Chamber even though he has been so noisy this morning. I want to talk about people who have a disability -

Mr Minson: I am back!

Dr WATSON: Good. What shocked me on Monday when I read the report in *The West Australian* was that he is no better than his friends and colleagues, the Minister for Family and Children's Services and the Minister for Health. The Minister for Disability Services is not prepared to listen to people with disabilities. The newspaper report is headed "Minson rejects poverty claim" and reads -

Mr Minson said it could be that any disabled people on \$3-a-day food budget were either not getting appropriate benefits or had run up big debts.

"If somebody is genuinely trying to live on \$3 a day for food I'd love to hear from them," Mr Minson said.

I cannot believe that the Minister has been a Minister for two years and does not know better -

Mr Minson: I said that I would love to see those people so that I could help them. That was not printed. If anyone is in that situation he or she would probably not be tapping into the benefits available.

Dr WATSON: This woman probably is not.

Mr Minson: That should be made clear.

Dr WATSON: The reason that the survey was done was that in June last year, as the Minister for Disability Services and the Minister for Health each told me, serious contemplation was being given to charging people with disabilities for aids and equipment. I wanted the Government to establish a select committee of this House - similar to the one moved by the member for Victoria Park this morning - to examine how the charges are being made and to locate the inequities and disparities in the fees and charges. The people with disabilities persuaded me that that did not go far enough. Such a select committee should also examine the indirect costs of disabilities; the costs that go to maintaining wheelchair batteries overnight - the \$200 a year extra spent on electricity - the costs that people who have multiple sclerosis meet to maintain their air-conditioning systems because they must switch them on when the temperature is only 25 degrees; the costs that people with other forms of disability bear for heating systems; and the indirect costs of transport, which are huge.

It is a matter of history that I submitted a motion about August last year that has remained on the Notice Paper and has not been debated. Part of my distress about that is that the Minister has always said in this place, and when writing to agencies which have supported the need for such a select committee, that he is perfectly aware of the costs.

Not only that, on Monday he was reported as saying, "I know what the costs are of every disabled person in this State. We have that on computer."

Mr Minson: That is not what I said.

Dr WATSON: It is reported as what the Minister said.

Mr Minson: That is not even what the report says.

Dr WATSON: It states -

Mr Minson said the Disability Services Commission had on computer detailed budgets of every disabled person in WA and there was no need for any inquiry into the problem.

Clearly that is not possible. Even to suggest that it demonstrates a lack of ethical thinking. It is totally intrusive to think -

Mr Minson interjected.

Dr WATSON: This is my speech. The Minister has done the most unethical research through the Disability Services Commission -

Mr Minson: We have done a survey of costings on all disabilities.

Dr WATSON: The Minister had better write a letter to the newspaper and let it know that because people are concerned.

Mr Minson: No doubt you are stirring it up no end. We do not have budgets for people with disabilities. I will do that detailed costing -

The ACTING SPEAKER (Ms Warnock): Order! The member for Kenwick has indicated that she wishes to continue with her speech. The Minister knows very well, as we all do, that he will have an opportunity at another time to make the points that he is making now, and I ask him to do that.

Mr Minson: I just want to make sure that she tells the truth.

Dr WATSON: The House may be assured that I am telling the truth.

Mr Minson: Your version of it.

Dr WATSON: Shortly after 1981, the International Year of the Disabled, the commonwealth program of aids for disabled people scheme came into existence. It provided money to each state to be distributed to purchase various aids and equipment for people with disabilities and people leaving hospital. When that came to an end in 1991, a state Health Department task force recommended that a charge or hire fee for equipment be introduced. This State Labor Government did not take up the recommendation. Since that time those moneys have been part of Western Australia's public hospitals' operating budget. However, in 1993, not long after this Government came to office, we got the report of the Independent Commission to Review Public Sector Finances, the McCarrey report, and the hospitals got more flexibility in how they could deal with their budgets. One hospital was told that it could develop charges in one area and another was told that it could develop charges in a different area.

In 1993 the East Metropolitan Perth Service commissioned a review of patient assistance programs which found a wide variation of services provided across the region. The six hospitals in the East Metropolitan Region had various policies for charges for services including these: Two asked for a deposit for physiotherapy and occupational therapy items; one requested a donation, but did not make a charge, from the person using the equipment; one hospital was in the midst of developing a proposal for charging; one was selling some items; and the last was making no charge at all.

The review also examined practices in two other hospitals. To put it into square language, there are gross inequities in what hospitals provide to people with disabilities. In the review to which I have just referred, information was not sought about people who need prostheses, breasts, eyes and perhaps legs, or people who were leaving hospital who borrowed equipment for a short time to get them through their convalescence. In my

survey I was looking at what people were doing, people who are disabled who need continence aids, wheelchairs, splints and that kind of equipment.

In 1994 the Health Department floated the idea of a \$300 charge for aids and equipment and this has been confirmed by both the Minister for Health and the Minister for Disability Services. Community disquiet left the Ministers with no option but to put together an interdepartmental committee, a working party, which was established in 1994. The Minister for Health told me that the committee would report in May, then in June and then in August. I have done all of this research in six weeks, yet the Government has taken more than a year to report. The third term of reference of this interdepartmental committee is for it to develop a charging policy for equipment for disabled people in both the Health Department and the Disability Services Commission that is consistent in both portfolios and that retains the user-pays principle. This has McCarrey written all over it. It is bean counting and an ideological perspective of the Government.

To cut a long story short, because we could not get up a select committee in this House due to opposition to it by the Minister, I carried out my own survey. I got back 150 questionnaires as well as a lot of other information. In doing my library search that preceded this survey, I discovered that in the Westminster Parliament in 1970 - 25 years ago - a bipartisan committee was established that considered issues relating to disability services. Whenever disability services were raised, there was a vigorous debate and bipartisan support for it. Further, in 1970 a private member was able to get legislation through without dissent in either House. That is unthinkable here. It was my plan to achieve the same end with a disability services select committee.

Some things should not be polarised, particularly for people with disabilities. It would be nice to think that we were able to come to some agreement about not having a fee for service for things that disabled people need. People with a disability pay for that disability, directly and indirectly. The findings of this survey quite shocked me because I had not realised how poor some of these people are and the sacrifices that must be made. Too often the sacrifices include a decision whether to have food or to recharge a wheelchair. Too many people must make such a decision.

People with a whole range of disabilities have access to different services and different entitlements. There are disparities right across the board. I am concerned with the inequities in hospital entitlements, particularly for children's services. Children registered with Princess Margaret Hospital for Children, the Disability Services Commission, the school aged therapy services, the Spina Bifida Association of WA or the Cerebral Palsy Foundation would have different entitlements. They might have to go to three or four agencies to get that to which they are entitled. The costs are different. If a child is registered with the Disability Services Commission and needs a wheelchair, the parents pay \$1 500 towards it. If the child is registered with PMH, the wheelchair is provided free. Those inequities exist - and \$1 500 is not to be sneezed at.

Another range of inequities exists between disabled people living in the city and those in rural areas. I did not canvass the patient assisted travel scheme in the questionnaire; however, the issue came up time and again. Some people need to access specialist surgeons, physiotherapists and speech therapists many times a year. If they live in the country their carers must not only take a day off work to bring a child or a spouse to see these specialists in the city - people forgo a lot of income when they support someone with a disability - but also find accommodation in Perth, often in a hotel or motel, within which they can use a wheelchair which will support people with challenging behaviours or which will provide a bath for them. Those things do not come cheaply. However, the Minister for Health no doubt supported in Cabinet by the Minister for Disability Services is prepared to continue slashing into that very important scheme. There are centralised services in Perth for people with disabilities. If one has a kid with cerebral palsy or if someone has spina bifida, the specialists are in Perth. They are not in Bunbury, Geraldton or Kalgoorlie. People have no option but to go to Perth. I add my voice to that of the member for Victoria Park and say that it is out of the question to cut services and to charge people any more.

The report to which I have referred makes a number of recommendations about how the Government should be able to relieve the direct and indirect burdens of costs. If someone is on a disability support pension, that person is poor to start with. That person pays directly for disability and also pays indirectly. Some people need special foods. Some people obtain special medications for which there are no pharmaceutical benefits. They end up paying more for their medication and vitamin supplements than they pay for food. That is wrong and I want the House to know about it because those people are in everyone's constituency. Those are the kinds of issues that we should be debating in this House.

The report makes a number of commitments. The Leader of the Opposition and I have said that, while there are a number of options for improving financial support for people with disabilities, each has its own justification. However, the one option for which there is no justification is to do nothing.

I do not have time to talk about Beijing or the agenda for women which will be debated over the next three weeks in Beijing and its surrounds to set the agenda for the next 10 years for the women of the world. In so many ways, we are lucky in Australia. Labor Governments at federal and state levels have made enormous strides. I am pleased to say that Liberal Governments, mostly, have taken them up, but we still have a long way to go.

**DR TURNBULL (Collie) [12.42 pm]:** I would like to tell Parliament today about the crisis that is facing Western Australia in the availability of skilled workers. The shortage of skilled workers required to drive the development boom approaching Western Australia is very serious. That has been highlighted in the past few weeks by the Deputy Premier and Minister for Regional Development, Hendy Cowan, and by the Minister for Resources Development, Colin Barnett. Their analysis has been followed up and supported by the Chamber of Commerce and the Trades and Labor Council.

As we all know, Western Australia faces a very exciting time as so many developments are in the pipeline or starting. Projects in the north west are mainly centred around the oil and gas industries and the iron ore industry and include the new Port Hedland power station and the North West Shelf to Kalgoorlie pipeline. There is also a proposal for an iron ore reduction plant in the north west in Port Hedland under BHP.

Today, I want to consider projects in the south west. In mentioning some of those projects, I will refer to the publication by the South West Development Commission and to some of the projects which are committed as from 1 July 1995. With regard to coal, there is the Premier Mine under Western Collieries. A coal fired power station is to be built by Asea Brown Boveri Pty Ltd. A mineral sands project is being developed at Beenup by BHP. A timber pine log sawmill at Dardanup is being developed by Wespine Industries Pty Ltd. There is also a lithium carbonate plant at Greenbushes under Gwalia. In Bunbury, there is also the concrete gravity structure for the North West Shelf offshore platform.

With regard to the hospital development, some people might say that this project is not committed as at July 1995. Although the contractors have not been appointed, the hospital project is definitely committed. There is also the synthetic rutile expansion at Westralian Sands. We also have the Bunbury harbour city project, the Dunsborough lakes project and the Port Geographe project. With regard to projects under consideration, there is the eucalypt pulp and paper mill, the Worsley Alumina refinery expansion and the Ewington Mine development. There is also the silica sands development at Kemerton with Gwalia and a titanium dioxide project connected with SCM Chemicals. All those projects are definitely moving towards construction. Many of them have not yet started. However, as we know, construction of the concrete offshore platform has begun in Bunbury harbour.

**Mr C.J. Barnett:** They should be pouring the first concrete this week.

**Dr TURNBULL:** That is a great success, especially as they had quite a setback a few weeks ago when the area was flooded.

I draw the attention of the House to those projects today because of the shortage of skilled workers for all of them. Two years ago, the Collie Power Station Task Force began work again after having been put on hold for quite a few months. The task force has a set of objectives which are to maximise the benefits from employment, fabrication and purchase of materials for Collie, the south west and for Western Australia. The project has developed a three pronged strategy: To identify the skills required in respect of the construction of the power station; to identify the engineering firms in the region and in Western Australia which can take a substantial part in the fabrication of the requirements for the power station; and to disseminate widely the information that has been collected. The people to whom we will be targeting the information are the successful major and minor contractors on the projects; that is, those who secure the contracts on the project.

In order to achieve that task, the power station task force worked to achieve funding for a project officer. That project officer is Bob Spence and he is being supported by the Office of Labour Market Adjustment, a federal grant, and the departments of Employment Education and Training, Regional Development, Commerce and Trade, and Resources Development.

The work that Bob Spence set out to achieve has now been completed. We have very extensive and comprehensive lists of the skills that will be required and the people who can provide those skills. When OLMA, DEET, the Department of Resources Development and the Department for Commerce and Trade funded that position, it was not just to study the Collie power station. All the projects in the south west have been embraced. The dossier is very extensive and complete. We are now moving onto the second phase of our tasks and activity which we regard as essential for the power station and for other developments and that is to disseminate information and to develop the training programs which have been identified as being required.

The requirements in training are the crux of my speech today. We have identified the types of jobs that will be needed. We know that all the people who will take up those jobs will require training. It has been calculated that there will be a shortage of about 2 500 skilled tradespersons and workers in the south west. That will peak in about two years. Of those, 1 300 will be related to jobs like steel fixing, form work, concrete laying, rigging and so on. We must have training programs for those jobs.

I want to divide that into two section: Skilled workers and tradespersons. I want first to consider skilled workers. When it comes to the training of skilled workers, the Collie power station task force considered programs which could be implemented. The Stanwell power station in Queensland, which was completed and commissioned about a year ago, provided the most suitable program. During its construction Stanwell set up a program called the Stanwell skills development program. It comprised a coalition of people from places such as technical and further education and other skills training deliverers. It also involved the Queensland Construction Industry Training Council and the State Government's approved training organisations. The objects of that training program were, firstly, to draw up specific, targeted training programs; secondly, to place them on the construction site; and thirdly, to run the programs so that the construction workers could gain new skills to allow them to continue in employment with contractors throughout other phases of construction. The fourth important objective was to run the programs so that the workers could access them outside their work time but still be on site so that they could be trained where they could use their new skills within a few weeks or months. The programs were certificated under the Australian Industry Training Council programs. The Stanwell power station program worked extremely well. Stanwell is a reasonably isolated area in Queensland and the power station was able to employ many locally based people and develop their skills. It required the cooperation of both major and minor contractors.

I visited Tokyo in September last year to talk to Itochu Corporation which had not long joined Asea Brown Boveri Pty Ltd as the joint managers of the Collie power station construction consortium. I was pleased to find that both Itochu and ABB personnel were well conversant with and had worked at the Stanwell power station site. They

acknowledged the great advantage of that type of training program. The Stanwell training program resulted in a massive reduction in lost time from sickness and injury. The skills of more than 6 000 workers were enhanced which led to improvement in efficiency and productivity on site. It was also estimated that as much as \$30m in \$600m was saved, which represents an overall cost saving for the construction of the Stanwell power station of 0.5 per cent. Much of the savings resulted from fewer industrial problems, less absenteeism, improved efficiency, not relocating workers and maintaining continuity of employment by moving workers from one section to another. Those are significant factors.

That result at Stanwell is the same as the vision held by the Collie task force for the development of its training program. The task force will hold another meeting on Friday when it will announce the development of the consortium of training providers who will work in conjunction with the construction consortium at the Collie power station. It will comprise Skills Training South West and TAFE people from Collie and Bunbury. That group will design training programs relevant to their skill area and package and deliver the programs. The first of the programs will commence in about six weeks. It will be specifically targeted at not the Collie power station site, but steel fixers. Those skilled workers will be required on all projects in the south west. The object of the South West Development Commission, and the power station task force is to target skills development at people in the south west.

In the area of apprenticeship training and trades we have probably almost missed the boat. A skilled tradesman cannot be experienced in less than nine or 10 years. Following the time required for an apprenticeship a skilled tradesman needs at least five years' experience in the workplace. Western Australia faces a shortage of skilled labour. The Deputy Premier Hendy Cowan said, quite rightly, that he was very concerned about the potential shortage of those people and that the issue must be addressed. One way to address the problem is to ensure that people who travel from the Eastern States to work in the south west or in the north west bring their families and relocate to Western Australia rather than come as transient workers. The Government must seriously consider assisting relocation of families so that they become part of the Western Australian work force.

*Sitting suspended from 1.00 to 2.00 pm*

[Questions without notice taken.]

**Dr TURNBULL:** I turn now to the details of the strategies necessary to address the shortage of tradespersons. The peak requirement for tradespersons will occur in about two years. That is a very short period for the training of tradespeople.

**Mr Marlborough:** The crisis is now; it will not be in two years. It was necessary for people to come from the Eastern States to build the pipeline from Port Hedland to Kalgoorlie.

**Dr TURNBULL:** The apprenticeship course can be fast-tracked but the new tradespersons would not have any experience. On many construction sites experienced tradespersons are necessary. Therefore, the interjection from the member for Peel is correct when he says that there will be a need for Eastern States people to move to Western Australia. The fact that people from the east are coming to Western Australia can provide an opportunity for this State. These people must relocate; they should not just visit the State, do the job, and fly home to Queensland or the suburbs of Melbourne where there is a high unemployment rate. This is an opportunity for Western Australia to expand its population base, and subsequently to expand its economic base, which will require all the ancillary services demanded by population growth. It is an opportunity for Western Australia, but particularly the Minister for Resources Development and the Minister for Regional Development and Commerce and Trade, to consider a way to convince people to relocate in Western Australia. We can do this by encouraging unemployed people to come to this State. One might say that we do not necessarily want the unemployed because they may not be very experienced, or that we do not want those sorts of people. However, at Geelong there are many unemployed, very experienced tradespersons.



I am sure that the football clubs in Western Australia, the Western Australian Football League, perhaps even the Eagles and the Dockers can be encouraged to join in such a campaign. Who knows, there might be another Gary Ablett in Geelong who has trade skills and who is dying to come to Western Australia. Such a person could become involved in our wonderful football program. This is an opportunity for our State to go out there -

Several members interjected.

Dr TURNBULL: That is what we are expecting. I am now on the lookout; I have been appointed the scout for Mines Rovers, which is just about top of the table this year. In order to win the premiership we could get one of these Geelong skilled tradespersons to relocate to Collie. This is not a fanciful proposal. We could advertise in those areas, particularly those around Sydney and Melbourne where we know that there are quite a few skilled tradespersons who, after undertaking very short courses, could be brought up to scratch sufficiently to be able to be involved in many of the construction projects we have in Western Australia. Their relocation would then be paid for by the Office of Labour Market Adjustment. The State could also offer an incentive to people, especially families, to relocate to regional areas. I am not talking only about Bunbury, which is a very pleasant suburb of Perth with very nice facilities. These relocations could be to places such as Collie.

Mr Graham: A good Labor seat.

Dr TURNBULL: The member for Pilbara has just pointed out that if I were a very cynical and self-centred politician I would not want these people coming to my electorate because they would affect the figures. However, I am not and these are very important people to the development of the Collie area. Yes, I agree that a few Labor voters coming into Collie will ensure that it is a marginal seat and that the member must work very hard to convince the Government that this investment is essential.

Mr Graham: I said Bunbury.

Dr TURNBULL: The member is talking about the very safe Labor seat of Bunbury. That seat is occupied by one of the member's colleagues, but that is a different matter. Unfortunately once a seat has become safe members get very complacent at times. It is my conviction that a marginal seat is much more important.

Mr D.L. Smith interjected.

Dr TURNBULL: Well, the member should come up the hill and we will give him a run for it.

Mr Grill interjected.

Dr TURNBULL: The comments from the member opposite indicate that he does not understand anything about what is going on in Collie at the moment. I can assure him that there are no tradespeople unemployed.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Ashburton will come to order.

Dr TURNBULL: There are no tradespeople unemployed in Collie at the moment unless they choose to be. There are unemployed people, but they are waiting for the opportunity to work on the power station construction site, and to work on that site they need training to develop their skills. If the member had been here before lunch he would have heard my detailed description of the various activities that we are putting in place to ensure that the unemployed people of Bunbury, Collie and the south west have the skills required on the construction site.

Mr Johnson: The member surely understands that they may have to be members of the Builders Labourers Federation before they can go onto the site.

Dr TURNBULL: I understand that the union is looking at that point of view as well. I assure the member that the power station task force includes two good union

representatives who are there to ensure that the needs of workers are addressed. I trust that those two union representatives will negotiate in a very cooperative way with the consortium members to ensure that everyone benefits from the construction site in Collie.

Mr Thomas: Which unions are they?

Dr TURNBULL: I am referring to the delegates on the Collie power station task force; I am not talking about unions that might want to be on the power station site.

The other issue I wish to address relates to the patients' assisted travel scheme, which I know is very dear to the heart of the member for Pilbara. I knew he would appreciate my changing the subject. I have had many negotiations with the Minister for Health and with his department on behalf of country members on the government side. In fact, I have spoken on behalf of all country members in this House. The issue we have addressed is the transfer of money out of the PAT scheme into the scheme for developing specialist services in the country. I totally support the development of specialist services in the country - everyone does. Those services must be established as soon as practicable. However, we must be absolutely clear that in many areas those services have not yet been established. I know some of the new services that are commencing are chemotherapy services in Geraldton, Northam and Mandurah; paediatrics and plastic surgery in Kalgoorlie; neurology services in Albany; ear, nose and throat services in Geraldton, Narrogin and Merredin; orthopaedics in Narrogin and Busselton; gastroenterology in Carnarvon; and ophthalmology in Geraldton, Narrogin and Merredin. They are some of the plans. The chemotherapy services will commence in a few days.

However, what about all the other people in the country who need specialist services that can be delivered only in Perth and the metropolitan area? These people are being penalised. Members may say that the PAT scheme is there only to assist. Yes, of course it is. However, when one takes the example of Collie one sees that the round trip to Perth is more than 200 kms. Previously patients were reimbursed \$60.60 for the cost of that trip, but they are now receiving about \$15. That amount obviously does not cover the cost of the trip. The PAT scheme envisaged that the amount of money available to a person would be approximately equivalent to the public transport cost. The \$60.60 was almost equivalent to that cost. We contend that for those people for whom no service is available the PAT scheme should continue to be provided without the \$25 surcharge and with the reimbursement of 15¢ per kilometre.

As I have already said, we have had long discussions with the Minister. The Minister has taken on board the submissions from government and opposition members who represent country areas. A review of the process which started on 1 July will be carried out in September. That is a very short time in which to review a process which began on 1 July. However, it was quite obvious that some people would be severely disadvantaged and the Minister recognised that.

Mr Graham: No, he has not recognised that. He is blind in that respect. When I said the things that you have just said, the Minister put out a press release which called me a liar. Do not tell me that the Minister has listened, because he has not. The Minister is as thick as two short planks. He still has not understood that the implications of his decision in the north west exclude people from obtaining medical services. To this day, he does not understand that.

Dr TURNBULL: We will continue to address the issue. I assure the member for Pilbara that I listened to his impassioned interjection. However, I continue to hold the position that I announced before. The Minister is recognising the issue and he is introducing an inquiry.

Mr Taylor: What about the examples?

Mr Kierath: I have asked for the examples.

Dr TURNBULL: There you are, the Minister has requested the examples.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Dr TURNBULL: The important thing is to show the range of different types of problems

for which there will not be specialist services in the country. These include complicated neurology, radiotherapy and CAT scans. The list goes on and on. I learned of a very interesting and extremely unusual case the other day of a woman who does not have a lethal condition. Her condition is quite rectifiable. She has a condition affecting a bone in one of her legs. Every week the pressure applied to the bone must be changed. Therefore, she must travel to Perth every week. That kind of thing goes on and on in addition to the chemotherapy.

Mr Riebeling: What happens if she cannot afford the fuel costs? Does she go?

Dr TURNBULL: It is not a matter of her not going. We have directed that point to the Minister and I am sure that he will review the situation very soon. As he said, the review will be carried out in September.

Mr Riebeling interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Dr TURNBULL: I encourage the member to encourage his constituents not to say that it is a waste of time. The member should encourage his constituents to ring the number so that all types of conditions can be registered.

I conclude my remarks on this issue by saying that the costs of ensuring that the PATS program can be available to people who do not have the specialist services and never will have those services in the country will not involve a massive amount of money. The Government will be able to consider that amount realistically in budgetary terms. I reiterate that we support the expansion of specialist services into the country. The chemotherapy service will be especially valued by country people because when someone is feeling very ill, travel is very debilitating. I am sure that, if we really put our minds to it in this technological age, that service can be delivered in regional centres and in large country hospitals. I look forward to that service being delivered in my town of Collie.

I could refer to many other issues today. I assure the House that the electorate of Collie is in a good economic condition. The people who work in the electorate are committed to the successful progress of the businesses and industries in my electorate. The expansion of the Worsley Alumina refinery is being looked forward to with great anticipation. The people who work there are committed to efficiency and productivity and to ensuring that they have the best practices in the world. It is the second most efficient alumina refinery in the world. The workers' objective is to be the most efficient, most productive and the safest refinery in the world. That is the kind of attitude that many workers can develop when they want to and when they have a conviction that the industry in which they work is worth the effort of going to work.

Mr Thomas: What proportion of workers live in Collie as opposed to Bunbury?

Dr TURNBULL: At the moment, the proportion of Worsley workers who live in Collie is increasing from the 10 per cent it was two years ago. It is probably about 15 per cent now. The figure is increasing because the people from Collie have proved that they have the ability to perform very efficiently. When an individual has a workplace agreement which ensures that skills and productivity are recognised, that individual performs to levels with which the individual is satisfied.

I thank you, Mr Speaker, for this opportunity to address the House on the issues which are affecting my electorate, the south west and ultimately the economy of Western Australia.

DR HAMES (Dianella) [2.58 pm]: I wish to discuss the issues relating to the problems associated with the provision of essential services in remote Aboriginal communities in Western Australia. I am pleased to see the member for Kimberley in his place and I hope that, following his discussion with Mr Speaker, he will sit down and take notice of what I have to say.

Before I begin, I want to discuss some of the origins of those Aboriginal communities in Western Australia and how they came to be where they are. For that reason, I will have

to quote some extracts that I have taken from a report of which I was chairman and which has been given to the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and is currently before the department for comment. It is not yet ready for me to present directly.

I want first to give examples of three shires which indicate the diverse ways in which those Aboriginal communities were moved or directed to those places which they currently inhabit.

My notes indicate that the report states that in the early colonial period in the Shire of Broome, reserves for Aboriginal people were proclaimed and leases were given to churches for missionary purposes. The option of purchase during the period of lease was offered to the churches by the Government, with land held in trust for the use and benefit of Aboriginal people. This purchase option was taken up by the Catholic Church throughout the Kimberley, and by many other religious groups throughout Western Australia. In the Shire of Wyndham-East Kimberley in the late 1890s and early 1900s there was a push by missionaries to establish missions in the remote areas throughout the Kimberley. Many missions were set up as an outpost to the Government, providing rations, education and medical services. The local Aboriginal people would gradually be attracted to an offer of food, clothing and shelter.

The second major influence to the movement of Aboriginal people within the region was the equal pay provisions of the 1960s when thousands of Aboriginal people were forced off the pastoral stations on which they had been living and working to towns such as Fitzroy Crossing and Halls Creek. I repeat that these are just three examples of occurrences throughout Western Australia. In the Shire of East Pilbara the exodus of Aboriginal people from their traditional country in the Western Desert region can be attributed to a number of factors, including the atomic bomb detonated at Maralinga in the 1950s, the Woomera rocket testing, and the establishment of mission statements and government feeding stations on the desert periphery. In more recent times there has been a strong movement of Aborigines back to their homeland, prompted by a need to re-establish the strong traditional and spiritual ties of the people with their land.

There are 41 000 Aboriginal people in Western Australia. I am trying to highlight the problems associated with the provision of essential services to those remote Aboriginal communities. Those communities were chosen not by the Aborigines themselves because they were the best places for them to live, they provided the best opportunities for future economic development, or were even the best places for them to hunt and provide their own food; inevitably, the three reasons I have outlined were the reasons for the location of an Aboriginal community. That has made it enormously difficult for Aboriginal people in those areas to better themselves, and to achieve independence and some economic basis for their existence in that community.

I will further highlight the difficulties of the management of the site and follow on from the problems being experienced by those communities and Governments in providing the services. Agreement was reached at a later stage by State Governments and the Commonwealth on the provision of maintenance for those services. My notes state that to establish some clarity of responsibility for Aboriginal communities in 1986 the State and Commonwealth Governments entered into the Aboriginal community development program. The ACDP commissioned the State Government progressively to assume responsibility for the cost of repairing and maintaining essential services - which were defined then as power, water and waste water - in remote locations in large, permanently established Aboriginal communities. Outstations were excluded from state government responsibility.

From that developed the so-called list of 48; that is, the 48 recognised communities which were large, remote Aboriginal communities for which the State Government officially accepted responsibility for maintaining and providing essential services. As a result of the significant difficulties experienced by those Aboriginal communities a committee, chaired by Michael Daube, was organised by the Premier. Among the report's recommendations, which covered a range of areas, was one specific recommendation that suggested a committee be established comprising the chief

executive officers of all the major government departments with a member of Parliament as chairman, and that it report to the Minister within six months on ways the situation could be improved. I was extremely pleased to be chosen for the task of chairman of that committee which comprised the chief executive officers of Western Power, the Health Department, Homeswest, the Education Department, Aboriginal Affairs, the Department for Community Development, the Water Authority, Main Roads, and Treasury.

Mr Bridge: You missed one thing. You made reference correctly to that 1986 deal between the States and the feds, but also a commitment was given to spend \$100m over five years. That was agreed upon.

Dr HAMES: I thank the member for Kimberley. I was not aware of that; it was not covered in the report. I will be interested to get information on that later.

Although I will not talk about the recommendations of that committee, because I hope to do that at a later date, I will talk about the problems the committee found in those Aboriginal communities and also the problems it had with government departments. It found an extraordinary lack of communication and coordination between government departments; between state government departments, state and federal government departments, and state government departments and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission - the list goes on. I recall one amusing incident in the early stages of the committee when the chief executive officers of the Health Department and the Water Authority were sitting next to each other. The chief executive officer from the Water Authority said to the Health Department CEO that he noticed recently in the newspaper an advertisement by the Health Department for infill sewerage in a remote Aboriginal community. The Health Department CEO said that was right; the department had done health surveys and found that the sewerage was a problem in that community and that it thought it needed to be fixed so it had allocated the funds to fix it. The Health Department had done that without telling the Water Authority, which was responsible for the maintenance of that service once it was installed, or even giving it the opportunity to install the system. Here were two state government departments with a total lack of communication.

The committee decided to focus its attention on six communities, which were chosen at random, to find out the cost to government of improving the standards in those communities to a certain basic level that it felt all Aboriginal communities should be at. We asked each government department to provide figures of their expenditure in those communities in the past six years and information about their knowledge of the requirements in those communities. Some departments could not find the figures to tell them what they had spent or what was needed. Some had a little information here, and a little there. In fact, as a result of those questions, the then Department for Community Development changed its recording procedures so that in the future it could work out what it was spending in certain areas.

The committee found enormous difficulties in this area. We were trying to get some idea of what plans had already been laid down for the community. We wanted to find out what ATSIC, for instance, had planned, because we were aware that it had conducted a major survey and that a similar survey had been done by the Health Department. It was impossible for us to put it together. It was impossible to get the figures for an individual community such as Jigalong, for example, to determine what had been spent and what was needed. The committee had the resources of all the major state government departments with ATSIC and the Commonwealth trying to help, but there were no figures in any collective form that it could significantly use.

Another problem was with the two major authorities - the Water Authority and Western Power. They had responsibility for providing the maintenance of the service in those communities. I do not wish to lay all the blame at the feet of those authorities. The Water Authority of Western Australia is very keen to look after the interests of the Aboriginal communities. The difficulty facing it is trying to manage a service in a remote community when most of its resources are based in the metropolitan area. For example, if a power generator breaks down, all the fridges cease operating and the food

perishes. If it occurs in the wet season and there is no road access to the community, emergency supplies must be flown in. Someone from Perth or someone contracted by Western Power in Newman, or some other north west town, would be required to charter a plane to fly to the community to ascertain what is the problem. In some cases it might be a relatively minor problem, but in other cases a part, which is not available locally, might be required and someone will have to charter a plane to either a regional centre or Perth to acquire it. Members can imagine how this significantly increases the cost of the provision of services to these communities.

**Mr Bridge:** I did not want to interrupt you because I like hearing what you are saying because it makes sense. However, you are a little dramatic by using that scenario. I have criticised the agencies, but I found that there are structures within government agencies in the Kimberley which provide for someone to go into the communities to resolve the problems. Perhaps you are talking about the Pilbara.

**Dr HAMES:** The example I am quoting did occur in the Pilbara and it is not something I made up for the purpose of this presentation. The Marra Worra Worra Aboriginal Corporation told us about similar incidents in its community. People had been flown in from Perth even though there were people with the necessary expertise within the community to do the work that was required. There was no need to go to Wyndham, Derby or another town to obtain the necessary expertise. What the member for Kimberley said is more appropriate to the Pilbara and the Western Desert than to the Kimberley, but it certainly occurs throughout Western Australia. The recommendations concerning those authorities form a major plank of the committee's recommendations.

I draw the attention of members to the difficulties of local authorities in providing services to Aboriginal communities. From what I have seen, the local authorities in the north west tend to have adopted the opinion that what goes on in Aboriginal communities is none of their business and that it should not be their job to provide them with services. They have the impression that the Aborigines do not want them to go into the community to do anything about the problems they encounter. If it were necessary for a local authority to go into a community and implement health requirements, it might have to declare many of the homes unsuitable for habitation. For that reason the local authorities stay away.

It appears the attitude of local authorities is that most of the rates collected should be spent in the areas where the ratepayers reside and given that residents in the Aboriginal communities are not ratepayers, services should not be provided in those communities. I emphasise that is not the attitude of the Western Australian Municipal Association. It has clearly stated that the provision of services by local government has nothing to do with the collection of rates and that it is required to provide equal services throughout the community. In addition, the Grants Commission funding is allocated on a per capita basis and local authorities receive for Aboriginal communities not only funding, but also a loading.

The representative of the East Pilbara Shire Council was most cooperative when he provided us with the information we required. He said that the shire's total budget was \$9m, and I think he said that 25 per cent of that money was received in rates. I do not know exactly what proportion of those rates come from large regional mining companies, but I suspect a significant proportion does and that the rest of it is in the form of grants. When I asked him what was spent on Aboriginal communities his answer was none. He said that some money was spent on access roads to the communities. Two communities in that area are Nullagine and Jigalong. Nullagine is inhabited mainly by white people and Jigalong is an Aboriginal community. They have a similar population, yet the council funds the rubbish service for Nullagine and not for Jigalong. When I asked the reason for that I was told it was not the council's job to provide Jigalong with a rubbish service. I replied that it had the same responsibility to both communities and that surely the Aboriginal community could be provided with a rubbish service. I was told that the council could possibly do that, but it had never thought about it. That appears to be one of the major problems; the councils would consider doing these things if they put their minds to it and made an effort to provide equality of services to the Aboriginal

communities and the white community. I can understand that if the council receives 25 per cent of its income from rates paid by residents of Newman, it should spend that money on the town. The remaining 75 per cent, which comes from other sources, particularly grants, should be equally distributed throughout the shire, but it is also spent within the town of Newman. The shire spends little time helping the Aboriginal community.

It appears local authorities are not aware of their responsibilities to Aboriginal communities and are apprehensive of the way they will be accepted into those communities. Discussions must take place between the State Government and local authorities and then between the local authorities and the Aboriginal communities to ascertain what is acceptable to the communities. I have been involved in local government and I acknowledge that we cannot expect it to take on significantly increased responsibilities with the same level of funding. However, the same level of services must be provided throughout the local authority.

One of the difficulties facing local government in the north west is distance and another is the maintenance of access roads to the remote Aboriginal communities. Currently they are poorly maintained. In the Kimberley there may not be any road access during the wet season for the delivery of food and other supplies. An increased amount of money must be spent by the State and Federal Governments to bring these access roads up to a good standard. A good example is what has been done in the Northern Territory. It has an agreement whereby a proportion of the funds that are allocated to local authorities to maintain roads must be allocated to Aboriginal communities. ATSIC has provided the funds to pay a driver and a trainee driver for that equipment. They have the responsibility of maintaining not just the roads in the community, but also the access roads to the community. Significant cost savings can be made because one of the major components of managing access roads is the enormous cost of transporting the heavy equipment to the area in the first place. I understand it accounts for one-third of the cost of maintaining roads. Therefore, a lot more could be done if the Aboriginal communities were targeted to do the work themselves.

I briefly touch on the issue of town reserves and outstations. Although the report specifically addressed the list of 48 - which we think should be expanded to include other large Aboriginal communities not in the original list - there is also a major problem with town reserves and outstations. Outstations are currently managed by ATSIC funding but ATSIC contracts to Western Power or the Water Authority to put in, for example, a sewerage service or power generator, and that is as far as it goes. No funds are provided for maintenance or ongoing management or training. The equipment is plonked in the middle of the community, with no follow up. The community asks the State Government to maintain it, but it says it is not its responsibility because it has a list of 48 communities and, under agreement with the Commonwealth Government, manages the services only in those communities. The State Government feels that ATSIC is responsible for maintaining these additional services if it provides them in the first place. Fortunately, the State Government has adopted a slightly broader approach and at Cotten Creek, for example, it has provided additional services for maintaining that equipment. This is a grey area, as is the town reserves issue.

In the rest of the town the residents have water and electricity meters to measure their consumption and they pay for the service provided. In Aboriginal communities the service is piped to the edge of the community and is reticulated to the houses, but the meter indicating the usage is at the edge of the community and not connected to individual properties. Members of the community contribute to a general fund which should pay the bill. Unfortunately, in many cases that does not happen. Aboriginal people are very mobile and travel between communities. A large number may come to a community for one reason or another, stay for a few days, during which they use a lot of water and electricity, and then move on. Those in the community, who are on an income equivalent to a pension, are then left with a bill which they cannot afford. They are battling to pay for their own day to day living expenses, as are all other pensioners. Of course, the people who visit should contribute to the general fund but, unfortunately, in

most cases that does not happen. Therefore, the people left behind have a large outstanding account with the Water Authority or Western Power. Arguments are going on about the responsibility for these accounts. Much needs to be done to address the provision of those services to town communities as a separate issue.

An important thing to remember when trying to solve this problem is that it is no good finding the solution in Perth, with a white person sitting behind a desk organising what will happen to Aboriginal people in the Kimberley. It will not work. It will work only with deep and intense cooperation, communication and negotiation with the Aboriginal communities. They know what is needed. They are not extravagant in their demands. If I were asked what I would like for Christmas, I would present a Rolls-Royce list. The Aboriginal people would respond to the same question by asking for assistance with land care, reticulation, provision of art and culture centres and other such things.

Mr Bridge: Basic things.

Dr HAMES: Yes, they would ask for basic things because we do not give consideration to the basic requirements these places lack. For example, the Oombulgurri and the Kalumburu communities, which currently are receiving increased commonwealth funding, have dirt roads and the people live in dog boxes with tin walls and roofs. There may be 10 to 15 people squeezing into one dwelling. I cite an example of what I found in Oombulgurri. In one house there was a child with scabies, which is a little mite that burrows under the skin and causes intense itching. This often leads to secondary infections which form scabs and pus. The mother was very good at looking after the child who was about three months old. She took the child to the health care clinic and got the correct treatment for the infection. The problem is that although some of the elders in the community have beds, most of the people living at Oombulgurri cannot afford to buy beds. There is no road access to the community and goods must be sent by barge from Wyndham to the community. The people are living on community development program funds, which are slightly lower than a pension. Therefore, it is out of their reach financially to ship a bed to the community. The people must all sleep together on the concrete floor. The dogs come in, the scabies come back and, as fast as the child is treated, she is re-infected. The mother could do little to solve that problem. Next door to the small bedroom was a kitchen with a fridge and stove, but only a cold water supply. There was a hot water tap in an outhouse with one sink. That had to be used for washing dishes and washing the children. Such conditions in this day and age are so primitive as to be unbelievable. Those conditions exist despite the enormous amount of funds provided in this area. People comment that money is poured into Aboriginal communities by the bucketful and it should be enough. It would be enough, if it was properly planned and coordinated, and a better contribution was made towards training Aborigines to look after it. That is a major deficit in ongoing maintenance in those communities. It is no good providing equipment and not maintaining it, because when it breaks down and cannot be fixed, it rapidly deteriorates.

Mr Bridge: Oombulgurri is not a unique situation. It is happening Australia wide and it is a tragedy.

Dr HAMES: That is true. I refer to another trip to Kiwirrkurra in the Western Desert. We were talking to the community about a new state-commonwealth training program introduced to these communities to address multiskilling and the problem of lack of training of the Aboriginal communities. We were talking to the men, and the children and their mothers, who are probably the most important people in the community, were sitting behind. While sitting there, I could hear a child of about 18 months old coughing and I found it difficult, as a doctor, to concentrate on what was going on because the child was coughing its little heart out. Apparently the health clinic sister, a white person, and the community manager, another white person, had formed a sexual liaison and had gone to Darwin three or four months earlier. No-one had seen hide or hair of them since. Therefore, the community had no-one to look after their medical problems. I examined the child and went to the medical centre. The Aboriginal people had the key to the centre and access to the medicines, but the flying doctor visited only once a month and he did not have much time to look at the children. I arranged for treatment of the child and



explained to the mother how she should give the medicine to the child, because there was no-one to supervise that. While I was at the centre I noticed a group of elderly Aboriginal women sitting in a lean-to at the front of the house, which was the coolest place during the heat of the day. One woman in her late 50s or early 60s had a dirty, bloody bandage wrapped around her head. She was holding the leg of a goat, which still had the hoof and a bit of hair on it but which had obviously been nicely cooked, and was chewing on the bit of meat between the sinews of the leg for sustenance. I took off that terrible bandage on her head and saw that her head was covered in boils, which is fairly common in communities which suffer from scabies and also from dietary problems caused by the lack of fresh fruit and vegetables, and I was able to treat that problem while I was there. That highlights the difficulties experienced by those communities in obtaining services and adequate treatment for their problems.

While the houses in that community were very nice and were well looked after, that was about all that the community had in the way of services, and the conditions were very primitive. Training is one of the major ways in which we can improve the situation. In regard to involving Aboriginal communities, I had the pleasure of meeting Dicky Bedford, the president, and members of the Marra Worra Worra Aboriginal Corporation from Fitzroy Crossing, who told me that they would like to not just maintain the services which they have but also take over the regional management of the provision of those services. Marra Worra Worra is certainly a community which has the capacity to do that, but I do not think all communities have that capacity.

Mr Graham: Why do they not do that through the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission regional councils and the Aboriginal Affairs Department at state level?

Dr HAMES: To answer that question would lead me to make statements about the report, and that would be difficult because I am not allowed to do that.

During the parliamentary recess, I visited an Aboriginal community on the fringes of Vancouver, Canada, and had a conversation with an amazing gentleman who was the head of an Indian tribe; one would never know that because although his appearance was obviously Indian, he looked like any of us here; he wore glasses and a suit, and sat in an office. He was responsible for the management of that community, which leased some of its land to white people, who were able to own the houses which they built on that land. However, although the community's income from those lease payments was not too bad, 80 per cent of the people in that community were unemployed.

Mr Marlborough: They can do that because they have land rights.

Dr HAMES: They are very critical of their land rights, and from what I can gather, they have fewer rights than our Aboriginal communities have and are finding life very difficult. There have been major land rights judgments in Canada but nothing has happened over many years since those decisions were made. Although they were receiving a reasonable income and were living in good houses in what appeared to be a fairly affluent community on the outskirts of Ottawa, they were experiencing the same problems as those faced by our Aborigines, particularly unemployment, alcoholism and juvenile crime. That gentleman spoke to me about the reasons that children in that community were having difficulty in finding a reasonable direction in life. He drew a circle for me and put on that circle ages commencing at zero when a person is born and ending at 80, which he said is the average life expectancy of a normal community -

Mr Marlborough: That is better than for our Aboriginal people.

Dr HAMES: It certainly is, and that will be explained later. He said that when children are born, their parents have a lot of influence over them, but at the opposite side of that circle we have their grandparents, who are around 40 or 50 at that stage and are usually working in the community and able to give their grandchildren a few treats and take them places, and those children gain a great deal of respect for their grandparents. However, when those children reached the ages of 12 to 20, they tended to rebel against their parents, so if their parents told them to clean the yard, they would say to themselves, "Why do I have to do that?" and would not be very impressed. However, if their

grandparents, who by then had reached the ages of 60 to 70, asked them to chop some wood for them, they would probably grumble a bit under their breath, but because of their great respect for their grandparents, they would do that task. He said that respect for elders and the community was one of the most important things that helped keep children on the straight and narrow during those difficult years. Those elders provided moral guidelines for the children because they could see that the elders did the right thing, worked hard and did not tell lies.

The reason for the breakdown that is occurring within Aboriginal communities is that while the grandparents were present before the children reached the age of 10, once they reached the difficult ages of 12 and onwards, the grandparents had died, perhaps due to diabetes, which is very prevalent, as it is in our Aboriginal communities, because the western diet does not suit Aboriginal people, or due to alcoholism, or they might be alcoholics and not able to play a part in the lives of their grandchildren. The gentleman said that one of the major problems in that community was the lack of guidance by grandparents because of the tendency for people who had reached a certain age to be shunted off to a nursing home. The old fashioned family network that is common in Aboriginal communities and provides guidance for children no longer exists. He did not know what the solution was; I do not think anyone does. However, his example highlighted the importance of grandparents in teaching children to have respect for their elders and the community.

Mr Bridge: The family structure is breaking down all over the world.

Dr HAMES: Yes, it is breaking down in every community. I asked him how he felt about the relationship between the white and Aboriginal communities, because there is always a tendency for the white community to be paternalistic and to act in a parent-child relationship with Aboriginal communities. I told him that I felt uncomfortable with that notion and wanted to have an equal relationship with Aboriginal communities so that in managing the Aboriginal problem, I could say to Aboriginal people, "You do it because it is your community and you are responsible for it." He said we cannot always do that because it is a bit like a father stating in his will that he wishes to leave an inheritance of \$20 000 to each of his three children, when one of his children is a well respected pharmacist, the other works in another occupation, which I will not name because every time I say something I create an impression -

Mr Thomas: A member of Parliament.

Dr HAMES: Yes, that will do. The other son is a drug addict. He said that the father would be happy to give the pharmacist \$20 000, although he probably would not need that much because he earned plenty on his own, and the poor member of Parliament who did not earn very much should get a bit more, but he knows that if he gave \$20 000 to the drug addict, it would kill him because he would go out and buy \$20 000 worth of drugs.

This man said that a balance must be created, that we must learn what people can cope with and then make a judgment. He had a son with whom he had a good relationship. He was an excellent child. When the child became an adult, this man still had a good parent-child relationship with him. As the child matured and had more opportunities for contact, an adult-adult relationship developed. We all want to achieve that with our children, as we do with Aboriginal communities. The son moved away to work and had a girlfriend. Following a tiff with his girlfriend, the son paid \$2 000 on an air fare to travel to see her. Before the father knew it, he had become a parent again and was telling the son off for wasting \$2 000 on the air fare. The father said that it was very hard not to have a parent-child relationship. He backed off, apologised and told the son that it was his decision and his money, but in his view, it was still wrong.

As a Government and as a manager of services, we must learn that there are times when a parent-child relationship with Aboriginal communities is needed and times when a parent-adult relationship is needed, but the goal should always be to achieve an adult-adult relationship with all Aboriginal communities. We can do that with some communities faster than with others; however, at the end of the day we should aim to achieve that goal.

I hope one day to outline what our committee found to be some possible solutions to those problems, and I look forward to doing that. My experience in investigating these problems was fascinating. The Aboriginal communities received our suggestions very warmly. We had numerous meetings with Aboriginal communities and with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission to formulate the direction we were trying to achieve. We got very strong support from the Aboriginal communities in that endeavour, and I hope that support will continue until we can provide equality of service for all Aboriginal communities.

**MR GRAHAM (Pilbara)** [3.42 pm]: *The West Australian* on 18 August contained an article headed "Cowan warns of skills gap" by Malcolm Quekett. It said that the Deputy Premier was concerned about the potential shortage of skilled workers needed to drive the looming development boom in Western Australia. It said -

Deputy Premier Hendy Cowan said this week he was concerned about the potential shortage and crunch time was just a couple of years away.

The Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the Trades and Labor Council confirmed Mr Cowan's warning.

The chamber said the manufacturing and construction sectors faced a repeat of skills shortages experienced in the early 1980s, when industries were forced to import overseas labour.

The article outlines what different groups, the Trades and Labor Council and the Chamber of Commerce had to say about the Deputy Premier's statements. It was of some interest to me because I had intended to give this speech in the Budget session of Parliament anyway. It is always a bonus when I give a speech and find that senior people on the other side of the House agree with the line I am taking.

The Deputy Premier is right; there is a shortage, and a potential for a far greater shortage, of skilled labour in this State. It begs a couple of questions. The first is why the Deputy Premier is able to identify it accurately as a shortage and make statements about it, when the responsible Minister has yet to come to grips with it as a problem. The second is why, when dealing with development projects, ongoing labour requirements and skills requirements at a regional level, this Government has consciously taken the Pilbara backwards in developing a skills base. I refer to the Pilbara 21 study, but not because I chaired it. I would dearly love to be able to say that three years after the study and a change of government, this Government had either jettisoned it or committed itself to it. I am half-happy because the Government has committed itself to many of the major policy changes that needed to happen, which were commenced by the previous Government.

The Government has written a lot of nice letters to me saying that it is committed to the Pilbara 21 study and its implementation. When it comes to skills and training and employment programs, the evidence belies the rhetoric. The Pilbara 21 study was structured to look at the impediments to industry developing in the north west, particularly the Pilbara, and to recommend a policy mix that would lead to economic growth and social development. It identified a series of impediments, with the use of consultants and a working group which talked to industry, unions, employers, workers and people who lived there, and people who invested in the region.

One of the impediments to the development of the north west was the shortage of skills and a labour base. It has always been a great irony that in one of Australia's great mining districts, people cannot learn mining skills. People employed in the mining industry in the Pilbara leave to take their children to another area of the State so that the children can learn skills required to be miners, and the children can ultimately move back to the Pilbara. Members need only think about that for a little while to realise what a nonsense this situation is.

What did the Pilbara 21 study identify as possible solutions? What did the two Governments since that report was issued do about the situation? The first problem identified was access to university level courses, which is extremely restricted. The

second problem was the cost effective delivery of training in the region. The third was about how to develop a skills base including the fact that there was, and is, no regional training approach in the Pilbara. There were difficulties with accreditation of skills and major difficulties with Aboriginal education and training initiatives.

There is a lack of a skilled work force in the region for existing industries. They recruit heavily from outside the region to obtain work forces. I am not only talking about mining but also other industries in the Pilbara. New industries must do the same thing; they must import labour to the region. There is a high staff turnover in the schools. That has increased rapidly since the current Minister for Education sought to put his stick in that ants' nest. The turnover of teachers in remote areas has increased out of sight, to the point where the schools tell me that it is now a major problem. There was always a residual problem in the talent base of the teaching staff in remote schools, with some coming and some going. Now more are going than are remaining. The fault for that lies directly with the Minister for Education. They are his decisions. He personally made those decisions and implemented them.

There were also difficulties with the adequacy of the secondary education courses offered. Because of the scale and size of the schools, the curriculum was restricted. In many cases, the curriculum offered in the bush does not allow young people to go on and get the tertiary skills they require to work in the industries in the region. There was, and still is, a lack of focus in education and training in the region. It was all over the place. There was no cohesive plan for the region in education, employment and training. Doubts were expressed by the Pilbara 21 study group about the adequacy of the Pilbara training facilities to meet national and state training priorities.

That is a fair mix of problems for a region to confront. The Pilbara 21 group put together what it believed to be a mix which would provide for the needs of industry. It required a couple of things to happen. One was the opening up of university courses in the region. I particularly would not suggest while you are in the Chair, Mr Deputy Speaker, that it is possible to teach all courses at every university outlet in the world or in the State. However, there had to be increased access to university education. Many units can be done off campus, but in an educational institution.

The college structure in the Pilbara had to be addressed. There was a Karratha college, a Port Hedland college and a Pundulmurra college which, in budgetary terms, was effectively an agricultural school which became an independent college. Therefore, there were three independent colleges. The Pilbara 21 group decided that they should all be put together as a university college of the north west and become a multicampus university college to deliver courses. The question then was what sort of courses should it deliver. The answer to that in the main, and I stress in the main, was that it should deliver the courses required by industries established or seeking to establish in the region. One does not have to be too smart then to work out that there had to be a link to bring industry and the university college of the north west together to deliver those services.

The industry would have provided the drive and we recommended the establishment of a small employment and training unit which would ostensibly be under the coordinating council of the university college of the north west. That would have provided the coordination and the university campuses throughout the north west would have provided the services. They would have done that in accordance with the wishes of the industries there or seeking to establish there.

It would be reasonable for government members to ask me what the previous Government did to head towards the aim of increasing the regional skills base in the Pilbara. We should bear in mind that the Pilbara 21 report was issued in June 1992. In early July 1992, Cabinet decided, may I say on the basis of a well-drafted Cabinet minute, that it would approve the creation of the university college of the north west, agree to create the employment training unit which would interface with industry, and authorise the Pilbara development commission to put together the package to carry out the negotiations with the relevant authorities. Members will recall that the Pilbara Development Commission Bill had not been through Parliament so no statutory body

could have achieved those ends. In November 1992, Cabinet put me in charge of implementing the recommendations of Pilbara 21. I must say that that was a wise move. I approved of it. It was a wise decision by Cabinet. I was not in Cabinet then. It was one of Cabinet's better decisions.

The implementation group of Pilbara 21, up to and including the time when the Bill to establish the Pilbara Development Commission had its passage through Parliament, carried out the wishes of Cabinet and the Pilbara 21 study group to the extent that the implementation group comprised people who were part of what was the Department of Regional Development and the North West, college directors from the two existing colleges and someone from the Department of Employment, Vocational Education and Training. Professor Gordon Stanley was put in charge of the implementation and he was in the process of negotiating with the Federal Government with a view to a likely starting date in early 1994. Tenders were being written up for the four Perth based universities to provide courses at what would then be the new university college of the north west. That was the position when the Government changed in February 1993. It is interesting to consider what has happened between then and now.

Mr Cowan: Lots of things have happened.

Mr GRAHAM: This is a nice time for the Deputy Premier to come into the debate. The short answer to that question, in the fields to which I have referred, is nothing except for some key decisions. However, those key decisions did not advantage the Pilbara. The Minister for Education decided not to proceed with the employment and training unit. He did not do that on advice. He decided not to proceed with it. There was no drive. No-one told the colleges what they should be doing. The Minister's logic was that the colleges would talk directly to industry and, in return, the colleges and industry would drive the courses. That has not happened.

Another thing that happened was that, prior to our losing Government, there were two proposals for university colleges to be established in Western Australia. One was to be in the goldfields and another in the Pilbara. Given that the Minister for Education was that great defender of the north west, Hon Norman Moore who was elected from the Pilbara region, I thought that we were on reasonably safe ground. I thought that was secure enough for us and I would not have to do a damn thing. I was wrong. The university of the north west is now located in Bunbury. Our local member in the upper House, our Minister for Education, took the single biggest advance for education proposed in the north west in the past 20 years and transferred it to the marginal seat of Bunbury. Thanks Norman, we appreciate that. That was a great job.

The problems which led to that happening still exist. However, we do not find the local member, Mr Larry Graham, saying that there is a skills shortage. The Deputy Premier says that there is a skills shortage. Indeed, industry says that there is a skills shortage. However, the Government has not produced a policy mix which will deliver that in the State, let alone in the regions. Members today heard the member for Collie and others point out the difficulties in their electorates when confronted with development projects. No policy mix is in place and the Pilbara cannot deal with future developments unless someone does something. It will not be the Minister for Education. We do not want him to help us because the last time he did that all the teachers left the north west and our college transferred to Bunbury. We cannot afford any more of his help.

When the pipeline was being debated I not only wrote to the Minister for Resources Development but also asked during the Committee stage of the Bill how he would ensure that the local employment provisions of the Bill would be implemented. I am not being critical, but he could not answer the questions at the time. To his credit he referred the matter to his department and, out of Parliament, provided the answers. He responded that, effectively, they would be dealt with administratively. That did not happen; they were not handled that way. When the HBI agreement Bill, which I have not yet seen, comes into this Parliament I suggest it will contain the Department of Resources Development chestnut that will oblige the State Government to talk to the Federal Government to ensure that the Broken Hill Proprietary Co Ltd can access migrant labour if it cannot access sufficient skilled workers in WA for its plant.

Mr C.J. Barnett: There will not be migrant labour; there will be a flow from the east coast.

Mr GRAHAM: I suggest that clause will be in the Bill unless some quick editing occurs between now and then! I am a tad cynical, but if it is not included, somewhere in that agreement Bill should be a provision to require the Minister and the State Government to assist BHP with the provision of its labour. The point I am making is that two years ago the Government should have begun that process when a policy mix was in place on which it could have acted. If it did not like that policy, it should have devised and implemented another one in its place, but the Government did not do that. That has created a problem for the Pilbara.

The Port Hedland Chamber of Commerce has compiled a directory of services in the town that will now be sent out with each BHP contract. It is aimed at ensuring that the maximum number of local businesses will be involved in delivering the work in Port Hedland which is needed for constructing the HBI plant. That kind of initiative will lead to continued employment. I do not know from where the chamber received its money, what assistance it received or how it organised the directory; neither should I know, nor do I care. Nonetheless, it is a positive initiative which will lead to an increase in business for organisations in Port Hedland. It would be a shame if local businesses which then picked up the contracts from BHP could not find the labour in the region to fulfil their obligations. A silly situation would arise where some small subcontractors, rather than a major organisation, would be forced to recruit from interstate and overseas.

If, dare I say, the Government were to act now on my advice and that of the Deputy Premier, the situation would be retrievable.

Mr C.J. Barnett: I agree; the point you make about the Port Hedland Chamber of Commerce is commendable. Some of the projects now commencing in the south west, such as the Collie power station and a few others, have let approximately 60 per cent of the early contracts to local firms. This has been encouraged by the Chamber of Commerce and the industrial development officer down there. Even though contracts let in Perth have been sublet to local firms, that will change as we let major contracts. Much has been learnt. Many of the major resource companies are now very conscious that it is incumbent on them to let contracts locally. A psychological change has occurred in the last period of major development in this State.

Mr GRAHAM: I accept that and I agree with the Minister that change is occurring in industry. Nonetheless, it would be a tragedy if the change were made in big industry and encouraged by chambers of commerce, but the small subcontractors were unable to find labour. If they have a contract, they must find labour from somewhere. Unless a training mix is in place to provide labour, small contractors will still have to seek labour from the same places as the big companies.

Mr C.J. Barnett: You will be aware that in your electorate the pipe coating plant has recruited about 40 people locally who were previously unemployed. A large pool of labour is not available in the Pilbara; what is there will be employed very quickly.

Mr GRAHAM: That is the point I am making.

I refer now to yet another example of how the Government treats people in the north west. At page 35 the report of the Western Australian Constitutional Committee reads -

In the North West, a number of people maintained that the State Government is as remote from them as the Commonwealth Government is to people in Perth. The overall impression was that political ideology is a lot less important in the North West than the lack of facilities and services. People feel that although they are responsible for producing a high proportion of the national (and State) wealth, under trying conditions, neither the Commonwealth nor the State Government is sufficiently responsive to their needs.

I fully endorse that comment, and will give a clear example of why people in the North West feel that way. When Kalgoorlie held its centenary the State Government contributed to it an extraordinary amount of money. I do not mean that in a critical

sense. Kalgoorlie has made a great contribution to the State of Western Australia. I notice the member for Kalgoorlie is here. Kalgoorlie has made a great contribution to Western Australia and after 100 years it should be appreciated. That assistance included, I think, about \$2.5m to enhance the entrance to the town and funds for an arts and cultural centre, of which \$10m came from the State Government and \$1m came from private enterprise. Any number of projects were funded, including upgrading the grandstand at the Kalgoorlie racecourse for the centenary cup, and the provision of lights to the Kalgoorlie football oval so that a night game could be played by the West Coast Eagles. That is probably an appropriate contribution by the State Government in recognition of a great mining area.

I will now compare Kalgoorlie with Port Hedland and see what Port Hedland wants for its centenary next year. When I refer to the Mayor of Port Hedland, people should be clear that I am not talking about an independent, impartial mayor. He is a prominent member of the Liberal Party. I had no truck with that and I supported him in his efforts to become mayor.

Mr Lewis: Who is that?

Mr GRAHAM: I am talking about Alan Eggleston and I actually said in this House that he was doing a good job as mayor, but that was early in the piece. He has been preselected by the Liberal Party and is in a winable position on the Senate ticket. The day he set his eyes on becoming a senator is the day that his interest in Port Hedland ran a poor third.

Several members interjected.

Mr GRAHAM: It may be a shock to members opposite, but he has been the subject of public debate in the north west and I put out a call for him to resign over a range of issues because he is not up to the job. He has his eyes set on Canberra and his decisions are tainted by that. On 4 April the mayor of Port Hedland was interviewed on ABC radio and a transcript of that interview reads as follows -

... at the Cabinet lunch here in Port Hedland, the Premier announced that the Government would fund the project not normally funded by the State Government in this town, and that the town Council had nominated the small boat harbour.

The Premier inspected the site and he was interested in it. The Minister for Resources Development also looked at the proposal and he thought it was excellent and now a feasibility study will be undertaken. The transcript refers to from where the money will come and the mayor said -

I believe we can do that and when that is done I'm sure the funding will come through.

I can quote from transcripts of other interviews in which the mayor of Port Hedland said that he is not really a Liberal person, but is able to get on the telephone to the Premier and senior people within the Liberal Party to do these deals which they will deliver.

Mr Lewis: Who is that?

Mr GRAHAM: Alan Eggleston.

Mr Lewis: He has never telephoned me.

Mr GRAHAM: I understand why he would not ring the Minister for Planning; he probably wants the deals delivered. The people from the brewery are waiting for this Minister to return their call. He brought that development to a halt. The transcript continues -

Well, I have other commitments which lead me to believe that there is no problem with any of these things.

It is clear from that remark that the mayor of Port Hedland has spoken to the Government and organised a centenary gift of some substance. How much substance? Alan

Eggleston met with the Premier and, according to the mayor, not me, the Premier announced at a community luncheon that the Government would fund the project. The transcript of the interview continues -

P Mr Graham says that a grant of anything less than the \$10 to \$12 million which Kalgoorlie/Boulder received would be an insult to the people of Port Hedland. How do you respond to that?

A I reckon we are going to end up with about \$10 million worth of grants, that's my personal guess.

P But would it be an insult if you didn't receive the same amount given to Kalgoorlie/Boulder?

A Definitely, but I'm pretty confident that that's about the level of funding we are going to get.

Mr Taylor: When is the centenary?

Mr GRAHAM: Next year. I have no doubt that the mayor did a deal. Having heard that I thought I would make some inquiries. On 3 May I put a series of questions to the Premier, the first of which reads as follows -

(1) Has the Government committed any funds to projects associated with the centenary of Port Hedland?

(2) If so -

- (a) what amount of funds have been committed;
- (b) from which portfolio have funds been committed;
- (c) for what purpose have funds been committed;
- (d) on what date were the funds committed;
- (e) what was the source of the funds?

(3) If not, why not?

I also asked -

(1) Has the Government received any requests for financial assistance from the Port Hedland Town Council for projects associated with the centenary of Port Hedland from the Port Hedland Town Council?

(2) If so, what submissions have been received?

(3) If not, has the Government received submissions from any other organisations or individuals?

I went on to ask a further question which turned out to be quite a good question -

(1) What funds has the Government committed to the South Hedland enhancement scheme?

(2) If any -

- (a) from which portfolio have funds been committed;
- (b) for what purpose have funds been committed;
- (c) on what date were the funds committed;
- (d) what was the source of the funds?

All the questions leading up to those have been answered. The questions I asked the Minister for Health, which I have been told incurred a cost of \$7 000, have been answered, as have my questions about the Premier's private appointments. My freedom of information requests have been answered and my questions about all sorts of government business have been answered. However, these three questions have not been answered, yet they are very simple questions. Have they not been answered because they are too difficult? Has the Government committed funds to projects associated with the



centenary of Port Hedland? The answer is either yes or no. If the answer is yes Alan will be a hero and he will be a senator for the rest of his life and long may he reign. If the answer is no, there is a problem. The Liberal Party does not have difficulty answering questions to make its candidates look good. Members can work out what the answer is.

Mr Shave: You are too cynical.

Mr GRAHAM: That crossed my mind. Given that the centenary is next year I thought I would give the Government the benefit of the doubt and I would not say too much about it until I had examined the Budget papers. If the Government intends to spend \$10m on a project in Port Hedland it would have to be in those papers because this Government is accountable. However, I did not find a skerrick of information about it. I slipped a copy of the Budget documents to some members of the local Liberal Party and asked them to see whether they could find it because, after all, Alan was their mayor and their candidate. They told me I had misread the Budget papers because they had been told the money was there. However, when they received the Budget papers, they could not find the money either. It appears that \$10m has gone astray.

Those members opposite who have been in Port Hedland recently know that this is a warm issue and the local people are getting cranky about it. What did they do? The people in that neck of the woods are not famous for lying down and copping a flogging. It is obvious they do not trust me and they decided to ask some more questions of their own. The person who heads the centenary committee is also secretary of the local branch of the Liberal Party and why should he take notice of me? I am only a Labor Party member who has the facts! The people concerned rang Howard Sattler on one of the days the Premier makes himself available to receive calls on his show, and I enjoy reading the transcript of that conversation. Peter got through. The Government Media Office transcript of the interview states -

PETER (CALLER)

Premier, the question I'd like to ask you was that Port Hedland is having its . . . in '96 its centennial year, what is the State Government going to contribute financially to Port Hedland for its celebrations, could you answer that question for me, please?

That was a good question given that the Premier announced in Port Hedland that the Government would fund a project, and the Mayor of Port Hedland said, "Trust me, \$10m will come from the State Government. The Premier has said we will have \$10m for the boat harbour." The transcript continues -

COURT

Yes, Peter. Directly I know that we are funding a harbour study there; I think we've committed \$65,000, from memory, to that particular study, and, as you know, we've got communities all around the state in recent years that have been celebrating centenaries, but . . .

SATTLER

Kalgoorlie was a recent one.

The Premier skipped over that one. The interview continues -

COURT

I think we've concentrated, Peter, on assisting with the harbour study to help with the small boats, so that, you know, radio personalities like Howard Sattler when they go fishing up there have got better facilities to work from.

"Ha, ha," laughs Richard Court, the Premier. As one would expect, Sattler gave him a bit of a serve about that. What does the Premier say? The transcript continues -

COURT

So, Peter, I think the . . . and with the work that . . . with the major investment that's now taking place with the HBI plant too, we are working with both the

council and BHP for the upgrade of South Hedland so there's quite a major investment that is going to go into that area, and in addition we are putting considerable funding into infrastructure for the new industrial estate that's going to be developed there.

So, Port Hedland is going to have a lot of capital works, but specifically related to the centennial celebrations, it's to do with the boat harbour.

Peter is not happy. He does not think that is a good enough answer. We know now that \$65 000 has been spent on the boat harbour study. Peter has a little bit of a problem with that, and he asks the Premier again.

... 35% of the national income comes out of a town like the Pilbara or Port Hedland and Karratha and so on, and I feel it's fair if we get a fair dollar back when it's our centennial year, given that we've given so much to the state and lived in the very harsh conditions without the normal nice things that people have for recreation in the metropolitan area.

I support that argument. It is not as though we are going to be rushing in next week with another big ask for a centennial. It will take another 100 years for it to come around again. Port Hedland will be back in another 100 years to ask for some more money; there is no doubt about it. How did the Premier deal with that question? The transcript continues -

Peter, I think there's a lot of positive things that are happening throughout the Pilbara region, and without doubt ... well it has been one of the major growth areas now for some decades. I mean, Peter, I first went to Port Hedland about ... what am I, 47 ... about 35 years ago, and I went up on the Stateships with my parents, and Port Hedland was basically just a pastoral town, very small town ...

That is the answer from the Premier of the State to the town of Port Hedland on what this Government will do for its centennial.

Mr McNee: Half of Labor's Premiers are in gaol for telling porkies.

Mr GRAHAM: A Liberal Premier was in there for skipping through with party money. If he gave it back, maybe we could have another \$25 000 for Port Hedland.

On a more serious side, and I have been a bit light-hearted, the town of Port Hedland is approaching its centenary. There is no ambit claim from the town saying the Government must give it \$10m or \$20m. The town is asking for genuine recognition from this State Government of the major role it has played in this State for 100 years. Port Hedland is the biggest port in Australia. In excess of 60m tonnes of iron ore will be shipped out of there this year. It has paid a huge amount into the State coffers. It has suffered the indignity of the town planning disaster that is South Hedland. It has had to suffer the difficulties that go with planning decisions made on St George's Terrace 30 or 40 years ago.

Mr Lewis interjected.

Mr GRAHAM: I would be giving this speech if there were a Labor Government in power and it had performed as abysmally as this Government has in its treatment of Port Hedland. The member for Applecross should stop talking to his Senate candidate, and start talking to the town council and start loosening up his wallet. The behaviour of this Government to date has been pathetic.

Mr Minson: Does the member for Pilbara want us to borrow some money for the next generation to pay back?

Mr GRAHAM: It is not a question of economics. If the Minister for Works wants to debate that, I will deal with that easily. It is a question of the Liberal State Government recognising the contribution that Port Hedland has made in the economic development of Western Australia.

Several members interjected.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! It is inappropriate for people to interject across the Chamber.

[The member's time expired.]

Debate adjourned until a later stage of the sitting, on motion by Mr Board.

[Continued on page 7135.]

### GRIEVANCE - SECONDARY EDUCATION AUTHORITY, TEE SCORES

DR WATSON (Kenwick) [4.28 pm]: I direct my grievance to the Parliamentary Secretary assisting the Minister for Education. It concerns the processes of small group moderation carried out by the Secondary Education Authority in relation to TEE scores. I have a concern that the processes and procedures -

Several members interjected.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The opportunity is being provided at this stage for members to take a grievance. It is totally inappropriate to have several members interjecting and preventing the member for Kenwick from even starting to raise what is a very serious matter.

Dr WATSON: My concerns about the processes and outcomes relate to the way in which they can disadvantage students who are from small groups and are moderated with a larger group of students from a bigger school. I shall demonstrate that they have the potential to perpetuate socioeconomic structures. I think that I am right in saying that the children who are most at risk of adverse outcomes from small group moderation for tertiary entrance examinations are those in so-called blue-collar areas who, perhaps, do not have the opportunities that their cohorts have in more affluent areas. They can be disadvantaged.

I bring to the attention of the House an anomaly that has been brought to my attention by the mathematics department of the Maddington Senior High School. In 1994, only four students were enrolled at Maddington for the year 12 TEE subject of applicable maths, so small group moderation was undertaken with the Rossmoyne Senior High School, which had 86 students doing that course. Very exhaustive comparable procedures of common teaching, assessment and marking took place over the year. The Parliamentary Secretary will understand that.

At the TEE, the two schools had their marks separated - I will explain that - and they were moderated separately because the statistical test, which involved consideration of the difference between the school assessment and the standardised exam score, showed a significant difference between the populations. The top student at Maddington Senior High School was scaled down by a total of 10.33 per cent from a raw score of 87 per cent. She lost 10.33 per cent. Her scaled mark was 76.67 per cent, whereas a student from the larger population lost only 3.81 per cent.

I shall refer to the marked sheets, which are confidential. I certainly do not want to mention the name of the girl concerned, but her school assessment was 89 per cent and her TEE raw score was 87 per cent, standardised to 73.5 per cent, and then when it was separated from Rossmoyne, she ended up with 76.67 per cent. A comparable student at Rossmoyne Senior High School had a school assessment of 87 per cent and a TEE score of 87 per cent. That standardised score from TEE was 72.6 per cent, and when it was standardised in that group of 86 students, that person ended up with 82.19 per cent. That is grossly unfair.

When we examine the way in which school assessments and standardised examination scores are averaged and standard deviation is calculated, we will understand that children in small groups are much worse off when they are matched with a big group. I understand that the Secondary Education Authority advocates that that is usually better when one can match a small group with another small group - say 9 in one school and 10 in another.

The teachers did everything right. They then lodged an appeal to the SEA - this is the crux of my grievance - to alter the process to overcome that disadvantage for that very bright student. However, the SEA rejected that appeal and started to justify its processes. I have copies of correspondence between the SEA and the principal and the head of the mathematics department at Maddington Senior High School. Part of the problem seems to be that, as complaints have continued, the SEA has become more intransigent. I have examined the Secondary Education Authority Act 1984. Under section 28(2), the Tertiary Examinations Committee can exercise such powers as are necessary for or incidental to the performance of its functions. It has authority to review teachers' or individuals' complaints, but of course teachers do not know those scores. They do not receive the score sheets until April the following year, by which time the student might or might not have enrolled at university.

As it happens, the young woman in question wanted to enrol for physiotherapy studies. Because her standardised scores were so dramatically reduced, she has been unable to do that. She is determined to do it; she is repeating a year. She is a very bright young woman. I understand that the matter has had a critical effect on how she feels about herself. She will study physiotherapy because she is determined to do so, but if she were not as determined and if she thought, "Oh well, that's the system," she would do other work that would not give her the opportunities for which she has potential.

I am particularly concerned in view of the socioeconomic implications of the procedures in respect of Aboriginal children. We must be certain that anybody with a grievance, whether it is a teacher who must act as the agent of the Secondary Education Authority, a student or his or her family, has a right of appeal. I should like the Parliamentary Secretary to ask the Minister to establish an appeal system within the SEA and to do what he can to review that student's particular circumstances so as to reverse the decision.

We are talking about a mathematics exam. Two and two make four, and three and three make six. It is possible to score 100 per cent but, if one says that two and two make three or that four and four make nine, one will be 100 per cent wrong. In standardising mathematics subjects, there should be a different system from that which operates for social studies and English because there is a quantitative versus qualitative aspect involved. The statistical tests and processes - the way in which standard deviations are established - will mean different things in those applications. In this case, the SEA has been intransigent. I have been quite shocked to read the correspondence. As the school points out, if that Rossmoyne group had been numbered alphabetically from 1 to 88, a group of any four students could have been in the same position as those children at Maddington. I am sorry that I do not have longer to present the argument, but I am sure that the Parliamentary Secretary is as distressed at that injustice as I have been.

**MR TUBBY** (Roleystone - Parliamentary Secretary) [4.39 pm]: I thank the member for bringing this grievance to the attention of the Minister and the House and also for giving me some notice of the matter. As she has tried to explain, the AST and the moderating of scores are very complex.

I will run through the background material and then return to the member's grievance. In two weeks she will have the opportunity to address her remarks directly to the Budget Estimates Committee. No doubt she will look forward to that. Why do we need a scaling process? We must remember that not only Western Australia but also every other State undertakes that process, although the scaling used in other States is different. The current policy for admission to university is based on a tertiary entrance score. The TES is an aggregate score based on students' marks achieved in year 12. Fifty per cent is the school mark and 50 per cent is the examination mark. There are 28 school subjects whose marks may be used in the TES. University students usually take four to six TEE subjects. Some subjects attract capable students and some attract the weaker students. In the subjects taken by capable students it is harder to achieve high marks because competition is intense. Therefore, those students need a process which recognises their high ability. The scaling process adjusts marks in a way which recognises the ability of students who take each subject.

Dr Watson: I can understand that. I think the teachers understand that but they feel they have a grievance where there has been injustice and that there should be a formalised system of appeal.

Mr TUBBY: I accept that. I will address that later.

The scaling mechanism means that students can maximise their marks regardless of which subjects they choose to take. Conversely, they are free to make educationally sensible subject choices without having to worry about how their marks will be affected. That means they can choose to take four or six very difficult subjects or four or six very easy subjects. Some students, to maximise their marks, take easy subjects and receive a high score and thus achieve entrance to university. Other students who choose difficult subjects may not achieve anywhere near the same score and may not get into university. We must find a mechanism to balance the degree of difficulty of the subjects.

How does the scaling work? University-bound students take the Australian scaling test. This is used as a measure of general academic ability. I believe this test has been used since 1969. The method used currently was introduced in 1985 when the McGaw report was produced. It is produced by the Australian Council for Educational Research. It tests four main areas - reading comprehension skills, social science skills, maths reasoning and science reasoning skills. The tests are not tied to the content, but to the learned skills within those areas. It is a scholastic aptitude test, not an IQ test. Using this score, the combined mark, which is an equal mixture of class marks and TEE marks in each subject, is scaled so that it reflects the AST marks of the candidature. If the students who take a given subject score highly in the AST - that is, they are students of high ability - scaling will tend to adjust the marks upwards. The effects of the scaling on the combined marks is usually to adjust them by about zero to 10 marks. There are a number of other stages in marks processing. Some of those are where the member's argument came from. I refer to the moderation of school marks and the standardisation of TEE marks, and sometimes it is mistaken for scaling by people who do not understand this complex process. Scaling is carried out on the entire candidature of a subject. It is not carried out differently for each school. Without doubt there have been problems with this system. As with any other system, it is not perfect. The circumstances raised by the member draw attention to the need for a mechanism -

Dr Watson: The problems are in smaller schools with a smaller number of students.

Mr TUBBY: There are some other similar circumstances in schools with a large number of students who do not wish to go for the TEE but whose parents insist that they do. That tends to reflect on the students who are very capable and who are tertiary bound, and it reflects on their scores in the end as well. A number of anomalies are inherent in the system. We must address the need for a mechanism for appeal. I will draw the attention of the Minister to that.

Most people consider that the mathematics subjects are very high academic subjects and, therefore, the students who choose them will have their scores marked upwards. Last year, however, they were marked down, but, as the member mentioned, not in all cases. The process applied across three mathematics subjects - applicable mathematics, calculus and discrete mathematics - which, this year, were scaled down. A student can receive a score of zero or 100 per cent for calculus. However, a student taking economics will not receive zero per cent because at least he has put his name on the paper. He will not receive 100 per cent either because no-one is perfect when offering subjective answers. Therefore, teachers usually score students' efforts between 40 and 80 per cent. They do not like to score above 80 per cent, and if a student tries, they do not like to score below 40 per cent.

Dr Watson: There will not be that bell shaped curve on that type of assessment. It is a flattened curve.

Mr TUBBY: We must try to balance the scores that students receive for economics against the scores received in mathematics so that we have some equity across the system.

**Dr Watson:** Where two children have the same score from the same process how can it go so wrong that there is a difference of seven points and one student is marked down 10.3 and the other 3.1?

**Mr TUBBY:** In those circumstances, we must provide an appeal mechanism. I accept that point and I will bring it to the Minister's attention. The Minister is open minded, as is the Secondary Education Authority. We realise it is not a perfect system.

In the tests there was gender bias last year. I thought that would be the thrust of the member's speech because her speeches usually have something to do with gender issues. I had made preparations in that area. However, it was not reflected in the scores because people realised the bias and took it out when they did the scoring.

**Dr Watson:** The SEA has not been open to complaints from the school. Even though two meetings have been held and a lot of correspondence sent, the authority has been intransigent. That is unfair on the teachers as well as the students.

**Mr TUBBY:** I accept that. I cannot explain it. I cannot apologise for it. The member should draw that to the attention of the Director of the Secondary Education Authority directly in the Estimates Committee. In the meantime, I will bring it up with the Minister to see if there is some alternative mechanism. If the member or the teachers she represents can suggest some better method to address the problem by trying to get something even-handed across schools and subjects, we will be interested to learn of that.

**Mr Strickland:** We would like the same standards in every school in, say, mathematics. There are different standards because there are different teachers and they set slightly different tests. The mechanism must account for that.

**Dr Watson:** We understand that.

**Mr Strickland:** Sometimes there are problems when some teachers are harder markers than others. We must account for that. The process does that, and it is very difficult for small schools because they do not have the mass to get the bell shaped curve.

**Mr TUBBY:** We need to achieve some equity year by year, because in some years, as the member for Scarborough mentioned, it may be that easy tests are set. A person may obtain a score that year but not go to university. The person may put it off for two or three years and subsequently compete against students who have undertaken a harder test. A range of issues must be addressed. This is the best system at the moment, but if a better system were offered, the Minister would be very open to suggestions, as would be the SEA. I will raise with the Minister the appeal mechanism system which the member would like to see instituted.

### **GRIEVANCE - MANDURAH HOSPITAL, ADDITIONAL PUBLIC BEDS PROPOSAL**

**MR MARSHALL (Murray)** [4.50 pm]: I am very concerned about the uncertainty that has been created in the minds of some of my constituents in response to this Government's proposal to build 100 beds in addition to the existing 30 beds at the Mandurah Hospital. Everyone will know that the Mandurah-Murray area is the fastest growing area in Western Australia.

All members deal with virtually the same issues in their electorates - law and order, education and health. In Murray/Mandurah we have covered law and order by employing a number of extra police officers. In relation to education, we have two new primary schools and superb secondary education. Now, for the first time in the history of the area, we will have a tertiary education institution within 12 months.

Health is another issue. For the past 12 years the health system of the Peel region has not been up to standard. About three or four years ago, as part of an election campaign, the Government of the time built a 30-bed hospital to prove how good things would be. That hospital lacked vision and it has been classed as a minor annex or even a doll's house by local people because it was not built correctly. In fact, it has been absolutely useless. This Government will now resurrect the health services provided to this growing

population by giving the people of Murray and Mandurah what they really need - another 100 public beds in addition to the 30 private beds in the hospital. There will also be a 24-hour emergency department.

Mr Shave: You gave this speech when you were campaigning in Fremantle.

Mr MARSHALL: I gave it two years ago. I said what we wanted for the Peel region and that we were going to get it. We need this 24-hour emergency department; we have been crying out for this service for 12 years. We will also have an obstetrics unit, an intensive care unit, expanding surgical services and so on. At the moment in Mandurah we have the 30-bed hospital, which is useless, we have pathology on one side of the town, x-ray services on another side and speech therapy on another side. We are going to bring them all under one roof to provide a magnificent health campus. This is a fantastic achievement.

What concerns me is that a few people, including my very good friend the member for Victoria Park, simply want to knock the project. As I said, the previous Government had 10 years to do something about this situation but it did nothing. Now that we are solving the problem, the shadow Minister for Health is doing all in his power to downgrade that achievement. I do not believe this is fair.

I know that the Opposition has to counter the productivity of any Government, but when it comes to health we are dealing with a very personal thing and I believe this is hitting below the belt. The concern that has been created about public beds versus private beds is causing unnecessary alarm in my electorate. This is bullying and it annoys me that little old ladies in my electorate are being scared about something that does not exist. I repeat: This hospital will be a fantastic addition to the health services of the area.

The hospital might be privately managed, but what is wrong with that? What is wrong with making money out of health? Dentists make money out of health; chemists make money out of health.

Mr Kierath: Doctors make money out of health.

Mr MARSHALL: Chiropractors also make money out of health. My friend the member for Victoria Park seems to have a phobia about private enterprise. As he was a Rhodes scholar I really expect something better because I am told that the qualification for Rhodes scholarship is that one must be an outstanding academic and sportsman. I would not match the member in academic terms but on the sporting side I would have the edge. It is in relation to the sporting aspect of health services in my electorate that I get annoyed. The shadow Minister for Health has forgotten what is right and what is wrong and how to give credit where it is due.

In just three months since the grand announcement of the improved health services in my electorate we have had members of the Miscellaneous Workers Union wanting to disrupt the area. They are concerned about privatisation. Their mathematics teacher must have been a flop. If a person has a job in the service industry of a hospital that has 30 beds, does that person believe he or she will have a job when there are 130 beds? The only reason people will lose their job is if they are not up to scratch. Why worry when the mathematics show that if a worker is any good he or she will keep his job?

We now have an action committee. The chairman of that action committee is the head of the Miscellaneous Workers Union and the treasurer is another friend of mine who hands out how-to-vote cards for the Labor Party at every election. It is a set up. There have also been unsigned letters to the editor, and that is a cowardly act.

Finally, we have just experienced a most disruptive and distasteful event. We recently launched a birthing suite at the Mandurah Hospital - a much needed facility. Expectant mothers can have their child and stay overnight, going home the next day to be cared for by a midwife. As we were launching this birthing suite we were visited by some yahoos who certainly did not come from the Mandurah-Murray electorate. Who set them up and who had them banging drums, destroying the launch of what I believe is a magnificent and sensitive facility for my area? It seems that sportsmanship has gone out the window.

I care about sick and dying people. I have had first-hand experience; I was told that I had a 50:50 chance of living. I know what it is like to be concerned about life; I love life. I help people who have been told that they have cancer and who are anxious. I am afraid that some members, rather than seeing the big picture, forget what sportsmanship is all about.

#### *Point of Order*

Mr RIPPER: I do not wish to prevent the member from expressing a grievance about his electorate, but I believe that he is abusing the standing orders relating to grievances. The footnote to the standing order on page 77 states:

a grievance is not fair or equitable when the grievance criticises a member who has no immediate right of reply.

Apparently that ruling was made on 15 October 1975. This grievance seems to have been largely an attack on my colleague the member for Victoria Park. He is not the Minister and he has no immediate right of reply. Mr Acting Speaker, I ask that you rule that the grievance is an abuse of the process and consequently out of order.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr Ainsworth): I must say that I am quite used to the member for Murray's being very eloquent in support of his electorate - there is no-one more so in this place. I thought he was perhaps winding up his comments to a point where he would agree with the Minister, which is the normal process. He has only three minutes in which to complete his contribution.

I fear that the point of order is correct and that the grievance is being directed towards a member of the Opposition and not to a Minister. That is normally done by way of a substantive motion rather than a grievance. However, if the member can find something about which to criticise the Minister for Health in association with this, and he is more than able to do that I am sure, he can continue his grievance.

#### *Grievances Resumed*

Mr MARSHALL: Mr Acting Speaker, I appreciate the advice you have given and the interjection because as Rudyard Kipling said -

If you can meet Triumph and Disaster  
And treat those two imposters just the same.  
... you'll be a Man, my son!

I am not a Rhodes Scholar but education has taught me that quip. I will come back to the point that my grievance is against the industrial action that has been going on against something which is very good in the health service in my electorate. Some one has set up a minority action group that needs to be educated into knowing what is good for my electorate. I do not want to see the elderly ladies of my electorate bullied with lies. I want a health system in Peel that will give everyone a longer and better life. This new hospital will provide just that. The people who oppose it show their immaturity about something which will be fantastic for the area.

MR KIERATH (Riverton - Minister for Health) [5.02 pm]: I thank the member for his grievance. He was in Mandurah at the same time as I recently when we opened the new birthing suite at Mandurah. He made the valid point that some people formed a picket line to try to prevent the Minister going into the hospital to open the new birthing suite.

Mr Riebeling: I wonder why!

Mr KIERATH: That comment by the member shows the ridiculous nature of the Opposition. He could not say something nice about a birthing suite. The people of Mandurah and Murray wanted that birthing suite. It had wide community support across all political boundaries. Many people down there from the left said, "We could not get one of the centres when our Government was in power." It has taken a coalition Government to deliver a birthing suite in their local hospital. They said that the Labor Party never delivered. A person down there was carrying on about changes to the patient assisted travel scheme. This man needs access to a chemotherapy service. We did



promise that it would be up and running by the 1 July; however, the oncologist from Fremantle Hospital who was to go there on 1 July decided he would take a three month sabbatical and the date had to be put back to 13 September. We are still on target; the staff have been trained, the oncologist has been recruited, and chemotherapy services will start in September of this year.

Before I go to the specifics that the member for Murray raised it is timely to remind members of the Opposition and anybody else who is interested in some of our achievements to date and of some of our management reforms in the health system to try to make it more efficient and far more customer focused. We have implemented wide-ranging reforms in our system of health. We have had the pooling of commonwealth and state funding by small communities to provide multipurpose services and efficient use of resources. The coalition Government established liver transplant units and a heart transplant unit within two and a half years. The Opposition could not do it in 10 years. All it can do is to come into this place and criticise. It could never introduce liver and heart transplant units. Before our term is up I bet that we will introduce lung transplant units as well. They are real services that save people when they desperately need them.

Several members interjected.

Mr KIERATH: We put competition in the health service. We have four specialist assessment centres to fast track the diagnosis of breast x-ray abnormalities. I understand that the member for Victoria Park does not care about breast cancer or facilities.

Dr Gallop: Do not be stupid!

Mr KIERATH: The member for Victoria Park should stop, listen and pay attention. We have put in four specialist breast assessment centres. We have also introduced a charter of rights for public hospital patients. Again, the Labor Party was never capable of introducing such an initiative. I guarantee one thing: We will have legislation in this House to set up a health conciliation and review unit before the year is out. Carmen Lawrence promised in 1986 that she would deliver that. However, she could not deliver in three years as Premier. We will deliver that legislation this year. We went further and established a permanently based independent health consumers' council. These were the favourite political issues of the ALP when in government, but it could not set them up. It is ironic that it has taken a coalition Government to do it. One of the things brought to my attention by the member for Murray was the gloom and doom in some of the newspapers in Mandurah. The member is right; when we look below the veneer what do we find? All the agitation is created by people with connections to the labour movement, who are either associated with the Miscellaneous Workers Union, or are Labor candidates or Labor members of Parliament, including the shadow spokesman on health.

Dr Gallop interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Order!

Mr KIERATH: I said to the member for Murray that I get the feeling members opposite do not want a new hospital. The member for Murray said he wants a new hospital and the best health facility for Mandurah he can get.

We put \$2.4 million into planning, which the Labor Party could never do. Let us have a look at what we have done there. Mandurah currently has a public hospital with 30 beds. What are we proposing? We are proposing to establish 100 public beds. For the benefit of the member for Victoria Park that is three and one-third times or 333 per cent more public beds that are free of charge to the public in the area of Mandurah. What do we see from the Labor Party? We see nothing but criticism and its attempts to disrupt the program. In addition to those beds we will add 30 private beds. Is it not interesting that the private bed component is equal to the sum total of the existing public sector beds? When one adds that extra public facility of 333 per cent one ends up with an increase of 433 per cent in the number of beds servicing that region. I can understand that the member for Victoria Park is peeved because in the Mandurah region the Labor Party pork barrelled the electorate but could never deliver a decent health service. This will be the first time for decades that the Mandurah region will have a health service and campus

that it really deserves and which meets current population levels. Usually from the time it has been promised to the time it takes to deliver, the population of the area has increased so much that it is behind the ratio when it is introduced. That is the point the member for Murray made. This is the first time that a properly designed and catered for health service is going into Mandurah. As the member for Murray says, we are not ideologically hung up like the Labor Party. We do not care whether it is done by the private or public sector.

Dr Gallop: We do.

Mr KIERATH: The Government of the member for Victoria Park flogged off the only hospital of the Commonwealth Government in this State. That shows how much he cares and indicates his double standards. As I have said, we will provide 100 beds to public patients at no charge as well as 30 beds for private patients, which is equal to the current public facility. Any self-respecting person would be in favour of this initiative. Anybody opposing it would be mean and miserable to the utmost degree and not have a decent bone in its body.

The additional services the Government will provide include an accident and emergency service that will be manned by doctors 24 hours a day. This emergency service will include an intensive care unit which will cater for all medical situations except the most serious cases. The service will be either equal to or better than any emergency service, other than those at the teaching hospitals. The member for Murray should note that. The emergency service will be backed up by improved and expanded radiology and pathology services. An obstetrics unit with birthing suites will also be included, and emphasis will be put on expanding aged care in the region. Other improvements will include psychiatric services, surgical needs, a paediatric ward, day surgery and medical services.

I support the member for Murray. I wish that some of the negative people got on side with the Government to get an expanded and improved health campaign for the people of Mandurah and the Peel region.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr Ainsworth): Order! Before we proceed to the next grievance I remind members of what I said earlier when the point of order was taken by the shadow Leader of the House. Grievances are to be taken up specifically between a member and the Minister responsible for a particular portfolio. In this case, it was not clear whether the grievance was for or against the Minister. When that became clear it was a little late in the day. We need to be careful not to stray into that territory again. I have let it go for this grievance, but it must be borne in mind that that is not the purpose of grievances. There are other ways of expressing those same concerns without using the grievance process.

#### **GRIEVANCE - BUILDING BY-LAWS; APPEALS UPHELD BY MINISTER**

MRS HENDERSON (Thornlie) [5.11 pm]: I am pleased you made those points, Mr Acting Speaker, because when I came into the Chamber I thought I must have come into a debate other than grievances. However, I am pleased to see the Minister rattled. I direct my grievance to the Minister for Planning. It concerns a young couple who were my constituents and in the future will be the constituents of the member for Jandakot, who I hoped would be here now. This young couple purchased a block of land in Jandakot on which they hoped to build their first house. They do not yet have a family, but it is their intention to have children. They saved up for this house; it has been their life's dream to own their own home. They submitted their plans, which were in line with all the uniform building by-laws, to the local authority, and they were approved. The couple went ahead and had their house constructed and are now paying it off.

Unbeknown to them the owner of the block next door submitted to the council plans for the construction of a home which incorporated a garage with a wall on the boundary of the block, and the garage itself was joined to the house. It was a long wall; it extended more than 7 metres. When the City of Cockburn contacted my constituents and informed them that this application had been submitted, they objected. Obviously they would

object, because it meant that when they looked out the window of the children's bedroom they looked straight onto a brick wall which was a metre away from their house.

Mr Lewis: How large was the lot?

Mrs HENDERSON: It was a normal sized building block, I suspect - about 800 square metres. The City of Cockburn refused the application from the owner next door and told him that he would have to abide by the normal uniform building by-laws. However, the owner then submitted an appeal to the Minister for Planning and that appeal was upheld. This young couple is now faced with the situation where their bathroom window and the window of their future child's bedroom will look out onto a solid brick wall. It affects severely the amenity of their house. It affects the light and, to some extent, the ventilation, although in a windy climate such as ours one would not expect that to be the case.

Dr Hames: There is a difference between a brick wall and a fibro fence.

Mrs HENDERSON: There is an enormous difference. A fibro fence is usually limited to a height that does not extend above the top of the window of a normal house. This brick wall is higher than the brick walls of the couple's house. Although one of the conditions that was laid down when the Minister granted the appeal was to reduce the height of the wall from 33 courses of bricks to 30, even 30 courses is higher than the wall of my constituents' home. As they look out the window of their house all they see is a solid brick wall which cuts out more light than would a normal asbestos fence.

My main grievance about this matter is twofold. It never occurred to my constituents to make an application to do anything other than what was provided for in the building by-laws. They see themselves as law abiding citizens. They submitted an application which in every way fitted in with the requirements of the local authority. They found that their neighbour had made another application. They were not advised of the appeal process. I understand that an appeals committee considers these matters and makes a recommendation to the Minister. From the correspondence I have received from the Minister I understand that a member of that committee visited the property. However, he did not consult with my constituents or go inside their house to see what effect the construction of the wall would have on their house. As far as we know, he had a look at the block. He certainly did not talk to anyone at the house.

As the Minister's letter to me states, the committee member may say that he took account of the letter my constituents had written to the local authority. That is not good enough. This young couple are committed to paying off a mortgage for at least 25 years on what was their dream. Like all young people they no doubt spent weeks, if not months, designing this home. However, they are now faced with a position where in their view the value of the house and their aspirations and expectations have been severely reduced by the fact that the bedroom and bathroom look straight out onto a brick wall.

It is not good enough that the Minister's committee, whose job it is to examine such applications and make recommendations, should not listen to the party who is the most affected by the appeal - in this case, my constituents. If that is the kind of procedure the Minister accepts, there is an onus on the Minister to change the procedure.

Dr Hames: It was exactly the same under your Government.

Mrs HENDERSON: That does not mean that it cannot be improved.

The Minister sent me a letter in which he set out clearly that once he has received a recommendation and made a decision, the Statute then does not give him any room to move; therefore, my constituents are effectively stuck with this situation, although the wall has not yet been constructed. I am concerned that when I have mentioned this in passing to a number of people, they have told me that one of the problems is that the Minister is renowned for upholding appeals, and that that has frustrated a significant number of local authorities which feel that appeals are being upheld without sufficient consideration being given to the arguments of the parties who are opposed to the appeal.

Mr Lewis: You are very ignorant of the process.

Mrs HENDERSON: I am more than happy to listen to the Minister explain it. If the procedure is that the committee considers the matter and a member of the committee looks at a block, and perhaps takes measurements, that is not good enough - not when it affects the future lifestyle of people such as my constituents. I am sure that they are not alone in this matter; that they are not the first people to have found that when their neighbours have taken the initiative and put forward a proposal which changes the amenity of their house or property, they are on the back foot. They were not advised that an appeal committee member would look at the property. Until they were finally notified in June of an appeal that was upheld in March, they did not even know that an appeal had been made. As far as they were concerned they had put in an objection to the local council and the council had rejected the application from the neighbour and it was all over. They had fought the battle to stop the wall being built and thought they had succeeded. They went ahead with their plans to build the house. Two or three months later they found that the appeal had been upheld by the Minister but they, as the key people affected by this wall, had not been consulted. I now quote the letter my constituents sent to the City of Cockburn, which clearly sets out their objection to this application. The letter is addressed to the City Manager/Town Clerk of the City of Cockburn and reads as follows -

Dear Sir,

Re: Application to reduce building setback Lot 156 Marich Cove Jandakot

We refer to your letter dated 8th September 1994, concerning an application to reduce the setback of a building to our common boundary.

The adjoining owner has previously approached us for agreement to construct a parapet wall on the boundary of our property which we carefully considered, however rejected.

We confirm our strong objection to the application now received by the Council concerning this matter.

It is understood the height of the wall would be 33 courses or 2.83 metres which is higher than the eaves of our house.

The eaves clearance to a wall in this location would be only 900mm and we are most concerned that the light to the major opening to a bedroom which already faces in a southerly direction will be substantially reduced.

We are also concerned for the reduction in light and ventilation to a bathroom which would be caused by a wall in this location.

The objectives of the residential planning codes as set out in clause 1.2 and 1.5.7 demand that prior to the determination of any proposed variation to setbacks, the effect of such variation on the amenity of adjoining owners must be considered.

We therefore urge you in your deliberations on this issue to consider the amenity expectations of any person building at normal setbacks, and to reject this proposal for a parapet wall since it is in direct contravention to the objectives of the R-codes.

The above represent our strong objections to the building of this wall and we trust you will give our concerns due consideration.

I ask the Minister to give consideration to changing the appeal process to ensure this sort of thing does not happen to anyone else.

**MR LEWIS** (Applecross - Minister for Planning) [5.22 pm]: As the responsible Minister for hearing all appeals in these matters, I will not ever debate publicly or in this Chamber the specifics of any appeal. It can be compared to the situation of a magistrate or judge making a decision and then entering into a public argument about that decision.

Mrs Henderson: You are accountable to this Parliament; you are not a judge.

Mr LEWIS: If the member is suggesting that under the ministerial appeal process every

decision may be publicly debated, she should recognise that it would absolutely destroy the process.

Mrs Henderson: You should be able to defend your position.

Mr LEWIS: If that were the case, every time an appeal was made it would be necessary to consider it in a court at great cost and with time penalties to the parties involved. If the member for Thornlie wants to impose that on the 700-odd people who appeal every year -

Mrs Henderson: That is rubbish. We are talking about one case.

Mr LEWIS: I am talking about decisions properly made in accordance with the Act. The processes I follow are no different from those followed by my predecessors, and this process of hearing ministerial appeals has been in place for many years.

Mrs Henderson: It has a major problem.

Mr LEWIS: In the opinion of the member for Thornlie it has a major problem, but perhaps her aggrieved constituents are not right and perhaps the appellant is right. Has she ever considered that? I am the person who takes that responsibility.

Mr Kobelke: We are a democracy and you must answer for your decisions.

Mr LEWIS: The member for Nollamara can take it as he likes, but if people start questioning magistrates for their reasons -

Mr Kobelke: You are not a magistrate.

Mr LEWIS: But I am acting in a semi-judicial position.

Mr Kobelke: Magistrates give written reasons for their decisions.

Mr LEWIS: I also give written reasons for my decisions.

Mr Kobelke: Are they public?

Mr LEWIS: Yes, they are.

Mrs Henderson: Why not in this case?

Mr LEWIS: Because I will not debate the pros and cons of every decision I make. I make a decision, the reasons are given, and that is how it must be.

Mrs Henderson: Will you give the reasons today for that decision?

Mr LEWIS: Certainly not, because I do not know the details of the matter raised. I am appalled at the ignorance of the member for Thornlie about the process. By law, the process is that an appellant must respond to the responsible body which, in this case, was the City of Cockburn. Indeed, that was done. If there is a responsibility for that appeal to be referred further, it is certainly not the responsibility of my appeal officer because the Act does not recognise third party appeal rights. Does the member for Thornlie understand that?

Mrs Henderson: Is it fair for your person not to talk to my constituents when deciding the matter?

Mr LEWIS: There are 19 members of the panel which looks into these matters. The panellists are professional people with many years' experience. Many of them were panellists under the former Labor Government.

Mrs Henderson: So they cannot make mistakes?

Mr LEWIS: Of course they can make mistakes; anyone can make a mistake. However, they were panellists under the Labor Government, and they make their decisions after consultation with the responsible authority which should be looking after the interests of its constituents.

Mrs Henderson: What about these constituents?

Mr LEWIS: How many should the local authority write to?

Mrs Henderson: Just one.

Mr LEWIS: That may be so in this case, but in some cases many constituents are involved. The point I make is that it is an impossible task for panellists to find every person who may be aggrieved, bearing in mind that there are no third party appeal rights under the legislation and there never have been.

I will continue to carry out my responsibilities in accordance with the Act and on the basis of sound professional advice given to me. I am the first to admit I am not always right; I am the first to admit that perhaps from time to time the advice I receive is not right. It must be understood that I receive professional advice and that quite often - not all the time - I do not agree with that advice and I do not accept it.

Mrs Henderson: What about on this occasion?

Mr LEWIS: I do not know whether I did or not. I receive about 700 of these appeals a year.

Mrs Henderson: Do you not consider them individually?

Mr LEWIS: Yes, I consider every one individually but my memory is not good enough for me to recall the detail of each one. A Statute sets out the way in which these appeals are to be processed. A town planning appeal committee, made up of a group of professional people, fully investigates these matters.

Mrs Henderson: No, it does not.

Mr LEWIS: I have every confidence in that committee; if the member does not, that is her problem. I have confidence in those people who advise me, although I accept that from time to time they may be wrong. However, I do not accept that on this occasion they were necessarily wrong. I do not know what they recommended because I cannot recall the detail of the appeal. The appellant also has property rights and if the R-codes provide for certain things to happen, and I am advised the application is reasonable, I invariably uphold an appeal. I do not know whether that is the case in this instance.

Mrs Henderson: I have read it to you and it is not.

Mr LEWIS: The member does not know what the R-codes are. Does the wall conform to the R-codes?

Mrs Henderson: No.

Mr LEWIS: It does conform to the R-codes. I would not have upheld it had it not conformed to the R-codes. The point is that perhaps there is a part of the R-codes which the member's aggrieved constituent did not understand but the person next door obviously did and made an application to do certain things in accordance with those codes.

The member for Thornlie has an aggrieved constituent. I suggest that when I uphold or dismiss an appeal, there is always an aggrieved person, because in this business there is no such thing as a win-win situation; we please some and upset others. I accept that the member for Thornlie's constituent may have been disappointed with the decision.

Mrs Henderson: The constituent was upset about the process.

Mr LEWIS: The member for Thornlie must understand that the person who appealed had rights, and he took the opportunity of appealing the decision of the council. He followed due process, I followed due process, and a decision was made. That decision is final. There is no revisiting that decision. I cannot change my mind about that decision, whether it be right or wrong. I made that decision on the basis of my understanding and on the advice that was given to me, and I reiterate that I do not know whether that advice was for or against. Unfortunately, while I have some sympathy for that aggrieved constituent, the bottom line is that I followed due process.

Mr Kobelke: The bottom line, Minister, is that you are not accountable.

Mr LEWIS: If I am not accountable, the member's Ministers were not accountable.

**GRIEVANCE - POLICE STATION, SWAN HILLS REQUEST**

**MRS van de KLASHORST** (Swan Hills) [5.31 pm]: My grievance to the Minister for Police is about a dilemma which is facing people in the Swan Hills area. I have recently held two public meetings about law and order. I have also received letters from people in Gidgegannup, from the Bullsbrook Chamber of Commerce, and from schools and individuals in Swan Hills, asking that a police station be established in their area. I know from the figures that I have received from the local police superintendent, Barry Dawson, that many of these areas have small populations and a low crime rate and that the cost of providing each of those communities with a police station is prohibitive and perhaps not warranted because we need to place our major police stations in the larger communities. However, the superintendent said at a number of public meetings that I held that the nature of policing is changing over time and we now need to have a partnership between the community and local police so that people are on friendly terms with their police officers rather than just contacting them only when there is a problem or accident.

After I had spoken to people from the 20 community centres in Swan Hills, I met with some of the constables at the local police station, who came up with the good idea of setting up a mobile police station for the area which could visit the various community centres for one day a month or every six weeks. That station would be staffed by a police officer, and would perhaps also have a second police officer who could go around the area on a bicycle to meet the local people and show them that the police could be involved in the everyday happenings in their area.

We have had a number of brainstorming sessions about this matter, and we have come up with the idea that the mobile police station could adopt a theme each time it visited a community centre; for example, the first time it went to Mt Helena, the theme could be to teach people how to make their homes more secure, and when it visited Mt Helena again six or eight weeks later, the theme could be youth and driving. The mobile police station would bring together the community and the police in a happy atmosphere rather than a negative atmosphere. Although the crime rate in the outer metropolitan area is not as high as that in the metropolitan area, and in some areas only one or two offences are committed a month, people still live in fear. Superintendent Barry Dawson said at the public meetings that there should be communication between the community and the police so that people know that the police are there to assist them and are patrolling their area. The number of patrols in Mundaring has been increased, but people may not be aware of that fact because the police have been in plain clothes and in unmarked cars in an attempt to catch some of the people who have been hooning around the sporting arenas and streets at night.

It has been suggested that the mobile police station should be in a caravan rather than a truck because the upkeep would be lower, and also that community organisations such as rotary clubs and local businesses might be willing to provide sponsorship in order to fund some of the materials required. However, the mobile station would need to be staffed by the Police Force, and perhaps the caravan would need to be purchased by the Police Force.

I ask the Minister for Police to support the establishment of a mobile police station in the Swan Hills area, which can visit places like Wooroloo, Mt Helena, Chidlow, Hovea, Glen Forest, Herne Hill and Middle Swan so that people will know that the police are trying to help them. In turn, the local people will help the police by setting up a Neighbourhood Watch scheme, which arose from a public meeting held in Mundaring.

**MR WIESE** (Wagin - Minister for Police) [5.38 pm]: I thank the member for Swan Hills for her grievance and for her comments. The problems outlined by the member for Swan Hills are not unique to Swan Hills but occur in many outer metropolitan areas. We need to be flexible and adapt our policing methods to the fact that we have outlying areas like Gidgegannup and Bullsbrook.

I am pleased to respond to this grievance because it gives me an opportunity to put forward some initiatives that are in place. I have spoken many times in this place about the independent patrol group, one of the first initiatives introduced by the Commissioner

of Police in looking at a more flexible way of policing within our community. There has been enormous acknowledgement throughout the community that this initiative has been very successful. The operations of that group have been able to address many problems occurring throughout the suburbs and the outer areas. It has been to Kalamunda, Rockingham and to areas further south as well as to Fremantle and many Perth suburbs. The group does a very good job, not just apprehending criminals and dealing with large groups of people who seem to be intent on disrupting the community but also generally liaising with and educating business people in the communities into which it goes. That has been a very large part of the job of this group. It has been very well received by the shopkeepers and business people to whom members of the independent patrol group go.

That gives an idea of the direction in which the police service intends to go in the future. Already three of the mobile services suggested by the member for Swan Hills are operating in Mandurah, Perth and Geraldton. The commissioner and the police service intend to have a mobile policing facility in each region in Western Australia. When that is attained - one region is the Midland region which covers the area about which the member for Swan Hills spoke -

Mr Catania: When do you envisage this?

Mr WIESE: It is set out in the proposed achievements for 1995-96, but whether we will achieve it by 1995-96 is yet to be seen.

A mobile policing facility is to be located in each region. I am sure that if the member, being a good shadow Minister, has gone through the Budget papers and the performance statements, he will have picked that up as one of the planned achievements for 1995-96. I am surprised that he has not asked me questions about it already.

As many members will be aware, the present Commissioner of Police has a very good record of addressing problems and achieving the targets for which he has aimed. The member for Swan Hills talked about how a community can help. One of the ways in which communities can do that is to work with and liaise with the regional police officer to get community support from the local service organisations and community groups. In the Kalamunda area perhaps the community groups in Bullsbrook, Chittering and Mt Helena could get together for the specific purpose of raising funds to assist the regional police officer to establish a facility of this nature in the region. I am sure we will see that happen in the coming months. I will be surprised if we do not see rapid progress in establishing a facility of that nature in that area, given the strong support from the regional police.

I totally support that initiative. To put a police station into an area like Mt Helena or Gidgegannup, perhaps even Chittering, is a very expensive exercise. In many cases the record of crime in those areas at this stage does not justify the huge capital expenditure plus the manpower resources of permanently stationing police officers there. Those communities deserve, and need, a police service in the same way as every other community, and they have a right to expect it. The concept of the mobile police facility which can go into an area on demand, in the way in which the member for Swan Hills has outlined, will be a very effective way of providing a police service in those areas.

The member raised a couple of issues which I will touch on. One relates to plain clothes police officers in unmarked vehicles. The unfortunate fact is that this happens in many cases for the reasons outlined. The police officers are unidentified so that they can apprehend people who are offending and resolve the problems that have been brought to their notice. From an overall police service point of view, they should not be seen and identified as police officers doing a policing job. It is a real quandary. I would love to see all police cars fully identified and with blue lights so that everybody - the crooks and the public that the police serve - would know they are in the area. However, sometimes they must go into some areas in plain clothes and unmarked vehicles to do the job successfully.

Mr Taylor: Most of the crooks can pick them from a mile away. I think they can smell them.



Mr WIESE: The bush telegraph seems to be a pretty good system of identifying them. The member for Swan Hills raised the possibility of a caravan being used. I agree that is one way of addressing this issue and that would be supported by the commissioner. However, the ideal way to go would be to use a fully mobile, self-propelled vehicle set up for the job. If that can be achieved - funds would probably be the major reason for it not happening - I would be quite happy to see a caravan do the job. If we can achieve that mobile facility, the question of whether a caravan or a truck is used is fairly academic. A self-propelled truck would be much more flexible in getting into those communities. I urge any committees that are set up to address that issue.

We must have strong community support to progress this initiative and we will need strong support from the regional police officers to get it up and running within the community. If we have community support and the support of local members as we have with the member for Swan Hills, I am very confident that the target that has been set out in the achievements for 1995-96 will be reached. I look forward to the time when a mobile unit is operating in the Midland-Swan Hills area.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr Ainsworth): Grievances noted.

### **MOTION - SELECT COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION, APPOINTMENT**

**DR CONSTABLE (Floreat) [5.49 pm]:** I move -

- (1) That a Select Committee on Education be appointed to
  - (i) (a) review, consider, report and comment on the educational and social benefits or otherwise of the Good Start program for the education of three, four and five year old children;
  - (b) investigate the implications of the Good Start program for the education of intellectually able and learning disabled children;
  - (ii) in the light of (i) examine the educational, administrative, organisational and financial ramifications of the Good Start program for primary and secondary education in Western Australia;
  - (iii) consider the consequences of the Good Start program for teacher training and professional development of teachers;
  - (iv) investigate the financial impact of the Good Start program on the early childhood education in Western Australia; and
  - (v) investigate any related matters necessary for the committee to report on the above terms of reference.
- (2) That the committee have power to send for persons and papers, to sit on days over which the House stands adjourned, to move from place to place and to report from time to time.
- (3) That the committee present its final report and recommendations by 31 March 1996.

This is an important motion for a select committee because it seeks to involve members of this Parliament in the current debate on early childhood education. In doing that, the motion seeks to involve Parliament in the important consultation process that is due to take place in the next year or so with regard to these matters.

We would all agree that the current period in the education of young children is exciting and crucial. We should make sure that, as these changes take place over the next few years and particularly in the year 2000 when the major changes are planned, we get it right this time. Parliament and members of Parliament have a crucial role to play.

It is clear that many groups of people and many individuals have a role to play in the future of education. This Parliament has a central role given the fact that a quarter of the

State's Budget is spent on education. We have a particular responsibility to be very vigilant about the future of education in this State. We are all familiar with the recent events relating to early childhood education. The issues surrounding early childhood education belong to the community as well as to the professionals in the field. The response of parents, teachers and others in June and July proved that point.

Over the past three years, matters relating to early childhood education have had a high public profile and that dates back to the last six months of the previous Government. Early childhood education was important long before that, but in the past three years we have seen a great deal of activity in the area.

If we think back to the second half of 1992, we will recall that the previous Government made a rather startling announcement that it would be phasing in full time preprimary education for all young Western Australians. The community was taken by surprise by that. There was very little consultation. In fact, if I remember clearly, there was no consultation. There was certainly a lot of noise and comment afterwards and many concerned parents. I recall rallies at Parliament House and I remember presenting a petition on the matter which had 8 000 signatures. The matter concerned parents across the State and particularly parents in country areas, who were very concerned about the ramifications for their schools and children in respect of full time preprimary education.

Mr Taylor: There were also a lot of enthusiastic parents.

Dr CONSTABLE: I agree. However, in some ways the response that we saw then is similar to the response that we saw in June 1995 when the Government announced Good Start mark 1. People thought that the proposal had been dropped on them suddenly. It was not a matter of it not being important or that it was not essential for us to focus on young children. It was not a case of it not being important to spend money on early childhood education. Indeed we should do that. However, parents reacted in both cases because they were concerned about their children, the future of schools in their areas and, more recently, the future of family centres. Those issues belong to parents, teachers, children and to all of us. We should all be concerned about this.

In both those cases, there was a huge public response because of the importance of the subject. As I have already said, part of that response involved concern and worry. It was somewhat negative. However, part of the response was very positive and that is why I have moved the motion for the House to consider. In both those cases, many people felt that the changes were being dropped on them suddenly and that they had little time to consider them. In June, we saw almost a sense of panic among parents who felt that their children would be affected in 1996. Many parents felt that the plans that they had made for themselves and their families were being changed by outside influences over which they had no control.

On both occasions, parents, teachers and other interested people turned to their members of Parliament as their first port of call. In June, many people telephoned their members of Parliament as soon as the announcements were made. My fax and telephones ran hot. I received stacks of letters from people all over the State, not just from my own electorate, who were concerned and interested and who wanted to make positive comments and suggestions about early childhood education.

Clearly, parents and other people see members of Parliament as playing a very important role in education and in early childhood education in respect of the recently announced changes. Parliament has an important role to play in the education debate, and we should take the opportunity to be part of the current debate on early childhood education. There is an expectation in the community that we will do that. I have received many comments, telephone calls, queries and questions about my notice of motion for the select committee. I feel that there is much support in the community generally for us to become involved.

In July, a revised Good Start program was presented to us in response mainly to the concerns of parents and parent groups which were expressed through the media and through members of Parliament. One of the cries was for more time to consider the

changes and more time for them to be properly and fully implemented. The Government should be congratulated on providing that extra time for us to get this right. The delay in the implementation of some of the main aspects of the Good Start program gives Parliament an excellent opportunity to examine early childhood education and to be involved in its future in this State.

I congratulate the Government on focusing on the importance of early childhood education. That focus began quite early in this Government's term with the Scott committee and its report. It is clear from the announcements and the Government's commitment to early childhood education. I also congratulate the Government on being wise enough to respond in the way it did to delay implementation of much of the Good Start program. By delaying it, we should be able to get it right. There will be more time for all interested people to be involved. Those parents and others in the community who felt that they were not involved early on during the Scott inquiry will be able to feel that they can be involved. No-one should be left out or feel that they have been left out this time around.

The time that is being given to us means that we will be able to refine what has been suggested. We will be able to investigate more closely. The pilot studies will be assessed so that the Good Start program can be fine tuned and proper research can be carried out.

In the past 10 years considerable educational change has occurred, much of it for the good. Again, a perception exists, real or imagined - in some cases I suspect real - that much of the change has been rushed. I suspect on some occasions it has not been properly resourced, possibly because although the resources may have been in place initially, over a period they have waned. We now have an excellent opportunity to get right our early education program.

*Sitting suspended from 6.00 to 7.30 pm*

Dr CONSTABLE: I turn now to certain aspects of the Good Start program and matters of substance related to early childhood education. As I said earlier, the focus on early childhood education by the Government is not the issue in this motion; it is the substance of the Good Start program. In my earlier remarks I applauded the Government for focusing on early childhood education and committing resources to that area. The need for value and quality in early childhood education services goes without saying. We are concerned about the development of young children and the foundations of social, intellectual and motor development in other aspects of children's development. We must consider how best the community, through the Government and education, should provide for those children in their early development. We are also concerned about children with special needs or children who might be considered at risk for a range of reasons.

The proposals contained in the Good Start program raise a number of key issues, which I hope the proposed select committee will have the opportunity to address. The major issue that has been focused on so far in the community is that of the appropriate school starting age and whether that should be changed. I do not intend to give a point of view on it tonight. Current research is not particularly clear; different countries have varying attitudes to the school starting age. It is important to take into account local conditions. The history of education in any community is also very important when examining change of this nature. However, it is worth noting that at this point, as far as I know - I am sure it is the case - no intergovernmental agreement has been made among the jurisdictions in Australia on a particular school starting age and towards which the other jurisdictions might be working. We are a long way from reaching agreement among the Governments of Australia on a uniform school starting age. Perhaps that issue should be addressed even further. On the other hand it may not be appropriate to have the same school starting age throughout Australia. I think there are five different starting ages at present.

The Good Start program proposes to concentrate on the provision of kindergarten and preprimary programs as well as look to the early years in primary school. The provisions

that have been put forward so far refer to equity, giving all children an equal opportunity in the early years, and providing choice for parents. We must examine how the Good Start program will provide that choice to parents and children. As we all know, the Good Start program will provide a major change in the education of young children. In doing so it will have enormous implications for teacher training and development both for new teachers and those already in the service. Future training needs must be examined to make sure we have the capacity in our teacher training institutions for that purpose. Clearly such major changes in early childhood will require the teacher training institutions to consider changes to their programs.

Another key issue that has been very much to the fore in the public debate so far is the role of parents in their children's education. The keen interest of parents in their children's education is obvious to all of us. In fact the public meetings I have been to, media reports and so on suggest that the education of young children is central to the lives of most families and parents. It is an issue parents take extremely seriously. Parents certainly have a role in the debate and must be consulted. It is also important that we recognise - I believe the Good Start program will do this - the role of parents working with schools and teachers. That role is extremely important in their children's education and later success.

One of the issues I highlighted in the motion is the education of children with learning disabilities and children who are intellectually disabled. I have a concern about Good Start which needs quite close attention. It seems a fundamental inconsistency exists in trying to justify delaying school entry age and at the same time seeking early intervention and early diagnosis of children with disabilities or children who are at risk of educational disadvantage. We cannot have it both ways. We cannot have delay while saying early intervention is important. As we have known for 35 years or more through the work by the Head Start program in the United States, early intervention is important for children with disabilities and educational disadvantages. However, if entry to school were delayed for those children, we may jeopardise their educational and long term future. This is an important area for the select committee to address. My own experience in the United States in the early 1970s on a program associated with the Head Start program, working with parents and children below the age of three, indicated we must very carefully consider this aspect. I also worked in the developmental assessment clinic at Princess Margaret Hospital some years ago where one of the fundamental issues we addressed was early detection and intervention. Working in a team long before children reach school age is very important. Perhaps the committee could address that aspect and suggest modifications to Good Start which would be more than acceptable.

We must also consider whether it is appropriate to delay entry into school for intellectually able children. This motion raises fundamental issues in education and it is an exciting possibility for members of this Parliament to be involved in addressing them. The need for ongoing research has been clearly recognised in the Good Start announcement. The results from research in education have provided very few absolutes. It is always developing and changing and we must examine some of the research that has been referred to already in order to form our own opinions.

Another key issue is the financial implications of Good Start. I think the costs will be quite major, but my first impression is that it will be money well spent. We need to know what are the initiatives and future financial implications.

A number of interesting changes are being trialled; for example, multi-age classes, an area on which parents are commenting and have concerns about. It is an issue which the select committee I propose should address. Equally important are some of the flow-on effects of the major changes to early childhood education which have not been addressed. The delay associated with the implementation of some parts of the Good Start program would give the proposed select committee the opportunity to examine those flow-on effects to make sure that they are well catered for when they are incorporated into the system. Two main effects have been mentioned in public debate, one of which is the problem which might be encountered at the year 7 level, when two-thirds of the students will reach the age of 13 before they enter high school. We must examine the possibilities

of changing the structure of schools to accommodate the changes that will flow through. Equally important is the increase in the age of students in years 11 and 12. We might have to consider the changes across the board, including the structure of the administration of schools, to take these things into account. All of this has financial and resource implications in educational planning and we must be cognisant of them and have an opinion on them.

It is not surprising that in recent months the education debate has centred on early childhood. However, in time to come the debate will shift to other aspects of the education system which have been introduced in the Good Start program. There is no one set of answers available and we must consider what is best and most appropriate in the Western Australian context. With the introduction of Good Start we are entering a new and exciting phase in education in this State and we are recognising the importance of early childhood education as well as considering major changes which will affect children, schools and teachers into the next century.

Mr Speaker, you might be interested to know that when I was sorting through a pile of papers in my study at home a couple of weeks ago I surprised myself by finding a paper I had written in the early 1980s entitled, "School entry age: School achievement and social adjustment". It involved the study of a group of children who, for various reasons, had entered school before they reached the regular school entry age. It might be the only piece of research ever done in Western Australia on the school starting age and there were no significant differences found between children starting school at an early age and those who did not. It reminded me of some early work I had done with one of the lecturers from the then Churchlands College of Advanced Education, now Edith Cowan University, and it was interesting, in the context of the debate in the past few months, to revisit something which I had completely forgotten I had been involved in.

Since I gave notice of this motion in June the Good Start mark 2 has been announced. Although I gave notice of the motion before the changes were announced by the Premier and the Minister, it is now even more important that this Parliament is given the opportunity to address these crucial issues in education. Given that we have more time to do that and the Parliament agrees to this motion I foreshadow a motion to extend the time for the committee to present its final report and recommendations. The motion provides for a reporting date of 31 March 1996 and I would like to extend that to 30 June 1996 to give the committee the time it requires to deliberate.

A select committee of this Parliament would provide one of the very important forums that special groups and individuals in the community, parents in particular, require to give them the opportunity to put forward their views on these important educational issues. As is always the case with select committees it would be a bipartisan committee and it would examine these issues outside the political framework. The issues are sensitive, but many of the points I have raised in my speech have been in the political arena. We must take these education issues out of the political arena and examine them in a non-adversarial way so that we can contribute to the future education of children in this State. In that way we will be doing what is best for the children rather than what is best for politics.

Already some very good work has been done by the Scott committee but that report is nearly two years old. The community has and continues to form attitudes and ideas about early education. A parliamentary committee would be one of the groups within the community to examine these issues. The committee would be in a special position to conduct its inquiries in a way that would allow it to come up with recommendations which would be of assistance to the Government in its moving forward on the issues relating to early childhood education.

In the past few years we have heard a great deal about the role of Parliament and accountability. Given that the Education budget comprises 25 per cent of the State's Budget, we would not be doing our job in respect of accountability if we did not address these issues.

In summary a select committee would assist, not hinder, the Government and be very

much a part of the mainstream debate on education. I noted with interest that the Minister has appointed Professor Anne Zubrick to chair an early childhood council. The Minister must be congratulated for taking that initiative. Professor Zubrick is an excellent choice and the work of my proposed select committee would assist the work of Professor Zubrick's committee. We have an ideal opportunity to use the resources and the ways and means of a parliamentary committee to seek information that probably no other group in the community has. The select committee would only add to Professor Zubrick's committee's work. While in some ways the interests of the two committees would overlap, they would have different roles and responsibilities and be different from any other group in the community. We would be working towards the same goals, but from very different vantage points.

Since I gave notice that I intended to move this motion many people have written to me or telephoned me and I have been chuffed by the support I have received. Many people have asked me what a select committee could do and they have offered me their support.

At the recent National Party Conference at Esperance a motion relating to the Good Start program was moved, but clearly it was written before the announcement of Good Start mark 2. The motion called for a delay in the Good Start program. In essence, the motion passed by that conference supports my proposal.

I appreciate the support I have received from Opposition members, particularly the support which the Leader of the Opposition gave publicly. I hope this motion will enjoy the support of all members of this House when it is debated on another occasion.

I have taken the time to refer to the history of select committees of this Parliament and I was shocked to find that there have been very few select committees into education. Given the importance of the Education portfolio and of education in the State's Budget, it is many years since this House addressed any educational issues in this way.

I also note with some interest that since 1993 when this Government came to office the Legislative Assembly has supported a wide ranging number of topics in select committees including ancient shipwrecks, groundwater reserves, heritage laws, science and technology, Wittenoom, heavy transport, intervention in childbirth, procedure in this House, recycling and waste management and road management. That is a large number of select committees. The Legislative Council has appointed select committees on the Cape Range national park and Ningaloo marine park, and on the Western Australian Police Force. Given that this House has supported 10 or 11 select committees, I venture to say that this select committee on education is at least equally as important as those. If we can support those select committees, I hope we can support this select committee on education. They are all important, as is this one. I hope that when this select committee is finally debated all members will support it. I commend the motion to the House.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr Tubby.

## MEDICAL CARE OF THE DYING BILL

### *Second Reading*

Resumed from 24 May.

**MR RIEBELING** (Ashburton) [7.52 pm]: This Bill was introduced by the member for Kalgoorlie, Mr Ian Taylor, after a great deal of consultation. I congratulate him for the effort he put into that consultation process and for putting forward this Bill. I hope that members of the Government are free to vote on this Bill as a matter of conscience rather than on a political basis. Opposition members will vote on this Bill according to their conscience. It is important that all members have their say on this type of legislation, and that it is not defeated or passed purely on political grounds.

It is important for everyone to note that this Bill is about the care of the dying, and not the care of people who are very sick or who might like to end their life. It is not about euthanasia. It is not, as some people suggest, a Bill which allows suicide, or euthanasia. I will define my perceptions of euthanasia and place clearly on the record my reasons for

supporting this legislation and for proposing the amendments that appear in my name on the Notice Paper.

Euthanasia is an act of intervention by somebody to end someone's life. This legislation, with and without the proposed amendment, will not allow for that. It will provide for a system to withdraw care which is purely designed to sustain or prolong life, and if the person will never get better, he or she is allowed to die naturally and with the degree of dignity that most people in this place would expect when their time comes. It is important that all members in this place bear those simple facts in mind when considering this issue, because it can become emotive and many people will use a religious argument either to support or reject it.

If people deal with this legislation in a Christian way, they will support it. This Bill will not allow people to be killed. It allows for people to die as nature has determined. If they are dying from cancer - that is how they pass away. There is no lethal injection. None of that sort of action is contemplated or will be allowed under this legislation.

The lengthy amendments I have proposed relate to what is commonly called a living will. That means that a person can put his or her wishes in the form of a will and plan ahead for the day when they may not be in a position to make a decision. It is relevant in the case of a person who, after being admitted to hospital, is told that he or she will not recover and is asked whether they want to sustain life once they have reached the point where there is no cure, or whether they want the hospital to provide palliative care until nature takes its course. That is an admirable aim, and that is why I support this Bill. This Bill does not cater for cases such as car accident victims with major head injuries. That person is not in a position to decide whether he or she should go onto life support systems that will sustain life without there being any possibility of a cure. The amendments I have proposed endeavour to give terminally ill patients a choice in the care they receive. I will go through five sections of the amendments which will be self-explanatory.

The amendments would affirm and protect the rights of terminally ill persons to refuse unwarranted medical treatment, allow the appointment of an agent by enduring power of attorney, allow an agent or guardian to refuse medical treatment on behalf of the incompetent patient, protect the agent, the guardian, the medical practitioner and other health professionals, and deal with related purposes. That is clearly what the amendments are about. They ensure that an agent is able to act for the person who is ill. There is no great argument about that provision.

My next amendment relates to clause 3. Just one line is important. So that members have a good grasp of what I am trying to avoid with the amendment, it states that the person who is appointed -

has no pecuniary interest in the estate of the patient.

That is important. Many people would say, "If you appoint an agent, he might inherit your estate." That is a specific provision to make sure that, if an agent makes a decision that inevitably results in the death of a person, that person has no interest in the estate of the person for whom he was an agent. That would put a great onus on someone making what is known as a living will to pick a person whom they trust, to explain fully to that person what their wishes are when they sign the forms, and of course to make sure that the appointed person is willing to take on that responsibility. It is an important amendment.

It is my intention in Committee to talk about the first amendment. I put the House on notice that if the first amendment is defeated, the balance will not be pursued. The last thing I want to do is to prejudice the carriage of the primary Bill. For that reason, I do not want to waste the time of the House.

I now refer to agents and guardians in clause 6(2)(a), which states that an appointment -

- takes effect if and only if the person giving the power becomes incompetent.

That is another important issue of which we should be aware. Such a power of attorney does not empower a person to say, "Gee, Jim looks crook; that's the end." That is taken

out of his hands. The form is used only when the patient is not capable of making decisions. If the patient is capable of making decisions himself, the agent cannot have any role. Under the legislation, if a patient signed such an authority, the enduring power of attorney would no longer exist because the authority would override the continuing power of attorney.

It is not as though there would be a conflict. If the patient is able to make a decision, the agent would not have a role. It is not as though a person will say, "Gee, Jim looks sick; it's about time we finished his suffering."

Mr Cowan: How does Fred look?

Mr RIEBELING: I look very well. That is not how the legislation is designed to work. In fact, the agent has no ability to instigate such action. The only way in which such action can take place is if a medical doctor who has care of the patient decides that the person is dying and that no medical treatment will reverse that. If the patient is incompetent, that doctor will go to the agent and explain the situation as though he were talking to the patient. The agent, knowing the patient's wishes because he discussed them with him prior to the agent's appointment, will decide as though he were the patient. He can make two decisions, of course. Nothing in the legislation says that they must request that the doctor cease treatment. The person might say, "I don't think that that's good enough. You can't stop the treatment."

If an agent has been properly spoken to by the person who gave the power of attorney, the decision would probably flow after advice from a medical practitioner to the effect that the person is dying and that it would be more just to let nature take its course rather than have a mechanical device prolong what is technically life but, which, in the mind of the person suffering, might not be the quality of life that he would expect or wish to continue with.

Mr Prince: I understand why the member says that the agent should have no interest in the estate. The burden he is placing on the agent would surely best be discharged by the person who is the closest next of kin, for example a spouse or child. I appreciate that there is a difference.

Mr RIEBELING: I hear what the member says. It would be easier to get someone in that situation to make that decision. However, on the death of a close relative, the person closest to that person - for example, a wife, son or whomever - is probably emotionally not in the best position to make a rational decision on the future of that person.

Mr Prince: I intend to speak in the debate, and I have been in that position.

Mr RIEBELING: I have as well. That is why I have put forward the amendment.

Mr Prince: I can see the problem. Say, for example, the person who was to be agent or trustee is the family lawyer or someone of that nature. Are you not placing a burden on him? It is an onerous burden that might not be able to be taken by anybody else. They might be liable to a complaint at law from the next of kin after the person's death. I do not want to take the member's time.

Mr RIEBELING: It is best primarily not to have an agent who is interested in the estate. That is vital. Most family members would fall into that category. If a family member was not part of the estate, nothing would preclude him from being appointed. I suppose that it would be a dead giveaway to a son or daughter who was approached that they were not in the will.

Mr Prince: Perhaps you should rephrase that!

Mr RIEBELING: It would be a living giveaway because people might find out they are not part of the estate, and that may cause trauma. The amendment will avoid the perception that this Bill will allow people with an interest to become an agent and knock off Uncle Bill.

Mr Prince: Do you envisage this occurring in the last hours of life?

Mr RIEBELING: Yes. This legislation covers most people who go into hospital, and in



the last couple of days when they know they are heading into a coma the situation will be covered.

My amendments relate to people who wish to plan ahead. For instance, if I drove away from this place tonight and had an accident on the road and suffered a serious head injury and died, my feelings would not be known. The proposed amendments do not take away my ability, if I am in a situation where I can make a decision, to make that decision. As soon as I sign the authority to take away the power of attorney through this legislation, that is it. This is an attempt to put right the situation which occurs on a daily basis in many hospitals. Whether people agree it should be occurring, it does occur in many hospitals especially with the urgent need in our community to make sure the palliative care workers are protected. These people do an outstanding job, and I am sure most people who have had anything to do with the care of the dying in religious, government and private hospitals in this State will applaud the work of those dedicated people. It is a burden that we, as legislators, might not like to tackle but it is a serious problem and we should tackle it bearing in mind what is best primarily for the patient but also for people who have dedicated their lives to caring for people in their last few days, weeks or months.

My next amendment relates to clause 5; that is, the patient's agent or guardian has been informed about the nature of the patient's current condition to the extent that would be reasonably sufficient to enable the patient, if he or she were competent, to make a decision about whether to refuse medical treatment. It is not simply a matter of Joe Bloggs, the new agent, saying that the person for whom he is the agent looks ill. The process is not instigated by the agent. The action must be instigated by a doctor who approaches the agent; and he must bear in mind always that it is a decision about a person who is dying. People may say, "What about Harry Smith who has chronic bowel problems or any other complaint that causes great pain?" The fact that the person is in great pain is not sufficient to contemplate ending a life, under this legislation. This amendment relates to people in the process of dying. This legislation cannot be seen to do anything other than address the treatment of the dying. That is the reason that the title of the Bill is so apt and should be supported.

Further amendments address the reasons for the withdrawal of the service. They must fall into various categories. One is that medical treatment would cause unreasonable distress to the patient. That is a decision that the agent would make on behalf of the person who is incapable of making a decision. No-one would make that decision lightly. As pointed out correctly by the Minister for Housing, it is a decision that probably the relatives would be in the best position to make. However, in the distressing circumstance when someone is dying, a member of the family may not be the best person to undertake that role. The second amendment relates to reasonable grounds for believing that the patient, if competent, and after giving serious consideration to his or her health and well being, would consider that the medical treatment is unwarranted. That is the basic premise of the amendments.

The agent must put himself in the body, so to speak, of the person who is ill, and make a decision whether the person would want to refuse medical treatment. Most people who have had experience with people dying would hope that if they were in that situation someone would make a decision to ensure they died as nature expected them to, with dignity and with as little pain as possible. That is the reason that this Bill protects workers in that field so well. The Bill goes a long way to achieving that end. We have the opportunity to go one step further, and that is the reason I offer these amendments.

I emphasise again that I will debate initially only the first amendment. If that amendment is defeated I will not proceed with any of the others. I hope that government members will have the freedom to vote as they wish, and that the party room will not determine which way they vote. I hope that this legislation is accepted. I commend the Bill to the House.

**DR HAMES (Dianella) [8.18 pm]:** I support the principles contained in this Bill. I will comment briefly because I am aware that there is a fair queue waiting to speak on this

legislation. I hope that I will have another opportunity to speak in Committee or at the third reading stage. In supporting the principles of the Bill, I wish to clearly indicate that the views I express are mine and not those of my party. I support only the principles of the legislation at this stage, and will not discuss the contents of the Bill, because I will take the opportunity to listen to debate, study the amendments, and participate in debate in the party room. I congratulate the member for Kalgoorlie for introducing this legislation. We all know that on occasions the member has a fiery temper but no-one can deny that he is a very caring and compassionate person. That compassion is reflected in this Bill.

The bulk of what has been suggested in the second reading speech has occurred in medical practice for a long time. As a medical practitioner, although not having practised in a hospital for a considerable time, I would like to back up what the member has said about the problems doctors have had. Perhaps I can provide some anecdotal information about what has happened to me and to other members of my profession.

There has always been a significant dilemma of what to do and how to manage terminally ill patients, in particular someone who has terminal cancer. It is these patients who are referred to most often in relation to this type of legislation. Such patients might develop a secondary problem, for instance, pneumonia. If one were to treat someone who has pneumonia and who is dying of cancer and they recover and go on to live another week, the question is whether one is doing them a favour. Is it something we should be doing? Doctors have asked that question for many years.

In general, one does tend to treat a patient in that situation. The problem occurs when the patient refuses treatment because he or she wants to pass away and sees dying of pneumonia as preferable to dying more slowly from cancer. While they refuse treatment we are not able to give it. However, we are then faced with a dilemma. Inevitably that person loses consciousness at some stage as the illness becomes more severe. We then have a patient who is no longer able to refuse treatment. Invariably they are dehydrated and require a drip, into which one would normally put antibiotics to cure the pneumonia. They then recover to go on suffering from terminal cancer.

That issue has been very difficult for us, as is the problem of cardiac arrest. Cardiac arrest is a reasonably common way for patients with cancer to die rather than from the cancer itself. There is always the dilemma for a doctor when someone has a cardiac arrest. Does one resuscitate them? The resuscitation vehicle in hospital is called "the heart cart". One calls for the heart cart and resuscitates someone who is about to die from cancer. That patient does not regard the doctor very highly for doing that.

In practice, that does not happen. In the notes of that patient, in a small spot in a column on the side, three letters are written by the doctor managing that patient: NFR, which stands for "not for resuscitation". Any doctor coming on duty who is unaware of the problems of that patient sees that notation and knows that if the patient has a life threatening episode, he or she does not run to the room, they walk quietly. They do not call for the heart cart. They establish the general condition of the patient before initiating any drastic treatment. The difficulty that doctors have always had is that in reality that is illegal. In effect, one is murdering that patient according to the law, even though according to our normal practice that is not how we regard it.

Another issue that I would like to raise with regard to this is the injecting of morphine, which is the usual analgesic administered to patients with terminal cancer to ease their pain. It was mentioned that we might be talking about the last few hours of life. In effect it is the last few days or perhaps even weeks. At some stage one reaches a position where people seem to be dying of cancer but then they come good for a week or two. One never knows exactly when they will die and it is very difficult to tell.

I am sure that many doctors have been faced with a patient who is close to death. It is normally relatively easy to tell when a patient is close to death and suffering significant pain. In that case, when one is deciding to inject morphine, the quantity of morphine injected is always a very difficult decision to make. Morphine is also a respiratory suppressant - it decreases the ability to breathe. If one administers sufficient morphine to

someone with terminal cancer who is in a very weakened state there is a very good chance that the injection will kill the patient. One must decide whether to give sufficient morphine to relieve the pain. The decision normally made is that one administers as much morphine as is required; that is, one gives a larger dose of morphine rather than a smaller dose. I am not saying that doctors overdose patients; it is just that a standard 15 milligram ampoule of morphine compared to a 30 milligram ampoule can make a significant difference. Generally, to relieve the severe pain towards the end of life, at least 30 mg is required, and sometimes much more if the patient has been on morphine for a considerable period - its effect is reduced over time. Sometimes one finds that, having given a 30 mg injection to stop pain, within an hour or so the patient passes away.

The question is always whether that injection caused the death. I think that in many cases it has. I do not think there is anything wrong with that for someone who has terminal cancer. That is why I support the Bill; it clarifies this situation. This issue has not been raised very often. One did not discuss it much with patients or with relatives. One gave an injection to stop the pain and if the patient passed away, he or she has died of cancer. This is good because it will bring this out into the open. It will allow discussion with patients and relatives and it will increase the understanding of what is occurring and what can occur.

I heard statements earlier that this was another form of suicide or euthanasia. Frankly, it is not. We are talking about people who are dying. To commit suicide or to assist a person to commit suicide - in effect euthanasia - means the deliberate taking of a person's life when that person would otherwise have died from some other cause, whether it be old age or illness. We are talking about people dying from cancer or those in the last stages of some other terminal illness. These people have no hope of surviving. One is not assisting someone to commit suicide in that situation, one is providing sufficient analgesia in the case of administering morphine. If someone is refusing treatment, they are not committing suicide - they are allowing themselves a natural death from something that is already killing them. They do not want doctors or anyone else messing around with their body or doing unpleasant things to them. They want to die in peace, and this Bill will allow them to do that.

Those who are opposed to suicide and euthanasia should remain so. They should have no fears about this Bill. Admittedly, if amendments are made to change the Bill, that is a different matter. We are not talking about amendments. If amendments are moved, members should argue that they not be accepted. I do not personally support euthanasia, although I have in the past - I have changed my mind.

I am happy to support this Bill. I have a few queries that I would like answered at a later stage. In the last part where injections for the terminally ill are mentioned there is nothing to dictate in any sense what quantity of drug is acceptable. If members are talking about this creeping into euthanasia, this is one area in which that possibility exists. One must have agreement from the person who is the agent to give an injection that may kill a person. However, according to my reading of the Bill, that does not have to be in writing. Therefore, there is nothing to confirm the agreement. There is nothing to say that the doctor, relative and patient have not come to some agreement that the person wished to die earlier - that is, euthanasia - and the doctor would give a much larger injection knowing that it had a chance of killing the patient much more quickly, and saying that the injection was only for the relief of pain.

That area needs to be looked at and clarified. Another area I am not sure of and on which I would like some clarification is the definition of terminal illness. I cannot find in the Bill a definition of terminal illness. I wonder how it relates to someone with total renal failure. That person with no medical treatment is a terminally ill patient, because without dialysis that person will die. If that person refuses dialysis, does that come within the confines of this Bill in that one has a patient who but for medical treatment is terminally ill and, according to this legislation, they could legitimately refuse that treatment? I do not think it should be allowed to be included. We have cases of renal failure from all ages and, as with any other people of all ages, they are prone to conditions like depression. Anyone with depression might consider suicide, and refusing dialysis may

be seen by those people as a form of suicide. I would like clarification on that issue and also on someone with total respiratory and perhaps cardiac failure following a motor vehicle accident where the patient is insufflated and ventilated, where he is still conscious and can communicate and may refuse medical treatment. It might be a reasonable option for those people to say, "I do not want to be kept artificially alive any more. I want to die." I do not have too many difficulties with that. However, the same problems occur with those people where they quite frequently go through significant and severe depression. At any one of those stages a person may decide they do not want to live but it might be a different situation at a later stage when depression is adequately treated. I would like some clarification of the exact nature of the requirements relating to the Bill.

I offer my support for this Bill and congratulations to the member for Kalgoorlie. I notice that it has received support from many areas in the medical profession. The Bill is not before time.

**MR PENDAL** (South Perth) [8.33 pm]: We are dealing tonight with arguably one of the most important pieces of legislation that has come before Parliament in recent years, not the least reason being because it is a Bill - and I might say a good Bill - which goes to the very heart of what must concern us in a civilised society. It comes to grips with the issue of the sanctity of human life. I had intended several months ago in any case to support the Bill in an unamended form. As fate would have it since the Parliament last met the matter has gone out of the realm of the theoretical in my case and into that of reality, because my wife lost her father on 28 June of this year after a long illness in which many of the issues inherent in this Bill were raised. Secondly, on Sunday of last week my mother died after a protracted illness where the same issues were apparent. Unlike the Chief Minister of the Northern Territory, Marshall Perron, whose attitude as a result of his mother's death was changed on this issue, my own experience did not change my views but, if anything, confirmed to me the wisdom of the Bill before the House.

I have always opposed euthanasia. I cannot see any circumstances under which I would alter my mind. This Bill does not deal with euthanasia. That must be made very clear by speakers in support of it. I support the Bill in the form in which the member for Kalgoorlie has proposed without amendment. In a moment I will comment on the amendments foreshadowed by the member for Ashburton. It is true to say that it is little short of extraordinary that the Bill before the House has support from such disparate groups as the Western Australian Voluntary Euthanasia Society on the one hand and leading Roman Catholic ethicists and philosophers on the other. I understand but totally reject the ultimate agenda of WAVES, which was outlined in the latest letter to members. Although I respect their right to express a view I make it clear that I do not agree with their ultimate agenda. One of the people I consulted was Father Walter Black, who is the head of the L. J. Goody Bioethics Centre in Western Australia. Apart from having a fine mind and being a leading ethicist in his own right he is also a consultant to the Australian Medical Association on such topics. Father Walter Black takes the view that the Bill drafted by the member for Kalgoorlie represents, expresses and reflects what he says are sound and traditional medical ethics. I understand that it was not always the case that the member for Kalgoorlie's Bill was in its current form, because in its original form it talked about the rights of patients whereas that has been refined to deal with the rights of terminally ill persons. That is reflected in clause 5 of the Bill. It did not mention before the refusal of treatment "when that medical treatment is futile or is excessively burdensome". For those who want to maintain support for the Bill the retention of clause 12 is crucial to the whole affair. Without offending standing orders I read an abridged version of clause 12, missing out the words which are not important for the moment to my argument -

A medical practitioner . . . is not . . . guilty of a criminal offence . . . or . . . liable in civil proceedings, for administering to any terminally ill person a drug or other treatment for the control or elimination of that person's pain or suffering which also has the effect of shortening that person's life expectancy if . . . there is not an intention to cause the death of that person . . .

The document mentions other things, but to me that says it all and is the kernel of that matter. We have just heard you, Mr Acting Speaker (Dr Hames), speak from the floor of the Chamber about your medical experience when a drug is administered in order to alleviate pain but where it is known that it can hasten a person's death. In those circumstances - I have had a recent personal experience involving that - we are not talking about euthanasia, but treatment that is futile or excessively burdensome. It is important that those sections remain in an unamended form.

I have not the slightest doubt that the member for Ashburton is moved by the most sincere intentions in the amendments he circulated prior to the House sitting. Although he does not need me to come to his defence, nonetheless, I do not believe that his amendments in any way swing the Bill to a totality of euthanasia. However, they help to muddy the waters and they take away the essential clarity that currently exists in the member for Kalgoorlie's Bill. The destruction of that clarity would be a tragedy and would cause me to withdraw my support for the legislation. A better course of action may be for the member for Ashburton to introduce a separate Bill in order to test those views he has expressed and outlined tonight which are incorporated in his amendment. That would allow the contents of his Bill to be tested on their merits, rather than to take away some of the essential clarity in the Bill in its current state.

One is entitled to ask what in all of that is really at stake. I say this because it is consistent with other things I have said in my time in Parliament: At stake is the fundamental issue; namely, the sanctity of human life itself. It is perhaps the most fundamental issue we get to deal with. Firstly, euthanasia is anathema to me, and I am pleased to hear your views as a medical practitioner on that, Mr Acting Speaker. Secondly, I believe that euthanasia is an affront to the sanctity of human life, just as I believe that abortion is an affront to the sanctity of human life - I know that others do not share that view - and just as I believe that capital punishment is an affront to the sanctity of human life. It remains a point of pride to me that I persuaded a sufficient number of non-Labor Party members in the upper House about a decade ago to cross the floor and vote for the end of capital punishment in Western Australia. The common thread in all three examples is that each in my opinion is an affront to the sanctity of human life. We should be doing a lot more to protect and enhance that sanctity than we are.

If the real issue is that question of sanctity, this Bill is capable of being supported. Even people who have no religious persuasions or persuasions other than those of the Roman Catholic Church would acknowledge that there is no harsher critic anywhere in the world of measures of this kind than that organisation; yet Father Walter Black and people of his kind are able to say that this is a good Bill. In fact, Father Black goes further and says in his conversations with me, which he knows I will repeat here, that the Bill stands as a protection against euthanasia in Western Australia. In the course of remarks made tonight references have been made to the role of palliative care in the subject under discussion. The *European Journal of Palliative Care*, published in the spring of 1994, states -

In this context, it is essential to distinguish between: euthanasia; control of pain and other symptoms; and withholding or discontinuing life-prolonging treatments. One must never confuse these three different types of clinical judgments and activities.

It continues at some length, but in an abridged form I will quote three or four parts to that explanation. It helps in the public debate to distinguish between euthanasia and a Bill of the kind that currently is before members. Under the heading "Euthanasia" the journal states -

The term euthanasia should be reserved for the compassion-motivated, deliberate, rapid and painless termination of the life of someone afflicted with an incurable and progressive disease. A suffering and terminally ill person is not allowed to die - his or her life is terminated.

The second explanation, which deals with the control of pain and other symptoms, states -

Doctors have a professional and moral mandate to use every reasonable means available to free patients from the pain and other symptoms that cause them to suffer. . .

The purpose of such treatment is to free patients from the pain and intense discomfort that dominates consciousness and leaves no psychic space available for the personally important things people want to think about, say and do before they die. The aim of such treatment is to liberate life, not to terminate it.

The final explanation under the heading "Withholding/discontinuing life-prolonging treatments" states -

In the course of illness, the time arrives when it is no longer possible to restore health, function or consciousness, and no longer possible to reverse the dying process. The most that even the aggressive use of sophisticated technology can achieve is to prolong that dying process. It is in these situations that we speak correctly of withholding or withdrawing interventions that are not stabilising a person's life, but only prolonging a person's dying.

I emphasise that. Further on it continues -

We acknowledge that prolonging life at all costs, especially at the cost of unbearable suffering, is not the right thing to do. That is the point of the evolving ethic of allowing the dying to die, and in doing everything possible and justifiable to help them die in peace and without pain.

That is the point raised in all my quotes. To continue -

That is the point of palliative medicine and palliative care.

Other parts of this document are worthy of quoting, but owing to time constraints I do not intend to do so. It is interesting that the journal deals with the concept of futility, which is a concept the member for Kalgoorlie has embodied; indeed, he has used the words "the rejection of futile treatment". But - it is a big "but" - under the heading "Euthanasia is not necessary" the journal rings some bells for me when it states -

The binary logic of the alternative, dying with pain or euthanasia, may have held true in earlier periods, before the development of modern methods of palliative medicine and palliative care. It does not hold true today, anywhere in the world. The civilised solution rests with a rapid implementation of programmes of palliative medicine and palliative care, not with resignation to pressures for euthanasia.

It continues -

Euthanasia, even when motivated by compassion, is not a socially acceptable substitute for the establishment of effective programmes of palliative medicine and palliative care.

The challenge of civilisation to our societies at the end of this decade is to transform our care of the suffering and the dying, not to legalise an act that would all too easily substitute for the palliative competence, compassion and community that human beings need during the most difficult moments of their lives.

That is utterly relevant to what we are talking about. I quote one other document which will serve as a gentle reminder about the way in which modern popes have sought to influence the arguments and public debate in respect of the matters now under discussion. It is interesting from my point of view, and I do not ask anyone else to accept it although, strangely enough, I believe others in this House will feel comfortable with this view. As early as 38 years ago, the then reigning Pope Pius XII was called upon to address an international group of doctors and in the course of that address this question was raised. The quotes I will use have recently been used by the current pope who produced an encyclical letter earlier this year on the value and inviolability of human life. I think members will find the statement by the current pope interesting in the context of this debate -

Euthanasia must be distinguished from the decision to forego so-called "aggressive medical treatment", in other words, medical procedures which no longer correspond to the real situation of the patient, either because they are by now disproportionate to any expected results or because they impose an excessive burden on the patient and his family. In such situations, when death is clearly imminent and inevitable, one can in conscience "refuse forms of treatment that would only secure a precarious and burdensome prolongation of life, so long as the normal care due to the sick person in similar cases is not interrupted". Certainly there is a moral obligation to care for oneself and to allow oneself to be cared for, but this duty must take account of concrete circumstances. It needs to be determined whether the means of treatment available are objectively proportionate to the prospects for improvement. To forego extraordinary or disproportionate means is not the equivalent of suicide or euthanasia; it rather expresses acceptance of the human condition in the face of death.

A little later is the quote by Pius XII in 1957 who affirmed it is licit to relieve pain by narcotics, even when the result is decreased consciousness and a shortening of life - that is precisely what my family experienced as recently as a week ago - "if no other means exist, and if, in the given circumstances, this does not prevent the carrying out of other religious and moral duties". The article continues -

In such a case, death is not willed or sought, even though for reasonable motives one runs the risk of it: there is simply a desire to ease pain effectively by using the analgesics which medicine provides.

It continues with some other equally valid material which I will not include tonight. It may come as a surprise to some members, and they may find it discomfiting to learn, that they are in agreement with modern popes. However, it lends weight to the legislation currently before us. I believe the Bill should proceed in its current form and should be passed. There is much merit in proceeding slowly, to allow the sort of community debate that has been going on at a certain level in the past couple of months. That will enable people to deal with the issue maturely and sensitively, and with intellectual honesty. I hope the Bill is not amended as outlined by the member for Ashburton on the Notice Paper. As recently as this evening I was given a copy of Archbishop Hickey's statement in respect of the Bill. I agree with that statement which includes the following -

Given the current push for euthanasia in Australia, any legislation that contains provisions for the terminally ill must be subjected to the closest scrutiny.

He is not suggesting that the Bill is about euthanasia. I agree with his statement. He goes on to deal with a number of other important issues, and asks the legislators in this State to proceed with a great deal of caution in order to not transmit the wrong message to the wider community. He states -

Unless the concerns are addressed -

He puts it no higher: It is not opposition to it or a request for rejection; he is expressing concerns which I hope the member for Kalgoorlie will address. It continues -

- what claims to be a Bill to prevent euthanasia legislation might in fact pave the way for it.

That is the fear. For my part, I do not believe it represents euthanasia in any form. It represents clear thinking on the part of the member who introduced it, and clear drafting on the part of the person who drew up the Bill. I look forward to the debate which will unfold in the months ahead, and if it drags on and is on the slow side, so be it. Generally legislation that is rushed is bad legislation, and legislation put under extreme scrutiny tends to be good legislation. I signal my intention to support the Bill in its current form.

**DR EDWARDS** (Maylands) [8.58 pm]: I, too, support this Bill. Many of my remarks will be similar to those of the member for South Perth and those in your excellent speech, Mr Acting Speaker (Dr Hames). I congratulate the member for Kalgoorlie on drafting a Bill which has this effect across the Chamber, because it demonstrates that he has truly

hit a nerve in the community. This matter needs to be discussed and resolved by Parliament. I reiterate that this Bill is about affirming and protecting the rights of the terminally ill to refuse unwanted medical treatment. It is also to protect medical practitioners and other health professionals who assist in the refusal of the treatment. This is a step in a very important debate and one which the community is now signalling it wants held in this Chamber. I take the stance of being interested in any outcomes that empower people, and this Bill certainly empowers people.

This Bill is about giving people the right to refuse medical treatment. It is not about euthanasia. I am pleased about that because I know that many things in my background, probably not the least of which is the fact that I am a doctor, cause me to have some difficulty in thinking about and coming to terms with where I stand on the topic of euthanasia. I have no such problem with giving people the right to refuse medical treatment. This Bill is very important because without reducing the powers of doctors, it will clarify their role and tell all of the parties involved that they have rights and responsibilities, and they have power. My experience is that very often dying people feel that they have little power, and certainly little control. As other speakers have demonstrated, this issue is intensely personal. I guess all issues with regard to birth, death and some other aspects of life are intensely personal. It is good that at the same time as this Bill is being debated in this Parliament, we have a Select Committee on Intervention in Childbirth, and that is an interesting reflection of the things with which the Parliament is dealing in this day and age. I am pleased that this is a private member's Bill because it will allow a more free and open debate in this Chamber, and I look forward to hearing other members' contributions.

I will reflect on some of my experiences as a doctor; in particular, those experiences that brought me face to face with death. I was in general practice, and perhaps unlike you, Mr Acting Speaker (Dr Hames), I had little to do with death because my client population tended to be young and healthy. However, when I worked in hospitals in the late 1970s and early 1980s, I saw many things that concerned me, and even now, 16 years later, that is why I feel very strongly about this Bill and why it is extremely important that this Bill is before this Parliament. I will talk in general terms about some of the things that I experienced, in the hope that those situations have changed. The first of my experiences could be headed "heroic efforts to prolong life". I saw many examples of that in tests that were not needed and in interventions that were not warranted but were imposed upon people, and also in the way in which people were managed. Fortunately, I know that things have improved since that time, and the doctors to whom I speak assure me that there is now more communication. However, some people who have been closely involved with the system, usually with relatives who have died, tell me that they do not think the situation has changed in the way which they want to see, and they are screaming out for a Bill such as this which spells out that people can refuse unwarranted medical intervention.

I witnessed actions at one extreme where all sorts of things were done to people in an attempt to keep them alive, yet the same people, with no consultation, and with what appeared to me to be little consideration, reasoning or deep thought, were then over a period of time given a lot of morphine and were assisted to slide quickly away from life. Those people were being actively assisted to die, but that was not spelt out and there was no discussion about whether that should occur. It was really a case where the people in control took that action. I was also involved in situations where I was aware that the book was being thrown at people in order to keep them alive, and I saw some good outcomes. I remember one man in particular who was very ill and who, if he was not dying then, would have died shortly afterwards, who was kept alive so that he could get married. That was significant for him and, I am sure, his wife, and it meant a lot to those of us who were part of that experience. I appreciate and support this Bill because it will empower individuals by telling them that they are important, they have rights, they have a voice, they can make their own choices, and they can tell the more powerful people - the health decision makers - what they want.

I turn now to euthanasia. I define euthanasia as a measure that is taken to hasten death



but is intended to provide what one might call a good death. I have seen that occur. My great unease about euthanasia is that, generally speaking, people are not told why euthanasia is occurring and what will be the outcome. I reiterate that I have not been involved in that type of medical practice for about 15 years so I cannot talk about the practice today. However, all of us in this Parliament have experienced things that have influenced us, and we often need to spell that out so that others will know where we are coming from. I have heard people being told that the use of morphine will alleviate and help manage their pain, when the side-effect may be that it will hasten their death, and after my experience of that in hospitals, I became very reluctant to administer morphine. I remember telephoning a registrar in the middle of the night and saying, "I will not administer this dose of morphine unless you can tell me that I will not kill the patient", and the registrar said, "Give it, because in this case the morphine will help the man's breathing and make him more comfortable." I gave that morphine to that patient and sat with him for quite a while, and it had a magic effect on his breathing because he became more comfortable.

In picking up some of the things said by the member for Dianella, I am getting into the area of medical practice, where perhaps members of Parliament should not tell doctors what to do, but, equally, members of Parliament, the public, and particularly the relatives of the dying, need to know more clearly what is happening to those patients. There is often a lot of conflict in this area, and it may be difficult for the people involved because they are emotional and under great stress. There is no doubt that palliative care physicians have gained a lot of wisdom over the years, and I hope that wisdom can come through in Bills like this. The palliative care movement has served us extremely well and should be nurtured.

I turn now to some of the graphic things that I experienced a long time ago when I worked in neurosurgical wards, and if I am dwelling on this, it is because it had a huge impact on me. It was evident to me in that work that we cannot predict life as much as we like to think we can, and it left me with an increased respect for life. One of the horrible experiences that I had was working in a room where all of the people were on ventilators and smelt as though they were dead. I believe that although their hearts were beating and their lungs were being made to move so that they could breathe, they probably were dead; and that is where this Bill will be very useful. However, that created a dilemma and a conflict, because while I was working on that ward, I saw a man wake up after some months on a ventilator, and, after a longer time, walk out of that ward and resume his life. In some ways, without going too far, that was probably a miracle. Dealing with death is much more complicated than people think. It is not black and white; it is all sorts of shades of grey. This Bill picks up on a lot of that and gives back the power to the people who are approaching death.

On a more personal note, like the member for Kalgoorlie, I have not had to face these issues; however, my husband has. I will briefly outline the story of the death of his mother. At that stage my husband was in nursing management in a hospital where his mother was admitted. He will say that he thought he had the whole thing sorted out. He had a clear idea of how much treatment someone with cancer should get, when it should be stopped and how death could be comfortable. He talked about getting on a dreadful medical merry-go-round where there was subtle pressure on his mother to try just one more treatment, to see whether another treatment worked or to suggest just another two days' chemotherapy. He said that sometimes he would feel really bad about wanting to go on with this, in particular when he saw the devastating side effects of what was happening. In the end he felt that he had to be very rude, loud and aggressive to get what he, his family and his mother wanted - to have the medical treatment withdrawn.

In some ways I have given a very long, somewhat emotional and personal prelude. I needed to do that to demonstrate that this is a very complex and personal issue, and I think members will be bringing their own stories. It is also a very emotional issue. Death is final and we all face it. I believe the community is asking us to look at this issue and that it wants us to take a more active part in it. In the past year I have been impressed to see the actions of people like Jackie Kennedy-Onassis who publicly said

that she had had all the treatment she wanted; that enough was enough; and that she wanted to leave hospital and to die with dignity - and that is what she did. Decisions were made in a similar vein by the family of Richard Nixon when he reached a similar stage. The message is that it is okay to die with dignity, and our focus should be on the people who are approaching death and from the point of view of making the passage to whatever afterlife a person believes in to be much easier and much more humane.

One of the limitations of this Bill is that we are dealing with perfect circumstances, with people who are competent to make decisions. It is about reducing medical treatment. I guess in future we will have to confront other issues about people who are not legally competent and those who are chronically ill. Those issues will be very difficult to confront. I wonder when the community will ask us to confront them.

Mr Prince: I am intrigued to know your view of the amendments put forward by the member for Ashburton.

Dr EDWARDS: I am glad the Minister raised that because it fits in with what I want to say next. I will make my statement and then answer the Minister's question. I have a personal difficulty with my mother, a very strict Catholic, giving all of her children specific instructions that if anything were to happen to her, she does not want any life prolonging treatment, any heroic treatment or to go to an intensive care ward or anything like that. It horrifies me as a daughter because I do not welcome the thought of my mother considering those things. It also horrifies me as a doctor because I have seen people who appeared to be in a dreadful state of dying, who received some treatment which reversed the condition, as the member for Dianella alluded to, and they were fine.

Mr Prince: It is also an acceptance of mortality.

Dr EDWARDS: Yes. Having said that, I believe the amendments would cover the things in which my mother would be more interested. At this stage I have not fully made up my mind although I lean a little towards them. Like many others here, I will be listening to what everyone else says and hearing the issues teased out.

This is an incredibly important Bill. It sets directions for the way in which people may want to die, I hope more easily. I am not versed enough in the detail of the amendments to give my full impression. I feel quite comfortable doing that, given that we have a conscience vote. I may well come to the Minister later to ask his legal advice. We need to ask why this debate has come about now. That has happened for a number of reasons. One is that there have been great technological advances which did not exist 100 years ago. We now have the means to keep people alive much longer and keep them in better health for longer. People are living longer and are not dying of infectious diseases as happened in the past. People are perhaps more attuned to how they want to die. One group of people who have expressed this are those dying of AIDS, and I have had experience with people who have died of AIDS. These people are a marginalised group and like others in marginalised groups, these people have skills. Many of the people with whom I have dealt have been articulate and often have been quite brave in saying that they want euthanasia. I have not seen that, but my experience of people with HIV and AIDS is limited. My personal experience is that I have not seen people in that population who have expressed a wish to die. However, as I said, my experience is very limited.

That brings us to the issue that relates to pain and suffering. Although I fully support palliative care and think we should be doing everything funding-wise in whatever way we can through Parliament to ensure that many people in this State have access to these services, it will not always work. Palliative care physicians say that 10 per cent of people who die will not have their pain relieved by palliative care. There is also an issue about suffering. Although many things can be done to relieve pain, suffering cannot always be relieved. With suffering may come a loss of dignity, a loss of control and a real despair. One of the examples given to me is the diarrhoea that people can get with some of the fungal infections associated with AIDS where they cannot keep anything in their body, where they feel extremely embarrassed, disabled and uncomfortable, and where they are constantly having to be admitted to hospital to be rehydrated to make up for the loss of fluid from the body.

In the future, we will have to tackle what should be done when palliative care does not work, when there is incredible suffering and when people are requesting that their death be hastened. These will be difficult issues for us to deal with and I will be interested to see what happens when that time comes. We need to remember that by the year 2025, 20 per cent of the population will be aged 65 years and over. I guess that affects some of us who are here, without wanting to reflect on people's ages. With that older population there will almost certainly be a greater group in the community thinking and talking about death and that will want these attitudes sorted out. Having said that, the legislative path may not be the way to go.

A House of Commons select committee on medical ethics reported last year. It was clearly of the view that it rejected euthanasia. It said that it had a social responsibility to care for people who were dying, who were elderly or disabled and that there must be greater access to care, more care and more palliative care. That shocks me a little. I will refer to a quote, similar to that used by the member for South Perth. In 1958, Pope Pius XII said -

Normally one is held to use only ordinary means - according to circumstances of places, times and culture - means that do not involve any grave burden for oneself or another.

He was talking about stopping medical treatment and not prolonging life with extraordinary means. Unfortunately, he died shortly after making those comments. A number of people have stressed that, while we need clearer guidance about stopping medical treatment, that is not the same as euthanasia. The legislative path, euthanasia by law, may not be the way to go because the law can be a very blunt instrument in circumstances which are not black and white and which are not amenable to a blunt instrument approach.

Although I could say more about the subject, I will conclude by quoting Peter Baume, who is a doctor and a former Liberal Senator. He is currently professor of community medicine at the University of New South Wales. He makes wise statements. He has said -

The withdrawal of curative treatment from the terminally ill and the continuation only of symptomatic relief is not what many of us call euthanasia - it is just good medicine.

He also states that -

Neither is the inadvertent shortening of life by the giving of symptom relief (e.g. with adequate doses of narcotics) what we call euthanasia.

That sums up what we are talking about tonight and I again congratulate the member for Kalgoorlie on bringing the Bill to this House.

**MR BRIDGE (Kimberley) [9.21 pm]:** The matter before the House is very significant. It is perhaps one of the most significant matters on which we are called upon to pass judgment.

We are talking about legislating about the empowerment of the human race, if we pass this legislation. That empowerment will give people some capacity to determine the duration of life. People may hold points of view, as we have heard expressed here tonight, and they are entitled to them. People can quote what other eminent people say about the issue and they are entitled to refer to those quotes. I cannot find in the Bible where God gives us that capacity to empower the human race in relation to when life begins and when it ceases.

I oppose the Bill because of personal experience, although not direct personal experience. I oppose it because, for a long time, I lived with, associated with and listened to the accounts of other people in our society. I would like to go through a few of those accounts. I once went around a town with several other prominent people where we asked the community to sign a petition which called on the local authority to provide coffins where burials were conducted and to dispense with the then practice of not having

coffins available. As we went around that town, almost everyone signed the petition and referred angrily to the appalling state of affairs where coffins were not provided. That was the case until I met one man. When we offered him the petition, he said, "I will not sign it and I'll tell you why I am not prepared to sign it. I fought in the war and I saw a fellow soldier shot alongside me. He fell to the ground and was certified as dead by a medical person. We chose then to dig a grave and to bury him in as dignified a way as possible. As we laid the body in the grave, we happened to see some form of movement. We retrieved the body and that person regained life, so to speak, which was obviously there all the time even though he had been certified as dead. After medical treatment, he regained his health and lived a normal life. Had we placed his body in the coffin, that may well not have been the case."

The significant factor is that a judgment was made by the people we call the professionals, the responsible people. They are the human beings who are so responsible that death was certified on that occasion. I have never forgotten that when I have thought about my capacity and the extent to which I would ever empower myself to determine the duration of someone's life.

For the past five years I have met and spoken to a certain person who, on all the days that I met him, has said to me, "Ernie, I go to bed each night hoping that tomorrow never arrives." I imagine that if that person went into hospital with that kind of attitude, particularly given that there was some pain associated with his illness, he may well say, "This is the way out." However, for five years, that person has excitedly fed swans and other birds and people like me have enjoyed and treasured his company.

I recall a lady who almost begged for something to be done to terminate her life because of what she described as its unworthiness and hopelessness. She said that there was nothing left in it for her. However, for 12 years, her grandchildren and the extended family have cherished her presence. I ask members tonight, how would a professional or a person respond in those circumstances? People would say that we are talking about people who have no capacity for recovery. There is a very powerful saying that we should never lightly cast aside: Where there is life, there is hope. We should look at our world today. In our wisdom we consider we have the intellectual know-how to make decisions as a result of reactions by the human race to an event. Can we say that we are a better society in the 1990s because we have drifted away from some of the fundamental beliefs and depths of the fabric of our society? I doubt it. In many instances, we have taken it on ourselves to drift away markedly from traditional practices, from those very powerful beliefs and rules invented in our family structure and have chosen to say that we know better, we will create some empowerment for ourselves so that that right of determination about our lives must be left to us.

Members should remember where we are today and think of where we are heading. As the song said, "Christ, if you looked at the country today, you would see that it was worse than it was when you were around." That is not a bad line; it is pretty true. I, for one, believe we do not have the right or the capacity to empower ourselves to make judgment on the duration of life. It should never be within the reach, jurisdiction or functions and powers of individuals. As a matter of principle, morality and spirituality, we must deny ourselves the right to make that determination.

Another significant factor concerns the Aboriginal people of this country. They believe strongly in the spirit; it is a historical fact that it is a powerful part of Aboriginality. We are not talking about similarities with the Northern Territory legislation, it has been made abundantly clear by people such as you, Mr Acting Speaker, and the member for Kalgoorlie. In this debate, however, a perception could be put forward by the Aboriginal people that, in their eyes, this legislation is a rose by any other name which would smell as sweet. It could be interpreted by them as empowering a white doctor to kill a black person. I would not disagree with that perception; it is a powerful part of Aboriginality. It is a very significant issue as we consider this legislation.

We are talking about practical considerations beyond the spiritual and moral depth of this issue. You, Mr Acting Speaker, spoke from a doctor's experience. The member for Maylands spoke similarly about medical considerations and her interpretation of what

this legislation is about. However, enshrined deeply in what both members said was a high regard for the importance of practicalities and how they deal in practical terms with difficult circumstances. It is for neither you, Mr Acting Speaker, nor I to make that judgment. As practical or as realistic as it may seem to make a determination on someone's life, I could not subscribe to it. I do not care what the Pope, the bishops, other members who spoke on this Bill or you think, Mr Acting Speaker. I know what I think and I believe I neither have, nor was ever given, the right to use this measure of empowerment. I will not depart from that rule whatever might be the opposing forces and the mass of opinion. It does not in the least deter me from what I feel is the position I must adopt and put forward concerning this legislation.

At the same time I recognise that the other points of view are entitled to be expressed in this Parliament. Although I differ very strongly with them, that is no reason why I should deny those opposing views the right to be debated. I will not seek to do that. However, from all that I understand and from the teachings to which I have had access, there is nothing to which I can turn or relate or be privy to which tells me that my position on this legislation is not correct. I can only reflect on the experience of wartime where life was restored from certified death; the life of an elderly person continues, despite an absolute desire "not to see tomorrow come", to enlighten and provide joy to others; and someone who for the best part of 10 or 12 years saw life as hopeless yet has found joy, comfort and attachment to the family structure. Those experiences are so overwhelming that I do not remotely want to interfere with, or pretend to have a capacity to make any judgment on, life and its duration.

You should remember, Mr Acting Speaker, that it is all very well for people to talk about responsibilities and professionalism, but how often in our society today and in the past have we said that certain conduct or undertakings by individuals were unbelievable? One would not think that such a person would be so irresponsible or would commit to such behaviour. We have said it time and again, yet we are saying tonight that notwithstanding the vulnerability those sorts of circumstances have clearly spelt out to us, the so-called professionals are judged, beyond all other things, to be worthy of sharing in that determination.

My position is very clear: I will take no part in supporting this legislation and I will tell the world as strongly as I can that there are certain decisions that we are empowered to make while we are privileged to be on this Earth. However, there are some things on which we cannot make decisions. The duration of life, regardless of what course it might take and whatever the circumstances, is outside the realm of the human race to determine. It so happens that you, Mr Acting Speaker (Dr Hames), other members in this Chamber and I fall within that category. I hope I have made my position clear and I will not support the Bill.

**MS WARNOCK** (Perth) [9.42 pm]: It is obvious from the wide ranging views we have heard in this Chamber tonight that this is a matter which concerns all of us. It is a serious subject and I am very grateful to have the opportunity to contribute to this debate. It is very rare in this Chamber that we have a free vote on anything. It is also very rare in this Chamber that we engage in philosophical debate. It is obvious to those members who have been in this place for a year or so that we deal mainly with practical issues along ideological lines and that we decide, on party lines, to either support or not support them.

The issues involved in this Bill include profound questions and they are difficult for all of us. Members cannot reach my age without having had to deal with the question of life and death in a personal way. One does not have to be a health professional, a priest or minister to have to deal with matters of life and death. It is for that reason that this Bill is particularly personal to all of us. It presents questions with which all of us will be faced at some time in our lives; and while we are involved with serious and difficult questions, the subject of this Bill could also be said to be almost prosaic. Members have already heard from two health professionals tonight that doctors and nurses will tell people that the question of when a person's life is beyond retrieving is a matter they have to deal with daily and early in their careers. It is both a profound and prosaic question for all people to deal with.

As many members have said in this debate, some of us have elderly parents and we will have to deal with this question in a personal way. Most of our views have been formed by personal experience. Mine certainly have been. I have watched a number of close friends, my father and my husband's mother die slowly from cancer. I have a very strong feeling on this issue. The question of how we will spend the last days or hours of our lives is something that we do not want to think about. Some people find it very difficult to address the question of their death. However, if one has seen a close friend or a family member either totally incapacitated or in chronic pain, and there is no chance of their recovering, it is something that becomes very real and it is no longer a philosophical question. When we think about it we become concerned that we might find ourselves in that position and we hope that we can die with some dignity. Many of us think about what we would do if we had to watch a close friend or relative in that condition. Each one of us will have to deal with that in our lifetime. It would be unusual if we did not have to wonder about somebody dying slowly and in a way that we would find painful to deal with.

Any public discussion about medical care for the dying will cause alarm, particularly among those people who have strong religious views. I have had strong representations from such people and I am sure that other members have also. I have also had representations from advocates for the disabled and others who have taken an entirely different view on this debate. It is obviously a concern that giving permission to a nurse or a doctor to assist someone to end his or her life will be a dangerous precedent and place us on a slippery slope and take us somewhere we do not want to go. I am sure that all members have heard that phrase used in the context of this debate. I do not have that fear but, having read widely on this subject and having had representations from a number of groups, I understand that fear. The member for Ashburton and other members made this point very clear. It is extremely important to reiterate that the member for Kalgoorlie's Bill is not about that; it will simply allow a dying patient to refuse further treatment from a medical practitioner and remain in palliative care.

Several of my colleagues have explained what they mean by palliative care. It provides comfort and the relief from pain and there are excellent institutions of this kind in this State. I know a great deal about palliative care and the level of care provided is exceptionally good; it is important to remember that in any discussion about medical care for the dying. We are talking about people who are in an extreme state and who, it is suggested in this Bill, might agree to refuse further treatment but remain in that excellent palliative care.

Another important point about this Bill is that it offers protection for doctors and nurses who, following the patient's instructions, discontinue treatment while continuing to administer palliative care. They will not be prosecuted for following the patient's wishes. Again, it is worth reiterating that we are not talking about people who are not able to make their wishes clear. I had to think a great deal about that when I was thinking about debating this Bill. I had the experience of a very good friend of mine who had made it clear after a couple of heart attacks, and being of an extremely old age, that she did not want to be resuscitated in the event of anything further occurring. Unfortunately, she had a disabling stroke and was unable to speak to anyone. Therefore, it was impossible for anyone who was close to her to determine what were her last wishes. Although she appeared to have an extremely poor quality of life in her last couple of years, there was no way that anybody could take action on her behalf or have any idea what she might wish. That caused me to think seriously about this Bill before I spoke on it.

When I read further I realised that is not the situation that we are talking about with this Bill. It does not go as far as following the wishes of somebody who is no longer able to indicate what are their wishes. I cast aside my concerns about that situation and read further into the Bill and found that there is no active intervention to end life; and, therefore, it is not intended to be a euthanasia Bill. I do not believe it should be painted in that way by people who are opponents of that choice. I understand the point of view of the opponents of that choice, and also the view of the supporters of voluntary

euthanasia. As other members have said this evening, it is not a euthanasia Bill. No action will be taken that can be construed to be deliberately killing a patient. It is not a suicide Bill as my colleagues on this side have also pointed out.

This Bill poses no risk of "clandestine legalised murder" - to quote one person who wrote me a letter stating their very strong opposition to the Northern Territory Bill. That, of course, is far more radical than the one that we are discussing in this Chamber this evening. We need to make that clear, so the terms of debate are well outlined. There will be people like my colleague, the member for Kimberley, who opposes any similar sort of Bill to the Northern Territory Bill, but we cannot confuse these two Bills. This is not a Bill like the Northern Territory Bill. There is no suggestion in the member for Kalgoorlie's Bill of any active intervention to end life. We cannot say that too often in this debate, because in such a delicate matter we cannot afford to confuse our terms.

It is obvious from material I have received that this Bill does not go far enough for many people, including members of the West Australian Voluntary Euthanasia Society. This society bases its philosophical views on individual choice, and claims that its views are shared by almost four out of five Australians. I have seen that mentioned in many surveys. The society states -

WAVES welcomes his Bill, which seeks not only to safeguard the right of terminally ill patients to refuse undesired treatment but also to provide long overdue protection for professional carers who act upon such refusal. We strongly urge you to support these provisions.

The letter goes on to point out that WAVES believes that a more radical action should be taken. This letter suggests that they would support the amendments proposed by my colleague the member for Ashburton. They advocate a living will, and are upset about the absence of this in the member for Kalgoorlie's Bill. They will certainly be happier with the amendments proposed by the member for Ashburton.

It is important to have a debate on this matter in the community. It is literally a life and death matter, and it concerns every one of us. It is surprisingly unusual in this place to have a philosophical debate. This place is often seen by the community as a debating society, but it rarely functions in that way because of party divisions about certain matters. All of us in this place know how the House operates and how votes are taken. A genuine philosophical debate about a matter that is of such serious concern to all of us is rare. For that reason I am pleased to take part in this debate with my colleagues on both sides of the House on this occasion. Society needs such serious discussions, even when they have the capacity to disturb us and make us uncomfortable. It is clear from the things that we have heard already this evening that many things about this subject disturb us and make some of us very uncomfortable. Nonetheless, we should seize the opportunity to discuss this subject because it would be unusual if none of us at some time or other had to give this matter serious thought.

Many of my colleagues have pointed out that this is an ageing society, that many more people are living to a greater age, and with medical advances we can prolong life in a way which was not possible just last century when so many more people died of infectious diseases, for example. We are more often in a situation where somebody's life may be prolonged. It may be prolonged far beyond where they feel they have any quality of life and they feel comfortable with that prolonged life. My view is that the community, on reflection, would be able to support the member for Kalgoorlie's Bill. It is an issue that many of us will have cause to think about. As the community ages, this subject will become particularly pertinent. I am extremely pleased that my colleague has raised the matter during this term of Parliament, so that this debate will cause more discussion about this subject in the community. It is clear from everything that most of us have read about the issue in recent years that the medical community has been battling with this issue for a very long time. Individuals have been battling with this issue as they deal with family situations, which have been described by other people speaking tonight. It is therefore important that we start the debate and the community continue that debate. Of course, we will not be voting on this matter tonight, so there will be further

opportunity for wider discussion about this. I believe that the member for Kalgoorlie's Bill will assist both dying patients and their medical practitioners. As the member for Dianella and my colleague the member for Maylands have made clear, doctors must deal with significant moral and practical problems in relation to dying patients, and they may have to do that every day or at least every week of their working lives. It seems that not only the community, which may have to deal with this matter on an individual basis, but also the medical profession need this support, and therefore my colleague's Bill should be supported.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Dr Watson.

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

### *Second Reading - Budget Debate*

Resumed from an earlier stage of the sitting.

**MR BOARD** (Jandakot) [9.59 pm]: I take the opportunity to record issues of concern to me on a statewide basis and of concern to my electorate. It is difficult to follow the previous debate, which was about the quality and value of life. Such issues go to the very heart of humanity. No bigger issue will probably be discussed openly and honestly in the House this year, and I commend members on their contributions this evening. As life goes on, I shall address the issue of developing a whole of government approach to the services that the Government currently provides.

It is becoming apparent in Western Australia, as our quest for government services becomes more competitive, that the competing forces of departments often clash and become confused in the delivery of services. That became clear to me recently when I chaired a select committee on metropolitan development and ground water. One of our roles was to consider the competing forces of government services.

The **ACTING SPEAKER** (Mr Johnson): Order! May we have less noise, please? I am having a job hearing the member for Jandakot.

**Mr BOARD**: We examined the very strong role that the Environmental Protection Authority played in protecting the environment, the role that the Water Authority played in protecting ground water and the delivery of quality water services generally, and the role that the Department of Planning and Urban Development played in providing land for the fast growing metropolitan region. When we looked closely at the issue it became apparent that government services and the mission statements of each department were clashing at a level that confused people on the ground and made it difficult for them to understand where the whole of government program was. Was it better to protect our ground water and our environment, or was it more important to bring on land for development for industry and to provide jobs?

We were able to resolve that matter and, I hope, in terms of the legislation, give priority to the protection of ground water as a result of the report and recommendations of the select committee. In many areas I find departments competing at the coalface, and that makes matters very difficult for the community. That is very apparent to small business. Small business faces difficulty in growing against the competing forces of government.

The word "decentralisation" is not in vogue these days because many people have regarded decentralisation as an unsuccessful program. There is no doubt that the Government is trying to entice industry to country regions and thereby provide infrastructure and much needed employment. The Department of Commerce and Trade and, to some extent, the Department of Resources Development have been proactive in their efforts to do that, but they are often frustrated by the lack of a whole of government approach to this issue. Why do we not have Main Roads, the Department of Transport and other departments also playing a role in creating a common strategy to develop an infrastructure in country regions?

The Public Accounts and Expenditure Review Committee is presently inquiring into State support for industry. As we consider the various departments, the services that they



provide and their assistance for industry, it becomes apparent that there is a lack of coordination in that whole of government approach. That is no criticism of the major planners - that is, the Department of Commerce and Trade and the Department of Resources Development - because they have played a strong primary role in the programs that are now being developed in Western Australia. However, it is apparent that other players often frustrate the system, and we often lose some major projects to other States. Small business would like to develop in country regions but they are gazumped in the system.

We need to place stronger emphasis on our assistance to small business. There is no doubt that, through the Department of Commerce and Trade, small business is receiving financial assistance. I have been a small business person. Of course, Western Australia is considered the home of small business. What brings many people to our vast State is the opportunity to generate income rather than to be dependent on the State or an employer. Small business through government policy still operate on the drip theory. Most of our energy goes to larger organisations, larger mining companies and larger infrastructure, hoping small business will pick up as a result of that, will come off the drip, and create employment. That is the history of some of our development. However, we now have an opportunity to be far more creative and constructive. I have been excited by some policies of responsible agencies such as the Department of Commerce and Trade which oversees the Small Business Development Corporation.

Mr Cowan: No, it does not. The SBDC is a separate body. It comes under my responsibility, but it is not part of the Department of Commerce and Trade.

Mr BOARD: I apologise. However, I am excited by some policy initiatives that are coming forward. One matter of concern to me is how small businesses could and should unite in trying to formulate a policy that attracts more resources from the Government. For example, I refer to the blossoming small wood industry in the south west. As we know, there is not only a strong tourist industry developing in the south west but also many wood turners and furniture makers who are producing high quality furniture of export standard. Many of those businesses are not of the ilk that would attract financial assistance from the Government. They often operate in an uncoordinated way and they sometimes lack a business plan or vision that would ensure that they reach their full potential.

There is an opportunity for the State Government to combine the visions of those businesses and create resources that could help the whole industry. In other words, those businesses could apply for finance and assistance as a net rather than individually, which causes many of them to fail. As a result of that, many businesses would grow and be more financially successful.

My inquiries have shown that there is potential employment for up to 25 000 people in the south west small wood industry. Although we talk about trying to decentralise - that word again - major industry into areas in which we want to develop our population infrastructure, it is often already there. It is a question of coordinating what is available and trying to assist in a bulk way.

When talking about developing with a whole of government approach I will offer some thoughts about the present difficulties we face with commonwealth-state relations, particularly in the finance area. I was privileged recently to represent the Minister for Education at the Kalamunda Primary School, which was celebrating the one-hundredth anniversary of its first assembly. In making my address I had to take my mind back to 1895 and consider what was happening in Kalamunda, and in Perth. The current republican debate and constitutional issues before us in 1995 are the same matters that faced people in 1895. Gold had recently been discovered at Kalgoorlie and people's efforts were directed towards the blossoming goldfields where untold wealth seemed to be held. There was talk about a referendum and the State joining the new Federation of Australia. My research indicated that the fears of the people at that time were that the vast resources of the State would go east to prop up the larger population in the Eastern States. How interesting it is that exactly 100 years later we are still talking about the

same issue. The reality is that wherever we go, whatever the issues we are considering, in many ways we are disadvantaged by the size of the grants and capital funding being returned to Western Australia.

This is not an issue on which I would like to make political points, but it concerns every member in this House and every person in Western Australia. Although we might represent only 10 per cent of the population, Western Australia is the largest State geographically and probably the one with far more potential than most of the other States. If we are to come together as a nation, there must be some change in attitude to help Western Australia reach its potential. We must all address the issues, not just why we should receive an equal slice of the cake. I go beyond that because the wealth that comes out of Western Australia is of benefit to all. To assist our growth, and to give us the speed of development required, we must receive more than an equal share in resources in population terms. For people in country regions to achieve the quality of life that people in the Eastern States currently enjoy with their capital grants and infrastructure, we need some sort of boost. It is incumbent on every member to make that clear not only to the current Federal Government but to any Federal Government. Western Australia should fight for more funds so that we can reach our full potential.

Mr Trenorden: If you read the 1935 petition you will find those arguments beautifully put. As you said earlier, this question has yet to be addressed by the federal system.

Mr BOARD: The federal system is not only biased against us but that bias continues to increase. I am not privy to all information but I understand that we are further disadvantaged by the fact that Western Australia is performing better as an export State. In many ways there is a built-in bias against such a good performance by a small population. I cannot see any incentive for us to progress if all we do is prop up other States. This is not a question of making political points. If we want to achieve a high quality of life for all Western Australians, wherever they live, we need additional funds, or just a fair slice of the funds being generated by this State.

I turn now to the role of select committees in this Parliament, and specifically the role they play in changing the Government's decisions or legislation. I cannot think of any member of this House who has not played a role in a select committee. In the two and a half years that I have been a member I have had the honour of serving on two select committees, one of which I chaired, and a standing committee. The committees are not only exciting because they can be a way for a backbencher to change things, but also they give government members an opportunity to spend time with opposition members who, in most instances, have a great deal to contribute when a bipartisan approach is taken.

Select committees are committees of the Parliament. They are appointed by the Parliament. They are not creatures of the Government. Many select committees have been established as a result of suggestions by the Opposition or the Government in order to address the issues in a bipartisan way. Often they require a great deal of resources and time. The necessary resources are provided for such committees. I commend the Speaker, and the President in the case of the upper House committees, for providing the significant funding and manpower necessary for the committees to achieve a resolution.

Most members of select committees spend a great deal of time and energy, as do the support staff, in trying to address the issues put before them. As a result, whether committees sit for three, six or 12 months, or even as long as 18 months or two years, a report is handed down and recommendations made. From my short experience, and from reading reports produced by other committees, those recommendations are usually arrived at after considerable time and effort. They are usually recommendations of substance. In the main, those reports are read and considered. However, I am disappointed that not all the contents of those reports are taken in the spirit in which they were intended; not all reports are given serious consideration bearing in mind the amount of work and effort put into them. In the main, the committees meet in a bipartisan way and address the difficult issues put to them. It is incumbent on all Ministers, and the Government generally, if they are not happy with the recommendations put to Parliament, to state the reasons that they consider the issues have not been addressed. I

do not criticise the current Government for that situation, because I do not believe the Government has anything to hide in that respect.

One of the more important roles of backbenchers, both government and opposition, is select committee work. That work must be given the highest priority, and members do that in their deliberations. I would hate to think that all the time, energy, resources and money devoted to select committees end in reports not being given due consideration. I implore people to give those committees the consideration required.

I will now refer to issues that are of particular importance to me. I wish to refer in particular to community policing. I have spoken on this issue previously and it is one that I would like to explore in a little more detail. The current Commissioner of Police and the Minister for Police are suggesting that the way of the future in policing in Western Australia is community policing or Neighbourhood Watch.

There is probably no more important issue in our community than law and order. I am sure that most members will have attended or conducted public meetings on this issue. I do not think a week goes by that I am not invited to some kind of meeting dealing with law and order. Currently in my area - and I am sure it is the case in other areas - we have a debate as to whether councils should be increasing security. We have a suggestion from our current mayor that the council buy into the law and order issue and provide private security for local citizens.

This Government has been proactive in terms of legislative change. We are addressing the issue of more police. Currently, 32 police officers are coming out of the academy each month. Of course, the community is not satisfied with that and people feel that the resolutions in relation to law and order are not moving along at the rate that they would like. Many people are unaware of the legislative changes and the many good things that this Government has done in trying to address this issue. It takes a long time for some of those things to bite and, of course, the community wants an instant fix.

I am very interested in Neighbourhood Watch because the current Commissioner of Police sees that as the long-term future for community policing and the solution to the problems in our community. I agree with him. In fact, I would go further and say that many of the resolutions in relation to law and order are already staring us in the face.

I have a very large problem in my area - and I say that it is a problem only because people are now coming to me with their concerns. They feel that their participation in Neighbourhood Watch is not getting the desired results. Neighbourhood Watch in my area has a very large participation rate. In fact, I would venture to say that there are probably more members in my area than in any other area. Why is it that people come to me with their concerns when they see, for instance, a burglary or something else happening in their neighbour's backyard or front yard? At this stage they cannot get the results that they want; that is, an instant police fix.

I have mentioned previously reports that I have received and am still receiving about youths in my area going so far as to taunt people into ringing the police while they are still filling their van or car with stereos and televisions. People are frustrated at not being able to get immediate action. There is no way that we can criticise the police because they have a priority system and need to attend to life threatening situations or matters of greater importance in terms of protecting the community. However, it does not help those people who are currently involved in Neighbourhood Watch and who feel disappointed that their efforts are not fulfilling their objectives.

I suggest to the House and to the Minister for Police, as I have done in writing perviously, that we must give more teeth to Neighbourhood Watch. We must come up with a system that empowers people in some way to get a result for the hard work that they have put in and the reports that they have made. Of course, providing more police does not resolve the issue, because we could put 100 additional police on the street and still we would not be able to deal with, for instance, a burglary, because those police officers are still needed for the higher priority activities.

We must raise the profile of Neighbourhood Watch and ensure that we have police

officers who can deal directly with Neighbourhood Watch inquiries. If we are to have hundreds of thousands of people involved in Neighbourhood Watch, we must be able to service their inquiries and complaints about the things that they are witnessing in their community. If criminals know that the eyes and ears of the neighbourhood are on them and that the police will be at the scene of the crime in a short time, we might see a change in what is happening in the community. The fact that juveniles can taunt people to call the police knowing that they have 20 minutes to get away is of great concern.

I have discussed this at great length with my local police sergeant, who is frustrated that he cannot get resources for Neighbourhood Watch. I believe that we can turn things around fairly quickly, at least in our neighbourhoods, if we can give some punch and teeth to the people who are doing the right thing. However, we must have a system through which we can get police or police equivalents, if that is the way we handle this, to a house or factory, or wherever the problem might be. If that staffing is not part of the mainstream Police Force, so be it. We must be able to service those reports and service them quickly. I believe that in many ways that would address the community's concerns.

Finally, I would now like to refer to the Jandakot airport.

Mr Osborne interjected.

Mr BOARD: Already there are different points of view. There is no bigger issue for me than Jandakot airport in my day to day dealings with my constituents. This issue goes to the very fundamental problems of government; that is, people's amenity versus the rights of private operators. It is a very emotional issue for many people. For me it is a very difficult and complex issue.

Basically, it comes down to a situation where people's amenity is greatly affected. However, perhaps those people should not have been there in the first place because they are now residing too close to the airport. That does not resolve the problem and it certainly does not take away from the fact that the quality of life of these people is being affected. As the local member, representing all of my constituents, I certainly need to find ways to address their many concerns while at the same time protecting the growth and development of the airport.

I can say with great glee that there is a light at the end of this tunnel and that the Minister for Transport and the Cabinet have with much vision allocated resources to upgrading regional airstrips to the stage where we are trying to entice circuit training and the much maligned twin engined training at Jandakot to other airstrips where there is no residential development in order to assist the amenity of my residents. We have a long way to go on that issue. I would have liked to address the privatisation issue, but I will address that at another time.

**DR EDWARDS** (Maylands) [10.31 pm]: I wish to make a few remarks in the Budget debate about some environmental matters and then about some issues relevant to my electorate. The first item I want to report on is the conference I attended on 31 July of this year in Melbourne. It was the first meeting of all the Australian parliamentary environmental committees. On that date all Parliaments were represented by members except for Queensland because it had just had an election and they were waiting to see who would be appointed to the committee. We got together on a very cold and dreary Melbourne day. We had a number of speeches from keynote people, including the chairman of the Victorian Environmental Protection Authority. The meeting was useful because members of Parliament from all over Australia with concerns in the environment were able to get together to talk about what we do in our Parliaments, the way we institute change, the way we look after the environment and what should be our roles. We decided to meet again in a year and see whether we could formalise the arrangement and make it more productive.

Two issues came up that concern our State that I want to report to this Parliament. The first is that of Western Australia not being a member of the National Environmental Protection Council. The chairman of the Victorian EPA spelt out in quite strong terms his belief that we need a broad national approach to many environmental issues which

could represent an overarching guiding vision while recognising regional differences. A number of people expressed their disappointment that all States except Western Australia have now put legislation through their Parliaments so that they can join the National Environmental Protection Council. The strong feeling was that we as a State might be missing out by not participating in that process. I was pleased that the other Western Australian who attended, the federal member for Stirling, Mr Eoin Cameron, also supported this notion. He has directly lobbied the Minister for the Environment.

The other issue discussed in some detail was the notion of state of environment reporting. One of the keynote speakers told us how industry in Europe is adopting state of environment reports that they put out with their annual reports. They are doing it because they recognise that their shareholders want them to do so, and that they do need to pay more attention to environmental efforts. For many of the large companies it is a forum where they can demonstrate that they are doing a lot. We need to reinstitute the idea of state of environment reporting in Western Australia. To my knowledge there has been only one state of environment report released by the then Minister for the Environment, the current member for Fremantle, in December 1992. For members who have not seen this document, I recommend the 1992 state of environment report. It is a very full document but it spells out all our environmental problems and attributes in great detail and contains a host of amazing information. For instance, it contains detailed maps and gives information about coastal areas and arid areas and a description in some depth of the environmental issues in regions of the State. These sorts of reports are very important because they allow us to go to the one document and be aware of the major environmental issues that face this State. I am afraid that in 1995, because this report is now out of date, it is quite difficult to see what are the environmental issues we face, and which should have the greatest priority and attention. We have had this confirmed by people much more versed in the environment than I am. I hope that in the near future and certainly when Labor returns to power state of environment reports will be presented to the State Parliament annually. The point of presenting them to the State Parliament is critical. It reflects the change to the way some of them have been tabled in the past. If they are presented to the Parliament, the Parliament as a whole will have a measure of responsibility to ensure that what is indicated as needing attention receives it, and Budget allocations are made to tackle problem areas. If the Parliament receives a state of environment report, obviously a dedicated environment committee of the Parliament could play a great role in clarifying issues and in bringing together all parties in a way that we just had demonstrated in the previous debate on the Medical Care of the Dying Bill in which everybody worked together towards common aims on issues where concern is shared by all parties. I was interested to note when I attended the conference that a number of Parliaments have standing committees on planning and the environment or public works which include the environment. In States such as Victoria where they do not have standing committees, they have environmental and natural resources sessional committees. Western Australia appears to be the only State that does not have some sort of dedicated environmental committee. The closest we have come to it is the select committee I serve on, which is the Select Committee on Recycling and Waste Management. That is how the invitation to attend the conference came about. I will be raising this matter and bringing it to the attention of Parliament in a more formalised way. We need to consider this issue and get committees to look at the environment as they have done in other States of Australia.

I turn to a second issue to do with the environment. I refer to the need for a new Wildlife Conservation Act. In 1992 a draft wildlife Bill was circulated through the State. Unfortunately, nothing appears to have happened since. It was known in 1992 that there was a real need for a new Bill. That need in 1995 is even greater. I urge the Government to take up this issue and build on the work done in 1992 when that draft Bill was circulated, and to bring it in here to give us the changes we need. Some of the problems with the current Wildlife Conservation Act are because it is out of date. It does not take into account the changes in science, technology and genetics that have occurred in the past 30 years. One of its major deficiencies is that although it contains provisions to protect wildlife and various species, there is no provision as it stands at the moment to

protect and enhance biodiversity by protecting habitats. One can take measures to protect species, but if one does not do anything about habitat or creatures have the wrong habitat that is killing them, those measures will be ineffective. I will give a couple of examples to demonstrate what I am talking about. In the south west of the State, a bird called the barking owl is under threat. Unfortunately because in the south east of Australia another area is populated by barking owls, our current Wildlife Conservation Act does not allow us to protect our animals in the south west because our Act provides that in order to get protection the animals must be in one place and not represented anywhere else in Australia; that is, they must be in Western Australia and in no other place in Australia. It also affects the fate of the quokka. We all know that quokkas are numerous on Rottnest Island; however, people may not realise that there are quokkas on the mainland which are gradually dying out. Once again, that is mainly because their habitats are being destroyed.

Mr Bradshaw: They found some in the Shire of Harvey the other day.

Dr EDWARDS: I am pleased to hear that. The populations of quokkas on Rottnest Island and the mainland may have distinct genetic differences, but because the current wildlife Bill does not allow that to be taken into account, no formal protection can be given to the mainland quokkas while there is a reasonable population on Rottnest.

Mr Bradshaw: A blood sample was taken from the quokkas found in the Shire of Harvey to see whether they were related to the Rottnest Island quokkas. If they are not, they will be declared an endangered species.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr Johnson): Order! I remind the member for Wellington that he is not in his seat when he makes those interjections.

Dr EDWARDS: They would have difficulty being declared an endangered species under the Act as it stands at the moment. I am told that the difference must be significant and that the Act does not take into account advances in genetics and DNA testing which has occurred in recent years. I might call on the member for Wellington to give more support to my notion. Similarly, it is not possible under the current Act to give stromatolites protection even though it is known that they are rare and fragile organisms that need that protection. I urge the Government to consider that issue and get a move on with the new Bill.

I now accede to the member for Bunbury's request and speak briefly about snakes and reptiles. I was approached recently by the Western Australian Society of Amateur Herpetologists. Herpetology is the study of reptiles and snakes. The amateur herpetologists are a small group of people who have a fascination with snakes. I must admit that I have some difficulty with that. I was brought up in the wheatbelt where we were fearful of snakes. If people saw snakes, they made them depart this earth very quickly. However, there are in this State a small number of people who like reptiles and snakes and are keen to keep small numbers of them and to help with their scientific study. Western Australia has a lot of reptiles, but according to some of the biodiversity literature I have read up to a third of the reptile population may not have been properly documented. There is a need to document what we have in Western Australia. As members know, little money is available for research of any kind, and reptiles appear to be particularly unpopular, resulting in virtually no research into reptiles. This is where the amateur herpetologists fit in.

The herpetologists ask that the Department of Conservation and Land Management consider its policy on the way it issues licences to keep reptiles for hobby purposes. The policy is reasonable, but it appears that it is not being implemented in an equitable way. I have had a number of meetings with the herpetologists and most recently had the opportunity of handling a number of pythons. That is quite an experience, as members can imagine, particularly when they get up near a person's face; however, I have some sympathy for the society's call. The Opposition proposes that the Society of Amateur Herpetologists and CALM get together in a cooperative manner and stop being so adversarial. I hope they can develop a code of practice on how measures can be taken to ensure that species are not endangered and there is no change in the importation and

exportation of reptiles, but to allow people who have a genuine interest to follow their hobby and at the same time contribute to science.

It was thought that the western swamp tortoise was extinct in this State until it was discovered that a child was keeping one as a pet. From that a small number was bred, and there is now a small colony of them. More importantly, we now know a lot about this animal which was not known before. The Opposition calls on CALM to review the way it hands out licences to herpetologists and to develop a code of practice so that stringent rules are in place. This is a rare instance of the Opposition saying to CALM that if it is serious about this, it should increase the licence fee to make people who want to keep reptiles jump through a number of hoops, but allow them to do so if they meet all the criteria and really want to engage in this practice. The sorts of criteria the people must meet would be to demonstrate that they can adequately care for reptiles and that they have adequate accommodation so that reptiles do not escape. The Opposition asks that CALM continue its auditing and inspection, as occurs at the moment, but that more people be allowed to have licences under these strict conditions.

Two things would flow from that if it were allowed to happen. Firstly, there would be increased knowledge about some species that probably are endangered in our State; we do not know even that much. Secondly, more than that, there would be a flow of intelligence between CALM and the herpetologists so that if things such as illegal exploitation occurred, a way of detecting it earlier would be available.

I move now to CALM and the management of Western Australia's forests. I was recently given a document that outlined some of the areas of research in which scientists within CALM would like to be engaged. I fully support these requests, and I hope I can follow them up in the Estimates Committee debates to ensure that it occurs. One important area is the effect of CALM controlled burns. There seems to be concern from scientists as well as the community that we do not know enough about what happens when controlled burns are undertaken. For instance, we know that fires, and possibly CALM controlled burns, have affected the quokka population. The effect of fire on reptiles, mammals, amphibians, and invertebrates in our forests is not known in great detail. Again, we must know these effects. I hope that more work is undertaken to indicate exactly what happens when fire goes through a forest and exactly what are the results of CALM's fire management policies.

A need exists also to consider the regeneration practices after forestry. I am aware of one request to look at areas of the jarrah forest where logging has occurred but jarrah seedlings are not establishing themselves. I understand that up to 10 per cent of logged jarrah forest may have this problem. This is a significant problem and one that needs to be tackled. I hope CALM follows up this issue.

On a brighter note I will talk about the efforts of CALM at Shark Bay and commend CALM on the happenings in that area. I was fortunate enough recently to visit the area and see some of the national parks and nature reserves on the peninsula. I was particularly impressed with Project Eden and the work being done to get rid of the feral animals. I wish CALM great success in that. However, I was disappointed to be told that despite this region being a world heritage area, it does not receive any increased funding to follow up its conservation projects. That is a great shame. It is obvious that effort and money have been expended in the area where the stromatolites are located, because there is good signage and excellent board walks, and measures have been taken to ensure people treat them with the respect they deserve. Unfortunately, that cannot be said of other areas, and it was obvious while walking around that more money and attention needs to be given to this national park. As more people visit national parks, the Government must make sure that their conservation value and the environment are protected.

I now comment briefly on a matter of concern in my electorate; that is, the need for a bridge at road level across the railway line at the Maylands railway station. In 1992 the Maylands station study was instituted by Westrail and the then Department of Planning, with the support of the local council and local community representatives. It was a very

valuable project because for the first time it brought together all the interested parties, and they discussed how development should occur around the station. Obviously, one of the essential requirements is to increase density around these stations so that people make use of the trains and help suburbs such as Maylands re-establish their hearts. As a result of the study, work began on upgrading the main street in Maylands, Eighth Avenue. A start is about to be made on putting the power lines underground and other small changes have been made, such as improving the paving and the general visual amenity of the street. Some results have been achieved - some traders say more people are coming back to that street which is the heart of the suburb.

One of the problems with the railway line in my electorate - it perhaps applies also to other electorates - is that it bisects the suburb. The ageing people in Maylands, who live on the opposite side of the railway line from the main centre, find it extremely difficult to cross the line to get to the centre where the shops, library, post office and churches are located. The existing bridge over the railway line is incredibly steep, long and slippery. In the past month two young people have reported to me that they have fallen on the bridge, and they are now scared to use it. The autumn centre has reported that elderly people, those in wheelchairs and those who need walking sticks refuse to use it. Instead, they walk a long way in the other direction to take a bus for public transport rather than a train. Building a new bridge is not an option because it is too expensive. As a result of the station study, the local people believed they had a commitment from Westrail to build an at-grade crossing over the railway line at this site. It would encourage railway patrons, help local businesses, and be a great improvement for the community. Unfortunately, in February this year Westrail changed its policy on the provision of at-grade crossings. I understand that in response to a report by the Coroner, it was decided not to finance any more at-grade crossings and instead to spend money on installing electric gates at 90 other at-grade crossings. In Maylands there is a small footpath over the railway line at Caledonia Avenue, but no-one crosses the railway line at that point because it is isolated. That crossing will be fitted with electric gates, even though there is a great need for a crossing at the station and no electric gates will be fitted there.

A number of groups have got together with me to try to sort out the problem. We have support from the autumn centre and the ratepayers association, and even a measure of support from the WA Royal Institute for the Blind, to try to get a proper at-grade crossing, such as that in Queens Park which is controlled electronically. I hope Westrail will listen to our plea and action will be taken to improve the situation. I appreciate its commitment to safety, but a more detailed study is needed. I must know more about the basis on which its decision was made and the risks that were taken into account before deciding that this is the best option for the community. I doubt that it is, and I will follow up the matter.

I now refer to the increased crime levels experienced, and particularly the impact on my electorate and the suburb of Maylands. A week ago the Police Department released a report indicating an 11 per cent increase in crime over the past year. I was horrified to read that crimes of violence against people have risen at an extreme rate. The rate of sexual assault has increased by 91 per cent, which is a horrendous figure of great concern. One of the items in this report indicated that the residents of Maylands are more likely to experience burglary than residents in other suburbs. I have received a number of complaints from constituents about burglaries. I urge the Government to pick up this issue and do more about it. More police have been promised for the Maylands area, but that promise has not yet been delivered. It is very disappointing.

At the local level we have tried to tackle this issue by getting people together and taking measures, such as providing an early education support centre. However, we are running into bureaucratic problems of one department not wanting to give territory to another. We also find there is no funding source to help us. Our group has a good proposal to use an infant health centre, and the Health Department is interested in working with us and using this as a new service for children. It is oriented long term to the prevention of crime. However, we are encountering a lot of sniping and administrative difficulty in getting our message to the right people. I give one example: Because it is an infant



health centre, it comes under the control of community nursing which in my area ultimately reports to the Director of Nursing of Royal Perth Hospital. However, it is difficult to grab the ear of the Director of Nursing to talk about a tiny infant health centre. I will reserve the other remarks I wish to make for the Estimates Committee debate.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr Ripper.

**BILLS (2) - RETURNED**

1.     **Legal Practitioners Amendment Bill**
  2.     **Corporations (Western Australia) Amendment Bill**
- Bills returned from the Council without amendment.**

*House adjourned at 10.58 pm*

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# QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

## POLICE - JUVENILES CHARGED BY ARREST OR SUMMONS

33. Mr BROWN to the Minister for Police:

- (1) How many juveniles under 18 years of age were charged with offences in the financial years -
  - (a) 1992-93;
  - (b) 1993-94?
- (2) How many juveniles under 18 years of age were charged with offences between 1 July 1994 and 28 February 1995?

Mr WIESE replied:

I am advised by the Commissioner of Police as follows -

The dates on the actual number of juveniles charged is not readily available; however, the following statistics outline the total number of charges by arrest or summons against juveniles as recorded in the P18 apprehension information system.

- |     |     |                                 |        |
|-----|-----|---------------------------------|--------|
| (1) | (a) | 1992-93                         | 15 068 |
|     | (b) | 1993-94                         | 11 974 |
| (2) |     | 1 July 1994 to 28 February 1995 | 5 990  |

## PORTMAN MINING - IRON ORE ROYALTY RATES, REDUCTION

965. Mr RIPPER to the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs; Housing:

- (1) Was the Minister present at the Cabinet meeting when Cabinet decided to reduce iron ore royalty rates paid by Portman Mining on ore produced at its Koolyanobbing mine?
- (2) Did the Minister know at the time the decision was made to reduce royalty rates for Portman Mining that Portman Management Pty Ltd, a wholly owned subsidiary of Portman Mining, had made a donation to the Liberal Party shortly before the 1993 state election?

Mr PRINCE replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) Campaign donations are the responsibility of the party.

## DISABILITY SERVICES COMMISSION - SERVICES CONTRACTED OUT

1357. Dr WATSON to the Minister for Disability Services:

- (1) Further to the answer to question on notice 382 of 1995, what services are contracted to the value of \$40m?
- (2) What is the budget for contractors' costs of -
  - (a) building maintenance;
  - (b) fleet management;
  - (c) courier services;
  - (d) food services;
  - (e) personal laundry;
  - (f) security services?

Mr MINSON replied:

- (1) Services to people with a disability provided by non-government agencies.
- (2) (a) \$800 000

- (b) \$85 000
- (c) \$60 000
- (d) \$180 000
- (e) \$400 000
- (f) \$20 000

**POLICE - BURGLARIES, STATISTICS; RISK ASSESSMENT**

**1685. Mr BROWN** to the Minister for Police:

- (1) Does the Government keep data on the incidence of burglaries in the metropolitan area?
- (2) Does the Government have a risk assessment system that identifies those areas as high risk areas?
- (3) If yes, which suburbs are classified as being high risk?

**Mr WIESE** replied:

The Commissioner of Police advises -

- (1) The police service keeps data on the incidence of burglaries in the metropolitan area.
- (2) The police service does not have a risk assessment system.
- (3) Not applicable.

**WOMEN - AND CHILDREN OF NON-ENGLISH SPEAKING BACKGROUND,  
GOVERNMENT POLICIES AND PROGRAMS**

**1714. Dr WATSON** to the Minister for Housing:

- (1) What policies and programs are administered in this portfolio to address needs of women of non-English speaking background?
- (2) Was a specific budget allocation made in this financial year?
- (3) If yes, how much?
- (4) What policies and programs are administered in this portfolio to address needs of children of non-English speaking background?
- (5) Was a specific budget allocation made in this financial year?
- (6) If yes, how much?

**Mr PRINCE** replied:

- (1) Regular weekly interpreter services are offered at Homeswest's three metropolitan offices, with significant use being made of the Telephone Interpreter Service. In instances where an interpreter is required for such things as an appeal, then an interpreter is contracted from TIS at the department's expense. Homeswest has also developed and implemented a language services plan every year since 1993-94. All Homeswest letterhead and computer generated stationery has been endorsed on the back with a message in 16 different languages advising how to access the TIS. In April 1995, Homeswest formed the ethnic affairs working party to oversee the implementation of the State Settlement Planning Committee recommendations of which the department is a member.
- (2) Yes.
- (3) Budget allocation for 1995-96 financial year -  
\$15 000 - weekly on site service  
\$9 500 - telephone service.
- (4) No specific programs/policies are aimed at children as assistance is offered to all members of the family unit.

(5)-(6) Refer to (3).

**ROYAL COMMISSION INTO EASTON PETITION - MINISTER'S CONSENT**

1732. Mr GRAHAM to the Minister for Police; Emergency Services:

- (1) Did the Minister agree to the establishment of the royal commission into the Easton petition?
- (2) Did the Minister agree to the terms of reference?

Mr WIESE replied:

(1)-(2) Yes.

**ROYAL COMMISSION INTO EASTON PETITION - MINISTER'S CONSENT**

1734. Mr GRAHAM to the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs; Housing:

- (1) Did the Minister agree to the establishment of the royal commission into the Easton petition?
- (2) Did the Minister agree to the terms of reference?

Mr PRINCE replied:

(1)-(2) Yes.

**DISABILITY SERVICES COMMISSION - ACCOMMODATION SERVICES  
REVIEW, CONTRACT TO IDENTIFY PROVIDERS OF SERVICES**

1837. Dr WATSON to the Minister for Disability Services:

- (1) Who has been awarded the contract/s to identify potential providers of services as set out in the accommodation advantage document?
- (2) Will that consultant still be required to submit a final report by 10 July 1995?
- (3) If not, why not?
- (4) Who are the members of the tender evaluation panel and do they include representatives from the Public Sector Management Office and the State Supply Office?
- (5) What is the cost of the consultancy?

Mr MINSON replied:

- (1) Deloitte Touch Tohmatsu has been awarded the contract to identify potential providers of the services as set out in the accommodation services review.

(2)-(3) No. The date was adjusted to allow for a more reasonable reporting period.

- (4) Accommodation Services Review Steering Committee members include -

Mr C. MacKinnon

Mr K. Karlson

Mr B. Dellar

Mr J. Thompson

Mr P. Tzaikos (representative of the Public Sector Management Office)

Mr D. Hounsome

Ms D. Beynon

Ms M. Jewell.

There is no representative from the Department of State Services on the above committee.

- (5) \$30 000.

## STATE SERVICES, DEPARTMENT OF - BUILDINGS LEASED; RENTALS

2243. Mr MARLBOROUGH to the Minister for Services:

- (1) What buildings does the Department of State Services currently lease?
- (2) How much is spent on the rental agreements per month?

Mr MINSON replied:

- (1)-(2) The Department of State Services currently leases the following buildings -

2nd Floor, 22 Mount Street, Perth - Bureau Services

Rent - \$7 086 per month

7th Floor, 12 Victoria Avenue, Perth - State Microfilm

Rent - \$5 101 per month

441/445 Murray Street, Perth - Department of State Services, Head Office

Rent - \$110 381 per month

Walnut Road, Bickley - Perth Observatory

Rent - peppercorn rent

151 Esther Street, Belmont - Supply West

Rent - \$44 608 per month

210 Adelaide Terrace, Perth (rear) - Mail West

Rent - \$6 366 per month

61 Victoria Avenue, Bunbury (part of third floor) - Mail West

Rent - \$7 086 per month

Ground Floor, 10 William Street, Perth - State Law Publisher

Rent - \$1 624 per month

The Department of State Services was also leasing office space on the ground floor of the May Holman Centre at 32 St George's Terrace for State IT's Information Technology Information Centre at a monthly rate of \$3 469. Responsibility for ITIC was transferred to LISWA on 1 July 1995.

## STATE SERVICES, DEPARTMENT OF - DUFFIELD, GARRY, ROLE

2246. Mr MARLBOROUGH to the Minister for Services:

- (1) Will the Minister explain the role performed by Mr Garry Duffield in the department?
- (2) Is the position of Government Printer now over-classified, given that State Print no longer exists?
- (3) Is Mr Duffield a permanent public servant?

Mr MINSON replied:

- (1) Since 19 May 1995, Mr Garry Duffield has assisted the Chairman, State Supply Commission, and in addition Mr Duffield continues to fulfil the statutory role of "Government Printer".
- (2) The position of government printer is currently under review.
- (3) Mr Duffield is a member of the Senior Executive Service, and is employed under contract.

## HOMESWEST - KWINANA REDEVELOPMENT, OVERSEER CONTRACT

2249. Mr RIEBELING to the Minister for Housing:

- (1) Was the contract to oversee the Kwinana Homeswest redevelopment advertised and, if so, where and on what date?

- (2) How many applications were received for this contract and from whom?
- (3) Who awarded the contract to the successful applicant?

Mr PRINCE replied:

- (1) Yes. *The West Australian* on 22 December 1993 and 15 January 1994.
- (2) Thirteen - McCusker Holdings Pty Ltd and Satterley and Company Pty Ltd  
Delfin Property Group Ltd  
Voran Holdings Pty Ltd  
Hames Sharley  
Richard Pawluk & Associates  
Baverstock and Associates  
KTA Partnership  
Dyas Realcom Project Management  
Sanven Pty Ltd  
I.R. Watson & Associates  
Durfen Pty Ltd  
Keywest Constructions Pty Ltd  
Gutteridge Haskins & Davey Pty Ltd
- (3) Homeswest, with the consent of myself.

**HOMESWEST - LOCKRIDGE REDEVELOPMENT, OVERSEER CONTRACT**

2250. Mr RIEBELING to the Minister for Housing:

- (1) Was the contract to oversee the Lockridge Homeswest redevelopment advertised and, if so, where and on what date?
- (2) How many applications were received for this contract and from whom?
- (3) Who awarded the contract to the successful applicant?

Mr PRINCE replied:

- (1) Yes. *The West Australian* on 22 December 1993 and 15 January 1994.
- (2) Eleven - McCusker Holdings Pty Ltd and Satterley and Company Pty Ltd  
Voran Holdings Pty Ltd  
Richard Pawluk & Associates  
Baverstock and Associates  
KTA Partnership  
Dyas Realcom Project Management  
Sanven Pty Ltd  
I.R. Watson & Associates  
Durfen Pty Ltd  
Keywest Constructions Pty Ltd  
Poliwka Group Pty Ltd
- (3) Homeswest, with consent of myself.

**HOMESWEST - DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITY PROGRAM**

2270. Mr KOBELKE to the Minister for Housing:

- (1) Into whose name, company or individual, was each parcel of land transferred or sold by Homeswest under the development opportunity program?
- (2) In each case mentioned above, what was the date of settlement for the sale and the purchase price paid?
- (3) In each case, how many lots, both individual and group sites, are to be returned to Homeswest?

- (4) How many of these sites, both individual and group, have already been handed back to Homeswest for each of the above purchases?

Mr PRINCE replied:

(1)-(4)

Location	Purchaser	Price \$	Settlement Date	Lots to be Returned	Lots Returned as at 19.6.95
Beechboro	Uzbek Pty Ltd	340 000	18.2.94	2(i)	2(i)
Koondoola	Macadam Nominees Pty Ltd (trading as Wesville Contractors)	350 000	13.10.94	6(i) 1(g)	6(i) 1(g)
Port Kennedy	Statewise Pty Ltd	3 065 000	18.11.94	34(i) 1(g)	Nil
Caversham	Gardenvale Nominees Pty Ltd	2 625 000	10.5.94	37(i) 4(g)	5(i) 1(g)
Bibra Lake	Wembley Lakes Estates Pty Ltd	3 960 000	9.5.94	1(g)	Nil
Queens Park	Kabane Pty Ltd	237 300	30.5.94	2(i)	2(i)
Warnbro Sound	Teaque Pty Ltd	255 000	5.7.94	3(i) 2(g)	3(i) 2(g)
Stratton	Uzbek Pty Ltd	400 600	11.7.94	Nil	Nil
Waikiki	Sumreal Nominees Pty Ltd & Rockingham Park Pty Ltd	3 926 000	24.3.95	14(i) 3(g)	Nil
Bunbury	Peet & Company Ltd	230 000	16.6.94	1(i) 1(g)	Nil
Karloo (Geraldton)	Panorama Homes (Geraldton) Pty Ltd	69 000	6.2.95	Nil	Nil
Mt Tarcoola (Geraldton)	Panorama Homes (Geraldton) Pty Ltd	907 000	24.1.95	Nil	Nil

i - individual

g - group

Note: The Rangeway land did not proceed to settlement as Homeswest received legal advice that the contract for the sale of the land had been frustrated.

#### DISABILITY SERVICES COMMISSION - HOSTEL ACCOMMODATION *Substandard Definition*

2285. Dr WATSON to the Minister for Disability Services:

Further to question on notice 1362 of 1995 and the Minister's request for me to provide further definition of the term "substandard", I refer him to the *Pocket Oxford Dictionary* definition of "standard of living: degree of material comfort enjoyed by community, person, etc" and to the *Collins Dictionary* "substandard - adj: below an established or required standard" and ask, will the Minister now answer question on notice 1362 (1) and (2) of 1995?

Mr MINSON replied:

- (1) By definition, there is no substandard hostel accommodation within the Disability Services Commission. There is, however, a backlog of building upgrades resulting from low budget provisions for restorative and planned maintenance in the late eighties and early nineties. This has been addressed by a provision of \$895 000 in the 1995-96 capital works budget.
- (2) Not applicable.

**HOMESWEST - DISABLED ACCOMMODATION**

**2289. Dr WATSON** to the Minister for Housing:

- (1) How many people with disabilities have been provided with Homeswest housing since October 1993?
- (2) Were 200 people with disabilities provided with housing options in the 1993-94 financial year?
- (3) If not, what number was accommodated?
- (4) How much money on housing for people with disabilities was expended by Homeswest in -
  - (a) 1993-94;
  - (b) 1994-95 to date?

**Mr PRINCE** replied:

- (1) Approximately 550 people have been housed.
- (2) No.
- (3) Approximately 170 people, excluding bond allocations.
- (4)
  - (a) \$8.6m.
  - (b) \$7.651m.

The information provided is primarily based on automated household statistics and possibly understates the actual position. To achieve greater accuracy would need significant resources and would not be justified.

**HOMESWEST - CONSTRUCTION PROGRAMS**

**2303. Dr GALLOP** to the Minister for Housing:

What Homeswest construction program is proposed in the 1995-96 Budget for the following suburbs -

- (a) Victoria Park;
- (b) Kensington;
- (c) East Victoria Park;
- (d) Burswood;
- (e) Lathlain;
- (f) Carlisle;
- (g) St James;
- (h) Bentley;
- (i) Welshpool; and
- (j) Wilson?

**Mr PRINCE** replied:

- (a) 3 units;
- (b) Nil;
- (c) 11 units;
- (d) Nil;
- (e) Nil;
- (f) 5 units;
- (g) Nil;
- (h) 60 units;
- (i) Nil; and
- (j) Nil.

\*Figures given are commencements and exclude Aboriginal housing as details are not yet finalised.



**NOONGAH ALCOHOL AND ABUSE SERVICE STREET PATROL -  
GOVERNMENT FUNDING**

**2305. Ms WARNOCK to the Attorney General:**

- (1) Will the Attorney General make funding available for a Noongah alcohol and abuse service street patrol in the Perth City area?
- (2) If yes, when?

**Mrs EDWARDES replied:**

- (1)-(2) Please refer to my answer to question 2304.

**POLICE - RECRUITS, BOOT ALLOWANCE**

**2307. Mr CATANIA to the Minister for Police:**

- (1) Were recruits previously paid a boot allowance of \$140 per annum prior to the introduction of workplace agreements?
- (2) Is footwear now supplied?
- (3) If so, would the Minister advise why this option was taken?
- (4) Is it a cost saving measure?
- (5) If so, what savings have been/will be achieved?

**Mr WIESE replied:**

I am advised by the Commissioner of Police as follows -

- (1)-(2) Yes.
- (3)-(4) As a cost containment measure and to standardise and improve the general standard of footwear.
- (5) The saving for each male officer is expected to be \$85 and for each female officer \$130 every 18 months.

**POLICE - MEDICAL EXPENSES, NON-WORK RELATED**

**2309. Mr CATANIA to the Minister for Police:**

- (1) Have the Minister and the Police Force on three separate occasions been advised by the Industrial Relations Commission that police officers and cadets should receive non-work related medical expenses?
- (2) Have the Minister and the Commissioner cancelled regulation 1307/1308 which enabled the claims to be made?
- (3) If so, why was the regulation cancelled?
- (4) Why have three separate appeals been made to the IRC?
- (5) What is the cost saving in not paying these benefits?

**Mr WIESE replied:**

I am advised by the Commissioner of Police as follows -

- (1) No.
- (2) Yes.
- (3) Due to escalating costs compounded by the Federal Government's fringe benefit tax, it was decided the moneys could be more appropriately utilised to improve conditions and resources in all areas of the Western Australian police service.
- (4) Three separate appeals have not been made to the Industrial Relations Commission.
- (5) The payment of non-work related medical expenses ceased on 17 November 1994. It is estimated that the savings are approximately

\$158 000 in 1994-95 and \$252 000 in 1995-96. If payment was made, an additional fringe benefits tax liability of approximately \$384 000 would be incurred.

#### **FIRE BRIGADE - FIREFIGHTERS, RESIGNATIONS ON MEDICAL GROUNDS**

2329. Mr CUNNINGHAM to the Minister for Emergency Services:

- (1) For each of the last five years, and for those under the age of 55 years, how many firefighters have left their service on medical grounds?
- (2) How many in each category were first examined by the respective medical panels to appraise the termination?
- (3) How many were not first examined by the respective medical panel but such was supported by other medical certificates?
- (4) How many were paid pro rata long service benefits upon termination?

Mr WIESE replied:

(1)	Total Number Retired	Under 55	Over 55
1.5.90-31.12.90	5	2	3
1991	3	0	3
1992	6	2	4
1993	14	1	13
1994	14	4	10
1.1.95-31.5.95	4	3	1
Total	46	12	34

- (2) 46; that is, all.
- (3) Nil.
- (4) 46; that is, all.

#### **POLICE - OFFICERS, RESIGNATIONS ON MEDICAL GROUNDS**

2330. Mr CUNNINGHAM to the Minister for Police:

- (1) For each of the last five years, and for those under the age of 55 years, how many police officers have left their service on medical grounds?
- (2) How many in each category were first examined by the respective medical panels to appraise the termination?
- (3) How many were not first examined by the respective medical panel but such was supported by other medical certificates?
- (4) How many were paid pro rata long service benefits upon termination?

Mr WIESE replied:

I am advised by the Commissioner of Police as follows -

(1)	1994-95	7
	1993-94	10
	1992-93	8
	1991-92	11
	1990-91	14

- (2) A police officer who is medically disabled is required to appear before a medical board for assessment of fitness for further active service. Specialist medical evidence is required to be presented to the medical board and that evidence would include an opinion that the police officer should be retired on medical grounds due to the nature of the medical condition. The police occupational health physician requests relevant specialist reports to enable him to make a recommendation to the Commissioner of Police that a member should be assessed by a medical

board due to health reasons. This process is adopted in each case except when specialist reports indicate that a member has a terminal disease. In these cases a medical board is not held and an urgent application is made to the Government Employees Superannuation Board.

- (3) Three members were, due to the nature of their terminal illness, dealt with by the Government Employees Superannuation Board.
- (4) Each member was paid pro rata long service leave benefits upon termination on medical grounds.

**SOUTH WEST DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION - BUDGET PAPERS AND  
ESTIMATED CAPITAL EXPENDITURE  
*Works in Progress and Completed Works***

**2402. Mr D.L. SMITH** to the Minister for Regional Development:

- (1) I refer to the 1995-96 Budget papers and to the 1994-95 estimated capital expenditure by the South West Development Commission and ask, in relation to each listed item of works in progress and completed works -
  - (a) what was the nature of the work;
  - (b) what was the break up of the estimated expenditure;
  - (c) if private contractors or consultants have been involved what are their names and the amounts paid to each of them;
  - (d) if other Government agencies were involved, which ones, and how much was paid to each?
- (2) With respect to each item of works in 1995-96, what is the detailed break down of the line items expenditure?
- (3) What items of Industrial Infrastructure will be reviewed and what will the costs of each be?
- (4) In relation to the funding -
  - (a) what land and property will be sold and what is the estimated value of each lot;
  - (b) where are the internal funds and balances derived from?

**The answer was tabled.**

[See paper No 445.]

**CELEBRATE THE REGIONS WEEK - EVENTS, METROPOLITAN AREA**

**2428. Mr D.L. SMITH** to the Minister for Regional Development:

- (1) In the Celebrate the Regions Week, how many and what events were held in the metropolitan area?
- (2) How many took place in the country?
- (3) Did any of the events in the metropolitan area receive funding and, if so, which ones, how much, and which country regions were involved in the event?
- (4) How was it that one applicant for funding in Mandurah received \$5 000 when the maximum grant was \$2 000?
- (5) What were the two applications from the south west which were refused and why were they refused?
- (6) What were the five applications from the Gascoyne that were refused and why were they refused?
- (7) Who were the five people on the panel overseeing applications and which region did each of them come from?

Mr COWAN replied:

- (1) "Celebrate the Regions" week was held in conjunction with the Western Australia Week Council and all the regional development commissions. Of all the events held in the city, the following five partially involved the Department of Commerce and Trade -

Forrest Place marquee  
Forrest Place art display, GPO Exhibition Hall  
Garden City Shopping Centre display  
Galleria Shopping Centre display  
Whitfords City Shopping Centre display

- (2) "Celebrate the Regions" week was held in conjunction with the Western Australia Week Council and all the regional development commissions. Of all the events held in the country, 56 partially involved the Department of Commerce and Trade.

- (3) "Celebrate the Regions" week was held in conjunction with the Western Australia Week Council and all the regional development commissions. Of all the events held in the country, the following involved partial funding assistance from the Department of Commerce and Trade -

Event	Regions involved	Funding provided
Activities in the Forrest Place marquee and art display in the GPO gallery	All nine regions	\$5 000
Garden City Shopping Centre display	All nine regions	\$30 000
Galleria Shopping Centre display	South west region	\$1 200
Whitfords City Shopping Centre display	All nine regions	\$500

- (4) This was a joint event involving 11 local groups, business and industry which would otherwise have sought funding individually. A large amount was agreed to on this basis.

- (5) The two applications from the south west region that were refused funding were -

(i) The Donnybrook/Balingup Tourist Committee - this application did not meet the funding criteria as the limited resources available to fund projects occurring in regional areas of the State during the "Celebrate the Regions" week did not provide for the Perth based component of this project to be supported.

(ii) The Augusta Margaret River Tourist Bureau did not proceed with its event but has discussed assistance from the South West Development Commission for a future event.

- (6) The five applications from the Gascoyne region that were refused funding were -

- (i) The Carnarvon Yacht Club  
(ii) "The Gascoyne Mainstreet Party"  
(iii) The Gascoyne Business Expo  
(iv) Skill Share Carnarvon  
(v) The Exmouth Chamber of Commerce

Applications (i) to (iii) did not occur during the "Celebrate the Regions" week 3 to 11 June and applications (iv) to (v) did not meet the criteria.

- (7) The five people on the panel overseeing the applications included three officers from the regional development division of the Department of

Commerce and Trade , a consultant from Perth working on the "Celebrate the Regions" initiative and an officer from the Mid West Development Commission. Advice was also sought from the development commissions on funding of projects in their regions.

**FIRE BRIGADE - GERALDTON FIRE STATION**

**2434. Mr CUNNINGHAM** to the Minister for Emergency Services:

- (1) Is there a \$100 000 surplus in the Geraldton Fire Station's budget?
- (2) Was the station officer instructed to spend it before the end of June 1995?
- (3) Has the Geraldton Fire Station been undermanned since April 1994?
- (4) Has manning been maintained only on day shifts?

**Mr WIESE** replied:

- (1) No. The Geraldton Fire Station's budget for the 1994-95 financial year will be in surplus to the amount of approximately \$40 000 as at 30 June 1995. The final figure will be determined in mid July 1995 when all accounts are finalised.
- (2) No. The station officer was asked to ensure that budget items listed for expenditure this financial year were spent in accordance with policy.
- (3) No. The total number of FTEs has been reduced by one due to staff resignation and staff transfers. Staff on overtime or call back as well as volunteer firefighters are available to respond to emergency situations.
- (4) No. At all times there have been three career staff members on duty during the day shift on weekdays and two staff members at all other times. Staff on duty are assisted by utilising volunteer members, or by call back career firefighters.

**PERPETUAL TRUSTEES WA LTD - GOVERNMENT FUNDS LODGED**

**2456. Mr KOBELKE** to the Minister for Works; Services; Disability Services:

- (1) What departments or agencies within the Minister's current responsibilities during the course of the 1994-95 financial year placed any moneys from trust funds or other accounts with the Perpetual Trustees Group?
- (2) When were such funds lodged with the Perpetual Trustees Group and what was the amount in each case?

**Mr MINSON** replied:

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

**PERPETUAL TRUSTEES WA LTD - GOVERNMENT FUNDS LODGED**

**2460. Mr KOBELKE** to the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs; Housing:

- (1) What departments or agencies within the Minister's current responsibilities during the course of the 1994-95 financial year placed any moneys from trust funds or other accounts with the Perpetual Trustees Group?
- (2) When were such funds lodged with the Perpetual Trustees Group and what was the amount in each case?

**Mr PRINCE** replied:

- (1) None.
- (2) Not applicable.

**STATE PRINT - SALE, LEGAL ADVICE**

**2483. Mr MARLBOROUGH to the Minister for Works; Services:**

- (1) Which firm was contacted to give the legal advice to the Minister on the sale of State Print, as reported in *The West Australian* newspaper on 1 December 1994?
- (2) Who provided the advice to the Minister?
- (3) What were the contents of the advice?
- (4) Will the Minister table the advice and, if not, why not?

**Mr MINSON replied:**

- (1) Legal advice was sought from the Crown Solicitor's Office by the Department of State Services.
- (2) Officers of the Department of State Services.
- (3) Within the context of tender and contract negotiations legal advice was sought on the status of the offer under consideration and options available to the Government.
- (4) No. The advice is regarded as legal professional privilege.

**STATE PRINT - SALE, LEGAL ADVICE**

**2484. Mr MARLBOROUGH to the Minister for Works; Services:**

- (1) On what date was legal advice sought on the sale of State Print, as reported in *The West Australian* on 1 December 1994?
- (2) On what date was legal advice given on the issue to the Minister?

**Mr MINSON replied:**

- (1) 3 November 1994.
- (2) The Minister for Services was made aware of the legal advice on or about 8 November 1994.

**HOMESWEST - NON-ENGLISH SPEAKING BACKGROUND MIGRANTS,  
ACCOMMODATION INFORMATION**

**2839. Mrs ROBERTS to the Minister for Housing:**

- (1) What action has the Minister taken to ensure that linguistically appropriate, accurate and timely housing and accommodation information is provided for non-English speaking background migrants?
- (2) What action has the Minister taken to ensure that that information is distributed widely?

**Mr PRINCE replied:**

- (1) Regular weekly interpreter services are offered at Homeswest's three metropolitan offices, with significant use being made of the telephone interpreter service. In instances where an interpreter is required for such things as an appeal, then an interpreter is contracted from TIS at the department's expense. Homeswest has also developed and implemented a language services plan every year since 1993-94. All Homeswest letterhead and computer generated stationery has been endorsed on the back with a message in 16 different languages advising how to access the TIS. In April 1995, Homeswest formed the ethnic affairs working party to oversee the implementation of the state settlement planning committee recommendations of which the department is a member.
- (2) Relevant ethnic groups are provided with information regarding the interpreter access times. Similar advice is distributed through the department's "ingoing tenancy pack" in several languages.

**HOMESWEST - RACISM, ACTION TAKEN**

2840. Mrs ROBERTS to the Minister for Housing:

What definitive and appropriate action has the Minister taken to with regard to racism within the public sector of the housing industry?

Mr PRINCE replied:

This question is very broad. Could the member be more specific so I am able to respond.

**"WA ONE" - GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS' STRATEGIC PLANS AND BUDGET ALLOCATIONS**

2942. Mrs ROBERTS to the Minister for Works; Services; Disability Services:

Will the Minister table for each department under the Minister's portfolios the department's strategic plan and budget allocation for the implementation of the Government's "W.A. One" policy?

Mr MINSON replied:

The mission of the Office of Multicultural Interests is to promote a harmonious community where Western Australians of diverse cultural, linguistic and religious backgrounds have equality of opportunity. This means, in effect, that the office is responsible for the implementation of the Government's multicultural policy, now formalised in "WA One: A multicultural police" and its entire budget is involved in achieving this. OMI's annual report each year states the office's major achievements for that year and the major planned achievements for the year ahead. OMI's planned achievements for 1995-96 include the development of the guidelines to government agencies and a coordinated state community relations strategy.

**"WA ONE" - GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS' STRATEGIC PLANS AND BUDGET ALLOCATIONS**

2944. Mrs ROBERTS to the Minister for Police; Emergency Services:

Will the Minister table for each department under the Minister's portfolios the department's strategic plan and budget allocation for the implementation of the Government's "W.A. One" policy?

Mr WIESE replied:

The mission of the Office of Multicultural Interests is to promote a harmonious community where Western Australians of diverse cultural, linguistic and religious backgrounds have equality of opportunity. This means, in effect, that the office is responsible for the implementation of the Government's multicultural policy, now formalised in "WA One: A multicultural police" and its entire budget is involved in achieving this. OMI's annual report each year states the office's major achievements for that year and the major planned achievements for the year ahead. OMI's planned achievements for 1995-96 include the development of the guidelines to government agencies and a coordinated state community relations strategy.

**"WA ONE" - GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS' STRATEGIC PLANS AND BUDGET ALLOCATIONS**

2946. Mrs ROBERTS to the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs; Housing:

Will the Minister table for each department under the Minister's portfolios the department's strategic plan and budget allocation for the implementation of the Government's "W.A. One" policy?

Mr PRINCE replied:

The mission of the Office of Multicultural Interests is to promote a harmonious

community where Western Australians of diverse cultural, linguistic and religious backgrounds have equality of opportunity. This means, in effect, that the office is responsible for the implementation of the Government's multicultural policy, now formalised in "WA One: A multicultural police" and its entire budget is involved in achieving this. OMI's annual report each year states the office's major achievements for that year and the major planned achievements for the year ahead. OMI's planned achievements for 1995-96 include the development of the guidelines to government agencies and a coordinated state community relations strategy.

#### GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS - TRANSLATING AND INTERPRETING SERVICES

2998. Mrs ROBERTS to the Minister for Works; Services; Disability Services:

- (1) What steps have been taken by departments within the Minister's portfolios to ensure that only qualified interpreters and translators are used on all occasions when dealing with clients who need these services?
- (2) Will steps be taken to train bilingual staff to meet the language services needed?

Mr MINSON replied:

- (1)-(2) The Western Australian Government's language services policy, which was implemented into the state public sector in July 1992, requires that all public sector agencies develop and implement a language services strategy which is appropriate to their needs and those of their clients. The language services policy comprises 12 principles which include the use of accredited interpreters and translators and the maximisation of accredited bilingual staff. Under this policy, it is the responsibility of each agency to develop and implement practices and structures, appropriate to its own administrative circumstances, to ensure that people from a non-English speaking background or who have a hearing impairment are able to access its services and programs.

#### GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS - TRANSLATING AND INTERPRETING SERVICES

3002. Mrs ROBERTS to the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs; Housing:

- (1) What steps have been taken by departments within the Minister's portfolios to ensure that only qualified interpreters and translators are used on all occasions when dealing with clients who need these services?
- (2) Will steps be taken to train bilingual staff to meet the language services needed?

Mr PRINCE replied:

- (1)-(2) The Western Australian Government's language services policy, which was implemented into the state public sector in July 1992, requires that all public sector agencies develop and implement a language services strategy which is appropriate to their needs and those of their clients. The language services policy comprises 12 principles which include the use of accredited interpreters and translators and the maximisation of accredited bilingual staff. Under this policy, it is the responsibility of each agency to develop and implement practices and structures, appropriate to its own administrative circumstances, to ensure that people from a non-English speaking background or who have a hearing impairment are able to access its services and programs.



## QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

HOSPITALS - MT HENRY  
*Health Solutions (WA) Report*

342. Dr GALLOP to the Minister for Health:

I refer to the Health Solutions (WA) Report on Mt Henry Hospital -

- (1) Is it not true that the Minister misled the public in his press release on 1 May 1995 when he announced the Health Solutions consultancy and said that it "would examine all options for the future of the hospital"?
- (2) If this statement was true, why did the consultant say in his report that the transfer of nursing home beds to the non-government sector was a "predetermined position", indeed a "premise" for his recommendations?
- (3) Is it not the case that the first draft of the report was sent back to the consultant for rewriting?
- (4) If so, why was the report rewritten?

Mr KIERATH replied:

(1)-(4) I cannot believe the member for Victoria Park.

Mr Taylor: Answer the question.

Mr KIERATH: I am more than happy to answer it.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr KIERATH: The consultant was appointed by the Health Department and not by the Minister.

Dr Gallop: You announced it in a press release and said you would examine the options.

The SPEAKER: Order! The Deputy Leader of the Opposition.

Mr KIERATH: Members opposite must settle down and take it easy. I was trying to point out that I never asked for the consultant to review the options for Mt Henry. I asked senior people in the department to advise me of their long term views, and a consultant was appointed. Having accepted that, there were terms of reference. I had a meeting with the consultant. Those senior people have examined all the terms of reference, including the option of leaving Mt Henry Hospital open. That is where the member for Victoria Park is so wrong.

Dr Gallop: It was a predetermined decision. That is what they said.

Mr KIERATH: It was not. There are now 135 beds there and they will build a new facility of between 40 and 50 beds. I do not know what the member for Victoria Park's interpretation of closing is, but I say that it is a replacement of some of the facilities with a brand new facility on the same site. It is not a closure. Two-thirds of the beds will be available to transfer to other areas. The reason is that the department of the federal colleague of the member for Victoria Park, the Minister for Health who is under severe pressure nationally and federally, has said that the area is way over-bedded and that other areas in the State are under-bedded. It makes a lot of sense to transfer beds from the over-bedded area into under-bedded areas. I have just been to the south west. Almost every country hospital I went to put in a bid for some of those beds.

Mr McGinty: Why was the report rewritten?

Mr KIERATH: It was not rewritten, as I understand it. If the Leader of the Opposition wants to know the facts, I will tell him. The consultant came to me to discuss the general drift of his final report. I asked the consultant whether other

people from whom he had not heard had attempted to make submissions. He said that he would review those submissions and submit his final report. My understanding is that the report was not rewritten, but that the consultant was at one stage able to take in further submissions. The member for Victoria Park may not agree with the consultancy process; however, it allows the ability for other people to have an input. Parts (2) to (4) of the member's question are wrong, as is part (1) which is based on a falsity. The member for Victoria Park has difficulty opening his mind and accepting that a consultant did not come down with a recommendation that he wanted, so the member simply makes up what he puts forward as the facts.

Dr Gallop interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order! The Deputy Leader of the Opposition is interjecting excessively.

### HOSPITALS - PRIVATISATION

343. Mrs van de KLASHORST to the Minister for Health:

Some notice has been given of this question. Concerns have been raised about hospital privatisation, and I have listened to much debate on the subject. Have any cases of hospital privatisation been a success?

Mr KIERATH replied:

Mr Speaker -

Mrs Henderson: Boring!

Mr KIERATH: One of the difficulties members opposite have is that they are not consistent. Thanks to the member for Victoria Park, the answer was supplied in a public interview. Excepting some of the contradictions, which he acknowledged, he admitted that on this occasion he was happy to accept the assessment that there had been some great successes in privatisation.

Dr Gallop: When did I say that?

Mr KIERATH: I will come to that.

Dr Gallop: You can't read.

Mr KIERATH: The member for Victoria Park cannot even remember what he said publicly. He referred to some of the veterans' hospitals around the country. He ignored the Western Australian example and chose the South Australian example because it suited his purposes. The veterans' hospital in that State went into the state health system. He said that the system of federal government run hospitals had been inefficient. He said further that following changes in Queensland and Western Australia, privatisation by the federal Labor Party had resulted "in an enormous improvement in productivity and output".

Dr Gallop: That is right. I could have done that too if I had managed them.

Mr KIERATH: Can members imagine that from the member for Victoria Park? He admits that a privatisation process increased productivity and output enormously. That is interesting!

Dr Gallop: I didn't say that at all.

Mr KIERATH: I hope Hansard got his comment on the record.

Dr Gallop interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order! I rose to my feet to give the Deputy Leader of the Opposition a warning that I would have to formally call him to order if he continued; however, he interjected excessively while I was on my feet. I could change my mind and formally call him to order; however, I will not do that. The member is interjecting excessively. Some of his interjections are good; nevertheless, most are too loud. I had the problem myself when I sat in a similar

seat. His interjections are so loud that they disrupt all that we are trying to do. The member should cease his interjections.

Mr KIERATH: The crux of my answer is that when a federal Labor Government flogs off a hospital totally, the Opposition thinks that it is okay; it is a success story. This Government is not that courageous. It has said that it will put private sector management into the chief executive officer position at Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital, but there are prophets of doom and gloom when it is suggested at that level: What a terrible situation! It is disgraceful! It is something the Opposition cannot stomach and is not prepared to support. The Opposition has double standards. When Labor sells hospitals lock, stock and bedpan it is fantastic; the results are terrific. However, when the coalition Government puts in private sector management to make the public sector area more efficient, that is not acceptable; it is disgraceful. We see the double standards of the member for Victoria Park. When Labor does it, it is okay; when the coalition does it, it is no good.

#### PRISONS - CASUARINA

##### *Rape Case, Man on Remand and Sex Offender*

344. Mr McGINTY to the Minister for Justice:

I refer the Minister to the rape of a 19 year old man being held on remand in a cell at Casuarina Prison by a convicted sex offender.

- (1) Will the Minister tell the House how it is possible for a person on remand in a maximum security prison to be raped by a known sex offender?
- (2) Given that the Ministry of Justice has no policy preventing sex offenders sharing cells with other prisoners, does the Minister accept responsibility for this appalling tragedy and what will she do to ensure that it does not happen again?

Mrs EDWARDES replied:

- (1)-(2) As the Minister assisting the Minister for Justice is the person responsible for the day to day operation of prisons, the Leader of the Opposition should address the question to him.

#### ROADS - BUNBURY, BYPASS ROUTE, PUBLIC SUBMISSION PERIOD

345. Mr OSBORNE to the Minister representing the Minister for Transport:

Some residents of Gelorup, which is south of Bunbury, have recently asked for an extended public submission period for the Bunbury outer ring road which is to commence construction after the year 2000. Residents of Bunbury have raised concerns that the number of heavy haulage vehicles which would be forced to traverse the city of Bunbury if the ring road is not constructed will be more than 90 000 per year. Will the Minister assure the people of Bunbury that the proposed road will go ahead after an extended public submission period has been allowed?

Mr LEWIS replied:

I have received some correspondence on the bypass route and I thank the member for bringing it to the attention of the House. I have received advice from the Minister for Transport and I can assure the member that the bypass road will go ahead.

Several members interjected.

Mr LEWIS: If members are patient, I will answer the question. It is accepted that the actual route has not yet been finalised. When Main Roads Western Australia has identified what it considers to be its preferred route there will be a two month consultation period with the public.

Mr D.L. Smith: Will the report be released as part of that process?

Mr LEWIS: I cannot tell the member.

Mrs Hallahan: Why don't you know.

Mr LEWIS: I am not the Minister for Transport. I could say I cannot recall.

Mrs Hallahan: You are the Minister assisting the Minister for Transport.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr LEWIS: It is amazing that the member for Armadale is the only person who cannot recall - all the members of her Cabinet can recall!

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr LEWIS: The people in the area will be consulted following a submission period and then Main Roads will finalise the preferred alignment which will be slotted into a construction program in the not too distant future.

#### PRISONS - SEX OFFENDERS, INTENSIVE TREATMENT PROGRAMS

346. Mr McGINTY to the Minister for Justice:

I refer the Minister to her claims in relation to Bunbury Prison made in the Legislative Council on 19 October last year that "the Bunbury program allows for intensive treatment of sex offenders" and to her claim reported in *The West Australian* on 20 October last year that the program at Bunbury Prison would allow "intensive treatment and counselling of sex offenders" and that "it was the program which had moved to Bunbury . . . the prisoners had simply followed". In the light of the admissions made by the Minister assisting the Minister for Justice and the Director of Prison Operations that there are no such treatment programs for sex offenders at Bunbury Prison, will the Minister admit that she deceived the Parliament and the public of Western Australia and immediately apologise and make sure that all sex offenders have access to intensive sex offender treatment programs such as that currently operating at Casuarina Prison?

Mrs EDWARDES replied:

The Leader of the Opposition was enthusiastic about saying that I had deceived the House. I did not. He was selective in his use of *Hansard* reports. If the Leader of the Opposition refers to *Hansard* of 19 October and 20 October 1994, it is clear from responses to questions in the other House that we were talking about a review of the sex offender treatment program operating in the State. A pilot program had started in Bunbury, and at the time I gave the answer to this House the evaluation of that program was under way.

Mr McGinty: The Attorney lied.

#### *Withdrawal of Remark*

The SPEAKER: Order! I call on the Leader of the Opposition to withdraw that remark.

Mr McGINTY: I withdraw.

#### *Questions without Notice Resumed*

Mrs EDWARDES: The documentation proves that there was always every intention to conduct a program at the Bunbury prison.

Mr D.L. Smith: The Attorney knows that is untrue.

Mrs EDWARDES: It is not untrue. The documentation shows clearly that there was every intention to continue to conduct the program at the Bunbury prison. The difficulty was in attracting experienced people to Bunbury.

Mr McGinty: There is no intention even today to have that facility operating at Bunbury prison, and the Attorney General knows it.

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

Mrs EDWARDES: The Leader of the Opposition is trying to put words into my mouth. There was, and is, every intention to operate a program at Bunbury prison. If the Leader of the Opposition wants the full details of the program, the Minister assisting the Minister for Justice can provide that. I did not mislead this House. The Leader of the Opposition was selective in his use of the *Hansard* reports, and he will get caught trying to slip that through.

Mr Marlborough interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order! I formally call to order the member for Peel.

#### RESOURCES (MINERALS AND ENERGY) PROJECTS - GAS PRODUCERS, BENEFITS

347. Mr BLOFFWITCH to the Minister for Resources Development:

We hear a lot about the major new resource projects planned for the State since the deregulation of the gas market. What is the extent of benefits flowing to the gas producers in Western Australia?

Mr C.J. BARNETT replied:

There has been a focus on some of the major new projects within the State. What is not widely recognised, at least within Perth, is the extent to which it is flowing back to the energy and gas production sector. Members may not be aware that since deregulation nine private sector power stations have been completed, are under construction or are due for completion by the end of next year. They will produce 590 MW, which is approximately twice the size of the Collie power station. That represents a lot of new market opportunities for gas producers within Western Australia.

The Apache Harriet project recently secured contracts to supply the Mt Ferrum power station in Kalgoorlie and Broken Hill Proprietary Co Ltd's power station in Port Hedland. The Western Mining Corporation power stations along the route of the goldfields pipeline have underpinned the development of the East Spar gas project, and construction is starting on Varanus Island, which is a \$250m project.

I am pleased to inform members that today a contract has been signed for the delivery of gas from the North West Shelf joint venture to the BHP hot brickette iron plant proposed for Port Hedland. That HBI plant is the largest development project in this State and is estimated to be worth \$1.5b. The gas contract for that project also has a total value of \$1.5b. It is a 15 year contract involving 130 TJ of gas a day. That contract alone is equivalent to a 25 per cent increase in total domestic gas sales within Western Australia. It means that not only are huge gas resources being developed for export in liquified natural gas, but also that deregulation has resulted in more gas being used on projects in Western Australia. I am sure the Treasurer will be pleased to know that not only will the State derive substantial royalties from that increased gas production, but also the stamp duty payable on the contract alone will be \$4m.

#### PRISONS - BUNBURY REGIONAL *Sex Offender Treatment Program*

348. Mr McGINTY to the Minister assisting the Minister for Justice:

In a recent briefing provided at Bunbury Regional Prison by the Ministry of Justice, I was informed there was no intention of providing an intensive sex offender treatment program at Bunbury and, from a prison management point of view, such a program was best provided at Casuarina Prison, as is currently the case. What intention is there to provide - contrary to the recommendations of his department - an intensive sex offender treatment program at the Bunbury Regional Prison?

Mr MINSON replied:

I thank the member for the question because it will allow me to make clear to members that, despite the fact I have released media statements and written to many members of Parliament, they do not seem to recognise that I do not have carriage of the Prisons Act by delegation. It is assigned to me by the Governor because most of the Acts included in the portfolio of the Attorney General do not have delegation powers. The Prisons Act, the Registration of Births, Deaths and Marriages Act, the Fines, Penalties and Infringement Notices Enforcement Act and other minor Acts have been transmitted to me by the Governor and, therefore, have passed from the control -

Mr Marlborough: You want us to blame you from now on?

Mr MINSON: Yes, I do. All questions in that area should be directed to me.

I make it clear that there are three levels of the sex offender treatment program. One, which is community based, is used for those for whom it is appropriate. Another is conducted on a sessional basis, and such a program started at Bunbury this week. That will not be appropriate for everyone, but it is the most appropriate for some.

Mr D.L. Smith interjected.

Mr MINSON: I am not sure. I think from memory that it is two, but I will check that for the member.

Mr D.L. Smith: It is one.

Mr MINSON: If the member for Mitchell knows the answer, why did he ask the question? The other very intensive program is not appropriate for everyone. As far as I am concerned, it was always intended to run that program at Bunbury, and I asked the Director General at a meeting at 3.30 pm yesterday - at which the Attorney General was present - to give me a timetable for the start of this program at Bunbury. I believe it should be available at Bunbury for those prisoners for whom it is deemed appropriate. I am led to believe that because the department could not find a psychologist, who had the necessary experience to deliver that program and who was willing to live in Bunbury, the five month pilot program could not be continued. I understand after the program was reviewed -

Mr D.L. Smith: When did it finish?

Mr MINSON: In June 1994. The program was reviewed and extended from five months to seven months because it was felt a better result could be achieved after that period. However, the department then did not have personnel willing to go to Bunbury to provide the program.

Mr D.L. Smith: They had no intention of re-establishing it at Bunbury. The decision to hold this one was made in your ministerial office and not in the department.

Mr MINSON: To hold which one?

Mr D.L. Smith: The program that started on 21 August.

Mr MINSON: That is not true; that program was put in place by the ministry. I will check when it made the decision.

Mr Brown: Say what you were going to say.

Mr MINSON: I did say what I intended to say. The intensive program will start if the appropriate personnel can be found.

Mr McGinty: Is that still intended to be established at Bunbury?

Mr MINSON: Yes. I have asked the Director General to give a timetable for the start of that program. I make it clear that no sex offender is released into the community without having gone through the appropriate program. If they must

be transferred to Casuarina or Karnet to undertake that program, that will happen before they are released. We often send people around the State for management reasons. People are classified not by offence but, rather, by their security rating. If they are rated medium security, they are appropriately located at Bunbury, and they will be transferred back through the appropriate prisons for appropriate treatment prior to release.

**ABORIGINAL HOUSING - KALUMBURU, AGED PERSON'S UNITS;  
PANDILOW, MARY**

349. **Dr HAMES** to the Minister for Housing:

Will the Minister update the House on progress of the construction of aged persons' accommodation for Mary Pandilow OAM in Kalumburu?

**Mr PRINCE** replied:

Last October, the member and I and others visited Kalumburu, among other places. At that time, a fairly expansive construction program was under way for 12 new houses at that community and for the upgrading of about 15 existing houses. The member no doubt will be interested to know that \$2.58m was expended on that work; \$1.6m came through Homeswest and the balance of \$960 000 came from the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission and from the Kalumburu community funds. Work was in hand when the member and I were there, but it had not been finished.

It was raised with us at that time by a few of the younger members of the community that that lady, Mary Pandilow, who is well into her eighties and has received the medal of the Order of Australia, was one of those who were to miss out on being given new or refurbished accommodation. She was then living in one of the houses that were built probably in the early 1920s, with a wooden floor, wooden poles, iron and so forth. It was totally inappropriate accommodation for a lady of her age with a number of the ailments that are suffered by people of that age. She expressed the view that she would rather live in the nearby ablution block than in the little home that she was in. We undertook to try to do something about that, but the allocation of housing is in the hands of the Kalumburu community.

I am pleased to say that the reconstituted Aboriginal Housing Board met just over two weeks ago. In its deliberations over about three days, it determined upon the building and maintenance program for this financial year. It has approved funding for four aged persons' units at Kalumburu. Tenders for the architect closed last Friday. I hope that we will have the architect on site by the end of next week. With some fast tracking, and assuming that the community agrees with whatever design is agreed upon, we might be able to commence building by late October or perhaps early November - in other words, before the wet.

It still remains for the community to decide whether Mrs Pandilow is to occupy one of those aged persons' units, but she is one of the acknowledged elders of the community. She is a remarkable person, and her health is not good. I urge the community to take the appropriate action when the units are available to move her into one of them. I undertake to the member to keep an eye on what is going on and to keep him up to date with progress.

**EQUAL OPPORTUNITY COMMISSION - "DISCRIMINATION ON THE BASIS  
OF SEXUALITY"**

350. **Ms WARNOCK** to the Attorney General:

I refer the Attorney General to the Equal Opportunity Commission discussion paper entitled "Discrimination on the Basis of Sexuality" and ask -

- (1) Is the Attorney General aware that Western Australia and Tasmania are the only States in Australia where people can be discriminated against on the basis of their sexuality?

- (2) Is the Attorney General aware also that that discrimination includes people being sacked from jobs, thrown out of rented accommodation, and being denied goods and services purely on the basis of their sexuality?
- (3) Does the Attorney General believe such discrimination is acceptable, and if not, what action will she take to make it unlawful as recommended by the Equal Opportunity Commission in 1994?

Mrs EDWARDES replied:

- (1-(3) The report that was given to me by the Equal Opportunity Commissioner last year was sent out, as the member knows, far and wide. Obviously, a number of people responded with their views on the recommendations. I have received the final report from the Equal Opportunity Commissioner, and I am presently considering that report together with the recommendations.

#### JANDAKOT LAND USE AND MANAGEMENT STRATEGY - JANDAKOT BOTANIC PARK, LAND ACQUISITION

351. Mr BOARD to the Minister for Planning:

Will the Minister bring me up to date on the progress of land being set aside both under the Jandakot land use and management strategy and the Jandakot Botanic Park?

Mr LEWIS replied:

I thank the member for the question. Obviously he has an interest in the matter because it relates to his electorate. The Jandakot land use and management strategy identifies 3 756 hectares of land for inclusion in the Jandakot Botanic Park. Of that area, 2 356 ha is reserved for parks and recreation in the metropolitan region scheme. To date, 1 742 ha earmarked for the park have either been acquired by the State Planning Commission or classed as Crown land.

#### COLLIE POWER STATION - CONSTRUCTION CONTRACT, WAGE INCREASES RESPONSIBILITY

352. Mr THOMAS to the Minister for Energy:

Is it true that under the contract for the construction of the new 300 MW power station at Collie, Western Power, not the contractors, is responsible for paying any increased costs due to wage increases?

Mr C.J. BARNETT replied:

I am not aware of all the details of the risk and escalation factors.

Mr Ripper: It is a major risk.

Mr C.J. BARNETT: It might be in the contract. I hope it is not. I expect good industrial relations on the site, and I hope the member will support that. I will provide an answer for the member. As with any major contract there is an allocation of risk between the participants. That is always the case. It is a turnkey contract for \$575m. I expect the project to be delivered on that contract.

#### POLICE - MURRAY-MANDURAH ELECTORATE, ADDITIONAL NEED

353. Mr MARSHALL to the Minister for Police:

Owing to the population boom in the Murray-Mandurah electorate a demand exists for extra police in the area. Is the Minister aware of this need and can he do anything about it?

Several members interjected.

Mr WIESE replied:

Judging by the number of interjections, I guess the member seeks an answer to the question because certain members opposite are not aware of the real progress



being made within the police service in relation to increasing police numbers throughout the State.

Several members interjected.

Mr WIESE: I remind members opposite that 32 graduates a month are leaving the academy currently. That number will continue for the next two and half years.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr WIESE: We will achieve the identified target of 800 extra police on the streets of Western Australia by the end of the term of this Government.

Several members interjected.

Mr WIESE: Members are sensitive!

An Opposition member: Honest Bob!

Mr WIESE: I wonder how many members opposite can have a remark like that made about them!

We have already appointed two extra general duties constables and one detective constable to the Mandurah CIB. In addition, a commitment has been made to appoint more than 10 extra police officers to the Mandurah police station over the next two years. I am sure that all members appreciate the benefits that will flow to the people in the Mandurah area. One of those positions will be allocated to the crime prevention section. The especially good news for the people of Mandurah is that one of the appointees will be a school based policing officer. The commitment to increase police numbers is already providing substantial benefits in the Mandurah area and in many other areas of the state. That situation will continue for the life of this Government.

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