

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Subiaco Oval

HON NORMAN MOORE (Mining and Pastoral - Leader of the Opposition) [5.30 pm]: I will take a few minutes to talk about an issue concerning Subiaco Oval. I became the Minister for Sport and Recreation in 1993 during the time that the Keating Government used something like \$8 million of Western Australia's road funds to build the southern stand at Subiaco Oval, which basically commenced the redevelopment of that stadium. In a sense, because of the capital investment, the suggestion was that Western Australia would not build anything like that anywhere else. As Minister for Sport and Recreation I took a proposal to Cabinet to complete the redevelopment of Subiaco Oval, which was accepted. Under that proposal the State was to provide \$1.5 million a year for 20 years to the West Australian Football Commission to assist it in repaying a loan it had taken out to redevelop the oval. As a result of that cabinet decision and agreement with the Football Commission, Subiaco Oval was developed into what I consider to be a significant, important and good stadium. Certainly for the amount spent on developing it, it is first-class when compared with other stadiums around Australia. The Football Commission recently entered hard financial times, partly due to its commitment to the oval but also because the dividends paid to it by the West Coast Eagles and the Fremantle Dockers have been on pretty bad terms over the past couple of years, compared with the success those teams have had on the field. Fortunately, that situation has improved this year. The Football Commission has renegotiated its financial arrangements with the current Government, which I support. It is a good example of a cooperative partnership between the State Government and the Football Commission to ensure that Western Australia has a superior stadium.

In seeking further funds, the Football Commission is looking for a naming rights sponsor for the oval. I do not have any problems with naming rights sponsorship of stadiums; it is the sort of name suggested that has caused me trouble. The most successful naming rights sponsorship deal was for the old Perth Superdrome, which became Challenge Stadium. The Challenge Bank was the naming rights sponsor of that stadium. Most people thought the new name of the stadium was generic for a place in which sporting challenges and activities take place. It was a very good name for that stadium.

Hon Kim Chance: The people at Challenge Dairy Co-operative Ltd were really pleased about it too.

Hon NORMAN MOORE: They probably were. I suspect that any company named "Challenge" was. In my view, that was a good decision. It meant that the Western Australian Sports Centre Trust obtained several million dollars for that sponsorship deal. Ian Laurance, chairman of the trust, deserves credit for that deal. I gather that the trust is having some trouble in getting a naming rights sponsor to succeed Challenge Bank, whose contract has expired. I am not arguing against the idea of naming rights for stadiums or facilities per se but against the notion that Subiaco Oval be called Crazy John's Stadium. That is an appalling proposition. It is a superior stadium; it is the premier stadium in Western Australia. To give it a name like Crazy John's Stadium is absolutely and totally ridiculous. As a partner in that stadium, the Government should tell the Football Commission that it will not approve that naming rights sponsorship deal under any circumstances, and that if the commission insists on going ahead with it, bearing in mind that the commission owns the stadium, the Government will consider its contract with the Football Commission with a view to withdrawing from it if possible.

Hon Kim Chance: I am actually warming to the name.

Hon NORMAN MOORE: The Leader of the House might be warming to the name. If he wants to call the Labor Party headquarters Crazy John's Headquarters, he can go for his life, because that might be appropriate. However, it is not an appropriate name for the premier stadium in Western Australia. The Government, through the Minister for Sport and Recreation, should demand that the Football Commission reject this offer, and indicate to the football community that the Government will take a dim view of any decision by the Football Commission to accept the \$5.5 million offered to name our premier stadium Crazy John's Stadium. I do not know how many people support the view I am expressing or how many people support the view of the Leader of the House. In my opinion, as a person who was intimately and directly involved in the redevelopment of Subiaco Oval to a superior stadium, it would be an absolute outrage to give the oval a name such as this for the sake of \$5.5 million over five years. There must be dozens of other companies that could be involved. I would not mind if it were called BankWest Stadium, Challenge Stadium or whatever. However, we must avoid at all cost a name that would bring the ground into disrepute and promote mirth when it is mentioned.

Hon Kim Chance: I rang George Grljusich and got his advice. He thought Crazy John's Stadium was fine too.

Hon NORMAN MOORE: Now I know I am right.

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Hon Ken Travers: I reckon we should use the money to buy the naming rights to one of the stands at the Melbourne Cricket Ground and call it the Visit WA Stand.

Hon NORMAN MOORE: I do not have a problem with that either. This proposal to rename the oval is absolutely ridiculous. If the Government does not do something about it, it will be derelict in its duty, bearing in mind that it is a significant investor in this stadium. The stadium deserves a better name than the one being contemplated by the Football Commission at this time. I urge the Minister for Sport and Recreation to publicly tell the Football Commission that the Government will not support renaming Subiaco Oval Crazy John's Stadium.

Swan Valley Nyungah Community

HON PADDY EMBRY (South West) [5.36 pm]: I feel I must make some short but further comment on the reasons given by the Government for its actions regarding the Swan Valley Nyungah settlement. The Leader of the House suggested that the Government had in some way failed in the debate because he had been unable to persuade me with the Government's arguments. I choose to take that as a compliment. I think that was how it was meant.

Hon Kim Chance: It was intended as such.

Hon PADDY EMBRY: My understanding of the leader's argument, or at least the substance of it, was that the Government had to follow its agency's advice. That is nonsense. An agency surely exists to carry out the Government's instructions. The Government should not try to hide behind the bureaucrats. I hope that if the Government is proved wrong in its actions at the Swan Valley settlement, it will accept the responsibility and not claim it was acting only on agency advice. The onus is on government members, and ministers in particular, to do whatever is reasonable to ensure that they select the correct advice. The father of Simon Crean, the present federal leader of the Labor Party, stated back in the dim dark ages of the Whitlam Government that experts should be on tap, not on top. I think Mr Frank Crean made that remark during the time he was Treasurer. Treasurers changed quite often during the short term of that Labor Government. He certainly made the remark during that term of government, but perhaps not while he held that portfolio. Surely the Government is aware of the substantial mistrust, or I should perhaps say lack of confidence, of many people in the bureaucracy. I will quickly provide an example of why that is so. I know of this example first hand. It involved Western Power and a friend of mine, who is a very well known merino stud breeder in this State. A power pole caught fire. My friend made a claim for the burnt pasture and hay. Western Power tried to get out of its obligation. Another friend of my mine, who owned a small aeroplane, flew in to see his friend the stud breeder to find out whether he could do anything to help following the fire. He took a great number of low-level photographs of homesteads and shed buildings. He made quite a lot of money doing that. He took photos of the State Electricity Commission, as it was called in those days, cutting off the rotten tops of the power poles with chainsaws. That is pretty serious. The SEC workers were trying to destroy the evidence of what caused the fire. That occurred not so long ago. The SEC had an amazing change of attitude when the stud breeder produced the photographs. He was paid compensation immediately without any further questioning whatsoever.

That government agency was trying to avoid its proper responsibility in that case. I suggest to the Government that that sort of action by government agencies does not involve just that agency. People mistrust government agencies. That is all the more reason for the Government to make sure that the advice it is given is correct, particularly in cases like the Nyungah Swan Valley Community whereby the actions taken and the legalities involved were quite draconian and extreme, to say the least. There would be something wrong if members of Parliament, particularly opposition members, were not concerned and did not want due process to occur when the Government tried to rush the reserves Bill through this place. I sincerely hope that the Government's actions over the Swan Valley camp are proven correct. However, if the Government's actions are proven to be wrong, it should accept the responsibility of the decision manfully and it should not hide behind the agency.

Phoenix Program

HON GIZ WATSON (North Metropolitan) [5.43 pm]: I will raise a matter that was the subject of some discussion in the House the week before last about the decision to remove funding from the Phoenix program of the Family Planning Association of Western Australia. I have spoken about this matter before and expressed the Greens (WA) extreme concern about the political nature of that defunding. A few days ago I received a letter from Don Baxter, the Executive Director of the Australian Federation of AIDS Organisations Inc. It is worth sharing the content of the letter with members. One of the tragedies of the Government's decision not to fund the Phoenix program is likely to be the consequence of increased risk of higher rates of sexually transmitted diseases among the sex worker population and, therefore, into the broader community. The letter is dated 19 June. It is addressed to Hon Robert Kucera, and states -

Dear Minister

...

The Australian Federation of AIDS Organisations is extremely concerned about the implications of your decision to terminate funding of the state sex worker organization, Phoenix, effective - we understand - from June 30th.

We urge you to re-consider the decision. We do so particularly in light of the independent audit report you had commissioned, which exonerates Phoenix from any significant irregularities and which points out that the only problems identified arose from inadequate control and approval processes developed by the Department of Health. Had these processes and controls been put in place by the Department, any concerns regarding the content of resources produced by Phoenix could have been met at an early stage.

Minister, one of the notable successes in Australia's response to HIV has been that HIV has been all but kept out of the sex industry here. With the benefit of hindsight we can see this substantially derives from the initiative of sex workers and their community organisations - very early in the epidemic - establishing condom use and good sexual health as routine standards of the industry, even among the most marginalised sex workers.

These initiatives have undoubtedly saved many Australians from HIV infection: not only sex workers but many of their clients, and also therefore the client's other sexual partners, including in many cases, their wives. As you may be aware, many countries have developed to an epidemic among their general populations through failing to facilitate routine condom use and good sexual health practices in their sex industry.

Phoenix's work carries on that vital work. Experience across Australia has consistently shown that health promotion programs targeting sex workers are most effective when delivered by sex worker organizations. Phoenix demonstrably has the confidence of sex workers in Western Australia and has a sound national reputation for its health promotion work.

We are aware of your concerns that Phoenix resources 'glamourise' sex work and contain material 'outside acceptable community standards'. We point out that depicting positive images and messages about the industry is an important strategy to gain and sustain the confidence of sex workers in the health education services provided by Phoenix.

We also point out that resources produced have not been intended for the general public, and hence should not be judged according to broader community standards but the standards of the industry concerned. Members of the general public would have had to take quite deliberate, conscious steps to obtain the material.

Australia's *National HIV/AIDS Strategy* commits to a partnership approach between communities most affected by HIV, governments and health professionals. The Strategy states the need "to expand sex worker organizations' capacity to design, manage and participate in peer-based health promotion activities and to participate in the broader partnership approach" . . . Your action runs counter to the partnership principles of the Strategy and risks undermining the success of our national approach to the issue.

There is no credible alternative sex worker based group or organization in Western Australia. In the absence of Phoenix, the State's sex industry will be left with no community based provider of health promotion services. This places sex workers, their clients and the broader community at an elevated risk of negative sexual health outcomes.

It is disappointing that a Government claiming to be committed to a progressive social agenda has taken such a damaging course of action. Now that you have been able to read and consider the final version of the independent audit we urge you to reconsider this decision.

Minister, we also understand you raised the matter of Ms Janelle Fawke's travel and attendance at a "junket" to the International Conference on AIDS in Asia and the Pacific in Melbourne in 2001. Minister, that trip was not funded by your government; it was funded by this organisation.

I can report that far from a "junket" Ms Fawkes worked extremely hard and productively with sex workers from a range of countries in the region. This included countries - such as our near neighbours Papua New Guinea and Indonesia - which have shunned and demeaned the workers in sex industry in their countries: to their great cost. They now have developed generalised epidemics, with infections

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having extended out of the sex industry into the general population. We do not want Western Australia to be a late addition to this quite avoidable catastrophe.

We look forward to your re-consideration of this issue and would welcome the opportunity to provide further information in relation to it.

I add my voice to the concerns raised by the Australian Federation of AIDS Organisations and again urge the minister to reconsider his very rash and ill-considered decision to de-fund the Phoenix program.

Farm Water Supply, Petition

HON BARRY HOUSE (South West) [5.49 pm]: I bring to the attention of the House a petition that I have been asked to present by a significant number of constituents of the south west. I do so now because I cannot do it during the formal business of the day that allows for petitions to be tabled, as the petition does not conform completely to standing orders. It does not contain the correct form of words, a prayer or details about the promoter of the petition. Nevertheless, the substance and content of the petition are of interest, and I sincerely invite the House to use the same process that it would use for another petition.

The petition has been signed by 118 residents and constituents of the south west region, and it reads -

To the Honourable the President and Members of the Legislative Council of the Parliament of Western Australia in Parliament assembled.

We the undersigned from the Shires of Manjimup and Nannup are concerned that the State Government is proposing to interfere in the management of farm water supply in our Shires.

Through the activities of the Warren Water Management Area Advisory Committee we have managed the water supply efficiently and cost effectively for decades, and are concerned that the Government intends to introduce new taxes for water which we have developed at our cost.

We are concerned that any costs associated with the proposal could affect farmers' viability

We are concerned that the Government, through the Water and Rivers Commission and Water Corporation will be dictating to farmers in our Shires what their farming practices will be - ie quantifying water supply which will affect cropping programmes and continuity of supply.

We are concerned that there appears to have been no study done into the long-term financial implications on supply of agricultural products from our shires.

We now call on the Legislative Council to ensure that the proposal mooted by Government entities do not proceed.

We ask that there be exhaustive consultation with the Warren Water Management Advisory Committee and farmers.

We also request that Government entities consider the cost of construction of dams, irrigation systems and tax paid by the farmer in developing water supplies and irrigation before any decisions are made.

Further we ask that the Legislative Council request Government entities also take into account that the south west of Western Australia is the food bowl of the State and ask that the Legislative Council pass these concerns on to the relevant Ministers and Premier and request that they abandon their push to charge farmers for water provided at their own cost

As I said, the petition, as presented, does not conform to the standing orders in all respects. Nevertheless, there have been other occasions on which petitions of this nature have been presented to the House, and the standing committee that deals with petitions has agreed to take them on. I hope that course will be followed with this petition that is signed by 118 residents of the south west. I seek leave to table the petition.

Leave granted.

[See paper No 1205.]

Roebourne Primary School

HON JOHN FISCHER (Mining and Pastoral) [5.53 pm]: As a result of correspondence and telephone conversations, on Wednesday, 25 June, I visited the Roebourne Primary School. Both the correspondence and the telephone calls had indicated to me that there were some very serious problems at the school concerning physical and sexual abuse, and that the truancy record was quite appalling. The complaints that I have received concern specific instances of sexual interference and physical attacks on both students and teachers. The

situation at the school is certainly well below the standard that I believe is reasonable to expect from a state school service.

Approximately 200 children attend the Roebourne Primary School. Many of the children are from dysfunctional families, and the problems arising from alcohol and violent physical abuse are apparent. Many of these children are affected by foetal alcohol dependency, which has resulted in attention deficit problems. The truancy rate at the school varies greatly, but in general it is totally unacceptable, with large numbers being absent, especially on welfare payment days, which is often the only time that they can be guaranteed of receiving their basic living requirements.

The stress that this places on teachers and the concerns that reporting these demeanours brings to the workplace make the possibility of successfully operating an education facility virtually untenable. No genuinely concerned parents who had the financial or physical means to remove their child would allow their children to attend this school. What is developing at the school is nothing short of segregation. If this is allowed to continue, a generation of people who are totally devoid of any social interaction skills will develop.

At present, approximately 10 to 15 per cent of unruly, uncontrollable children are absolutely destroying any chance of the remaining 80 per cent achieving any standard of education. Therefore, some strong, realistic action needs to be taken to improve this unacceptable position before it reaches plague proportions.

I discussed many of the issues with the headmistress, and she introduced me to several Aboriginal mothers who were in attendance at the school as paid school aides. An attempt will be made to form a community committee consisting of concerned parents to try to enact some direction to solve these problems. However, this will work only if the community as a whole is prepared to accept responsibility. Currently, the relevant government departments, such as the Department for Community Development, spend only two days a week in Roebourne. Therefore, apart from concerned school staff, no truancy officers are in attendance.

There is no doubt that the Government needs to look urgently at educational processes in areas such as Roebourne. Schools with a high percentage of Aboriginal pupils cannot be run on the same lines as schools in metropolitan or major regional centres. I believe that a school administrator should be appointed to Roebourne - not someone from the teaching staff - to liaise with a community board that has the authority to react to irresponsible parents. If children do not attend school, welfare payments should be withheld from the parents. As it is, a large portion of these payments is wasted on gambling and alcohol abuse. In these situations, the welfare handed out becomes merely a destructive mechanism, leading to a paradox whereby the material wealth of these communities improves while dysfunctional families, alcoholism and child abuse increase.

The small percentage of children who are uncontrollable should be removed from the school and taught basic requirements, such as to read and write, away from the school so that they cannot disrupt the other students. While we continue down a path of myopic thinking about educational standards in regional Western Australia, we could well end up with far more serious consequences, with whole communities totally illiterate and disengaged from reality by lacking any visionary insight into their future wellbeing. Other forms of punishment should be brought in by the community committee or by the administrator, if he cannot get the committee to act responsibly.

Currently - it is not in only Roebourne - teachers have no ability to control unruly pupils, other than by sending them home. In many cases this is exactly what the children want, as they take others with them as well, which merely exacerbates the problem even further. At present the situation is not working, and it will not begin to work unless there is some degree of parental authority. If parents will not accept responsibility for their offspring, an administrator should be appointed to do so. It is no good blaming the teachers. Often they have little or no life experience to handle these difficult situations. They are there to teach, not to be responsible for social problems that have worsened over the past 50 years. Similarly, I do not believe that it is the job of the police, although they certainly have a role to play in these areas. However, many young policemen and policewomen also are not experienced enough to handle the difficult postings that arise. As a result, they find it difficult to interact with a culture that is beyond their comprehension.

The Aboriginal elders must assume a responsible position on the protection and advancement of their younger generations, with sensible help from government departments that have experience and knowledge of local conditions. I do not mean people sitting in the metropolitan area pushing some psychology degree around in a barrow, because they learnt it out of a book written by someone else who thought he knew best about a situation he had never attended or experienced. I will quote some words by Noel Pearson under the heading "How the commonwealth government can help stop Aboriginal welfare dependency" -

There is no use in seeing the parlous situation of the Aboriginal community as requiring increased funding. We first have to unshackle ourselves from much of the confusion that prevails. There is much

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confusion in the 'progressive' thinking that has informed social policy in Australia and it permeates the thinking of the professional and pseudo-professional 'service-deliverers' in the bureaucracies, and their intellectual allies in the academic, legal, medical and media establishment. Indeed, our current policies are often the justification of their existence as a class whose role is to service social dysfunction, which explains why they refuse to rethink even as the consequences of their policies reach genocidal proportions in Aboriginal Australia. I cannot otherwise describe a situation where the members of a people have several decades taken from their lives.

Local contribution at a sensible level, outside the Department of Education and Training, in the form of administration of the community is desperately required. The Commonwealth and Tasmanian Governments have combined to tackle truancy in that State by providing \$80 000 each in a project involving community, parents, schools, service providers, police and local governments. Some of the data may be helpful, but this problem will not be solved merely by putting money into regional Western Australia. It needs community and parental commitment, and if that is lacking, it needs administration on a local level to ensure that social ground rules are put in place. We have recently seen this Government override concerns for human rights to bring safety and security to Nyoongah families in the Swan Valley. The problems in regional Western Australia cause such problems to pale into insignificance. We need to get off our politically correct bandwagon and make some decisions that really work at the coalface, or else we pass the buck again and leave an even bigger mess for the next generation.

Greens (WA), Resources

HON ROBIN CHAPPLE (Mining and Pastoral) [6.03 pm]: I rise to deliver some brickbats and roses. Roses go to Mr Colin Barnett, and brickbats to Dr Geoff Gallop. That might surprise members opposite. On 13 June, on the Liam Bartlett program on ABC radio, Dr Gallop made a statement as follows -

We've reduced the size of the cabinet, so it's not as if we're asking the Greens to do something we're not asking of ourselves. I mean, we have a smaller cabinet, there's enormous pressure there. We've got a clear view for a leaner and meaner government generally.

The intent of this statement was overturned a few days later when, on 20 June, it became obvious that the Premier intended to appoint two new parliamentary secretaries. I do not take anything away from the two nominees, Margaret Quirk and Hon Sue Ellery. In the lead-up to that statement, the Leader of the Opposition in the Legislative Assembly said that he was concerned that there were two new parliamentary secretaries, as the ABC news stated -

Mr Barnett says it's not fair his office is so under-resourced, when the Government is able to create new positions for itself.

The comment above by Dr Gallop was in response to a question from Liam Bartlett about the resources that may or may not one day be given to the Greens (WA). Dr Gallop said -

Look, this is an ongoing issue in terms of all of those that are involved in parliamentary work. There's always a debate about whether or not they have the resources they need and the pressures obviously are growing - our society is becoming more complex; the sophistication required to respond properly to the many representations that are made etc, and we're sympathetic. The difficulty is, Liam, it requires legislation and we have such a busy legislative program that it simply is not one of our priorities.

If it is all to do with drafting, I imagine that a Bill could be drafted in a couple of days - we have seen that recently - and rushed through both Houses of Parliament. I do not really see the problem being identified by the Premier. However, he said it is very difficult. On resources in Parliament, the Premier said -

It is hard, but, you know, the Greens do get resources to do the jobs they are required to do in that chamber that's no different to what has been provided to minor parties in the past.

I have pointed out to the Premier that the role of the Greens (WA) is somewhat different from that of minor parties in the past, inasmuch as we have a responsibility - holding the balance of power in this Chamber - to review every piece of legislation with our best endeavours. My concern is that, notwithstanding the appointments of Margaret Quirk and Hon Sue Ellery - both honourable people who will do fantastic jobs as parliamentary secretaries - here we go again, within a few days, with a complete backflip on what the Premier has been saying. Again, we seem to be the butt of the joke.

House adjourned at 6.08 pm