

members. Robyn is the newest addition to the team and has made a great impact on this House in what seems like a short time. I wish them both well in carrying on the fight. I will be in the background if I am needed. As I tell my son, I will be an unpaid adviser when asked.

I thank Hon Norman Moore for his leadership over the years. He is a wise and talented leader and a wonderful speaker who can put a case forward at short notice in the most forceful and intelligent way. I thank him for his example and leadership. I have been privileged to work under many leaders. The first was Hon Ian Medcalf, who was a very distinguished soldier and lawyer. He was a quiet achiever who led the House with great distinction. After him was Gordon Masters, the rather more ebullient member from the hills. He gave us all good leadership. Mr Deputy President (Hon George Cash) also did so as Leader of the House. Hon Norman Moore has led us through more recent times with great distinction.

On a more personal note, I thank my wife Margot for her support over the years. None of us can do this job without the support of our family. Margot has been a wonderful help in the hard things I have had to do. I am glad she has had some of the pleasures of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association trips. They have been some reward for her sacrifice. I give thanks to our son Digby, who has taken over and run the farms while I have been away. He will continue to run them when I retire. As I said, I will be the unpaid adviser when asked. I thank our two daughters, Carolyn and Erin, who have either the misfortune or foresight to be married to farmers. They are close and handy. I look forward to spending more time with them. I have never moved from the farm; I have chosen to be a farm-based member of Parliament. In many ways, I pick up more political wisdom in a shearing shed or a CBH bin than from briefings from parliamentary advisers and others. I value that contact and I thank all sorts of people for the input.

Reg Withers was quoted earlier as giving advice. The advice he gave me was somewhat different. He said that there is no such thing as a permanent enemy in politics. I think that is worth remembering. We all have angry times. The one thing I have learnt in my 22 years in this place is to drop the word "hate" from my vocabulary. It was never large in it anyway. I now know that there is absolutely no place for the word "hate" in public life. People can have their strong dislikes and all sorts of other things, but hate is responsible for so much agony and turmoil in the world that it is something we can all do well without. When I hear young people in school grounds say that they hate this or that I try to spread my message. There is no place for hate there or anywhere. It is a big world, but it is getting smaller. We have to live with lots of things that we did not tolerate a long time ago. Of all places, this is where we have to set that example, and spread the message out into the community. I hear young students of politics saying how they hate the Labor Party or they hate the Liberal Party. There is no cause for that; we all have strong beliefs in our systems. Some of us may be misguided in our personal view, but that is okay because there is always a chance to bring people around. We can bring people around by arguments, but we cannot bring them around by making sweeping statements and taking extreme views.

I thank all members for their friendship over the years. It has been a wonderful experience and part of my life. I will leave with some regrets, but I will not miss sitting in a car and travelling over 60 000 kilometres a year, which is one of the reasons I am getting out of this job. I am proud to have come into this Parliament by request, to win an unwinnable seat and to be leaving in my own good time. I thank everybody through the electorate and the Parliament who have supported me. The very best of luck to everyone. I know that everyone will continue to do their best for Western Australia long into the future. God bless you all.

[Applause.]

HON JIM SCOTT (South Metropolitan) [5.52 pm]: First, I would like to say that it is very strange feeling standing up here at the moment and making this valedictory speech. It feels like only yesterday that I arrived in this place, but it also feels like I have been here forever. This job is a part of my life, and has been as far back as I can remember, but nowhere near as long as Hon Bill Stretch. However, it has certainly been pretty reasonable stint. I also want to thank the initial speakers including the Leader of the House, the Leader of the Opposition, Hon Murray Criddle and my parliamentary colleague Hon Christine Sharp for their very kind remarks previously. When a person comes into this place, he mostly expects that his opposition will be tearing strips off him, but it is always lovely to hear people saying good things about a person, even if among all that they say there has been considerable disagreement at many levels. We have to remember that out of disagreement, if it is disagreement with openness, comes learning. If we never have disagreement, we will never get learning. That is an important part of what a Parliament is all about; that is, shaking that disagreement into new understandings and moving on.

All those years ago or yesterday, whichever way a person wants to look at it, when I first arrived here it was because of one of those unexpected results that come out of elections. Quite early in the count, I had noted that I was probably going to be elected because I could add up, and I knew what my preferences were. However, the media had been mistakenly suggesting that people like Barry Hodge were going to get elected; almost everybody except me. Finally, after two weeks of counting, I was rung by someone from the ABC who asked if I knew that I was very likely to win the seat. I said that I was. When they asked how long I had known, I said that I had known for about two weeks. At that point in time, I realised just how little people understood our electoral system and the way in which the preference flows actually go; it was quite interesting to experience that. Even in further elections, I discovered that some of the so-called experts were getting it terribly wrong, and continue to do so until this day.

Looking back, this is the best job I have ever had. It has been a wonderful experience and a fantastic honour to have served the community of the South Metropolitan Region. My colleague Hon Christine Sharp was right when she said that I used to describe myself as the shadow minister for the meaning of life. I had to deal with not only every issue, but also the whole of the State, because no-one else in the State had a green point of view. I travelled from Kalgoorlie to the Burrup Peninsula and then to Albany. It was quite a busy life. Hon Paddy Embry said that when he first came to Parliament, it was quite a daunting and lonely experience. It was not quite like that for me, because when I first became a member of Parliament, I sat next to somebody I had known all my life. That made it less daunting. In his speech Hon Peter Foss alluded to the fact that people do not really understand how this place works when they come to Parliament, regardless of whether they are a member of a major party. He is correct, because I did not have a clue when I first came to Parliament. It was interesting when I made my inaugural speech in this place. I was aware that everybody was looking at me with curiosity and that they were wondering what words would come out of my mouth. The same thought crossed my mind, because the whole process was very confusing and that confusion was not helped when people started explaining the rituals of Parliament. For instance, if a member wants to approach the Chair during a division, he or she has to hold a piece of paper over his or her head and seek permission to approach the Chair. I thought Parliament was a bit like *Monty Python* and that I would never understand how it worked. I began to understand slowly as I saw some members approached our very able Clerk to find out how they could twist and turn the standing orders to get what they wanted. I discovered that those rules were very important. I was never greatly into the standing orders, so I still do not understand most of them. I have managed to blunder my way through by osmosis.

As previous members have said, the first thing I noticed when I became a member of Parliament was the fantastic staff. Without any doubt whatsoever the people who work here are some of the best people one could find anywhere. They are fantastic at their jobs, no matter whether they are the Hansard staff, who are now taking down what I say and who will try to make my messy sentences coherent, or one of Parliament's more eminent members, such as the Clerk of the House, who was described by Hon Norman Moore as an honourable member of the House. I refer to him as Lord Marquet. That is probably closer to the mark.

I thank both able assistants sitting next to the Clerk. Reference has been made to the committee staff, who are sitting in the background, Mia and Nigel. Nigel has worked not only in the Chamber but also on committees. I first met him when I was a member of the Joint Standing Committee on Delegated Legislation when I received some very good advice from him. Right throughout the Parliament the standard of assistance and the goodwill is fantastic, as is the huge workload that people carry. In some ways it is a bit of a discredit to us, because I believe that some staff carry far too big a workload. We should probably be looking at ways in which we can ensure a little more funding goes towards reducing some of that workload by getting staff additional help. That applies particularly to Laurie Marquet, because I know that Laurie takes on so much work - I think too much for one person. Maybe it is the only way he can operate; I am not sure.

It took years for me to work out how the place runs. I spent probably the whole of my first term working it out. In the first Parliament my vote was not critical at all, because the Court Government, the Government of the day, had clear control in both Houses. Although people were curious about me -

Hon Simon O'Brien interjected.

Hon JIM SCOTT: I am sorry about the wistfulness. One day it may come again. Because my vote was not critical, it did not matter if I put up 1 000 amendments - none were going anywhere. Apart from anything else, I was struggling with how to understand legislation, and how there were principal Acts and how something could not be put into a particular Bill because it was not the appropriate Bill. It was all very difficult to learn without someone to give me some tutelage, although Laurie was always available if I wanted to ask him. My problem was that I did not know at that time what questions to ask.

I also put a lot of effort into my electorate because I felt the most valuable work that I could do was to represent the community very well. During that period I did a lot of work on that; in fact, I got involved in everything. I used to tout for business by reading the local newspapers, finding out what people's problems were and then phoning them. After a while I got involved with so many people I did not know what to do with them all. I was being snowed under and was very soon overloaded. That is when I thought about the title of shadow minister for the meaning of life!

I have met some very helpful people in this place, particularly the person I sat next to on the other side, Reg Davies, who was elected shortly after me. I turned out to be the first person from a minor party to be elected to this House. I guess, however, that Reg was not from a minor party; he was an Independent former Liberal who was re-elected. I slightly preceded him in the count, so I beat him to the title. Reg was always helpful in telling me how to take shortcuts and get around things. I remember on one occasion I wanted to put forward minor and major amendments to a piece of legislation, which was very daring for me at the time. I had been keeping track of that argument before I became a member of this Parliament as it was an issue in which I was involved as an activist. Reg had suggested that such a Bill had been introduced by a private member of the previous Government and he told me how to get help on it very quickly, as I wanted to introduce the Bill. However, the previous mover of the Bill was by then opposed to any change to the legislation.

Hon Kim Chance: Did it have anything to do with the Hairdressers Registration Board?

Hon JIM SCOTT: No, it was a Bill introduced by Hon Peter Foss. However, Reg assured me that the new Bill would fix the legislation and that we would not need to control the Liberal Party in that way because it could be trusted.

However, I had another experience recently when the Freedom of Information Amendment Bill 2004 was debated in this place. My Bill, which comprised a single-clause amendment to the Freedom of Information Act, also related to a private member's Bill of the member for Nollamara. It amended a problem about which a constituent of mine had come to see me, and I recall that the Liberal Party in this House supported it, thankfully, with a small amendment. The Bill went to the other House, where both parties agreed to the amendment, and it came back here and was agreed to by every member of this Chamber. I was, therefore, more successful on that occasion because I was able to garner the numbers in the Opposition to support that Bill. The system, therefore, does work. However, it is interesting to note how members change from when they are in opposition to when they are in government. That was another thing that Reg had told me about. We had raised some issues about Port Kennedy with the then Government, which then went on to say a lot of harsh things about the issue in opposition. When I was getting nowhere with one line of questioning on Port Kennedy, Reg had said to me that the only thing that changes in this place is the bums on seats. I therefore learnt a lesson there: that is, it does not matter which party the Government or the Opposition belongs to, they can be fairly similar. Governments do not easily accept change from either the crossbench or the Opposition, even if the changes were originally the Government's idea.

One thing I found very difficult in my earlier period in Parliament was the extremely long hours. I discussed that with my colleague Hon Chrissy Sharp over dinner. Being the only member of my party in that early period, I sat in this Chamber for every minute of every debate, except on one occasion when Hon Tom Helm - I think it was - spoke for some hours. When the native title legislation was suddenly sprung on members in this Chamber, they had to go to their offices to get their notes, as they had not expected it to be brought on for debate. I think some Greens in the Senate were causing some sort of trouble with native title and the Government wanted to hurry the Bill through Parliament before the worst happened in Canberra. The upshot of all that was that I had time to drive to Fremantle and get my copious notes on the native title legislation. When I came back into the Chamber, Tom was still going strong; in fact, he went on for another two hours after that. It was an extremely interesting speech. I cannot remember a lot of what he said, apart from what he said about what had happened to him when he had gone shopping in the supermarket in Port Hedland.

The other problem was that as the single member of a party I was not kept in the loop, so I never knew which bit of legislation would be coming on next, because no-one would bother to tell me. I would read the notice paper and bring in about 20 pieces of legislation, some of which I did not know a great deal about, unless they were pieces of legislation in which I was particularly interested; however, I certainly did have an opinion on them all. The upshot was usually that I would arrive with the first 20 or 25 pieces of legislation, and we would then jump to No 46, so anything that I had written down about any of those pieces of legislation I had to get out from my memory; or, if it had been done by one of my staff members, I would have to quickly go and get hold of the legislation and swot up on it very quickly. I am very pleased that things have moved on a bit from there.

Hon Derrick Tomlinson talked about the work of committees and how it is very rewarding for members to work together on committees, no matter what party they are from and what differences they might have. Members can often leave behind a lot of the political issues and arrive at really good reports, with the help of the wonderful staff of the committees, of course, and thereby provide a valuable service to the Parliament. When I first arrived in this place, the committee system was quite different from what it is now. I was not allowed to be a member of a committee at first, because I think people jealously wanted to hold onto their positions on committees. In fact, I was not entitled to a vote that would get me onto a committee. However, that all changed when the Joint Standing Committee on Delegated Legislation began to find it difficult to get a quorum. There was a rule at that time that there had to be a National Party member on that committee, otherwise it would not be quorate. However, because the National Party members could not always be there, the committee decided that there should be another member on the committee, and the rules were changed to allow another member to be appointed to the committee. I then got onto that committee, and I stayed on it for some time.

Another feature of the committee system at that time was that the party that had the numbers at the time held all the positions on the committees. The chairs of all of the committee came from the winners. It was a winner-take-all system.

Hon Norman Moore: It has not changed.

Hon JIM SCOTT: I think it has changed considerably. Hon Barry House chairs a committee. My colleague Hon Christine Sharp also chairs a committee.

Hon Peter Foss: Your party was the winner.

Hon JIM SCOTT: One thing that we wanted to see changed was the control of the Executive over the Parliament. The people who are on the government benches should not be in control all the time. It is not just the chairs that we are talking about here. The numbers on a committee are now such that a Government can no longer get things through a

committee just by using its numbers. That was a very important change; it has improved things in this place considerably. During the first parliamentary session following my election, the event that stands out as most memorable is the debate on the workplace relations legislation. Anyone who was here at the time will not have forgotten the way in which this Chamber operated. The public gallery was packed with union members, most of whom I understand were, fortunately, from the Media, Entertainment and Arts Alliance. They could sing in tune, which was fortunate because a huge cacophony of singing and shouting occurred during debate in committee every time one of the clauses was vote on. I could not hear a word spoken by the Chairman. I had no idea what votes were taken until eventually the business of the House was moved to another location. It was a very hair-raising, exhilarating experience.

The other important event for me towards the end of that first session was my adoption by a family of a disabled person. The members of that family are wonderful people. I still regularly meet the parents, Robin and Melissa Wright. My involvement with the family has increased my understanding of the difficulties suffered by families managing a disabled child. It highlighted their love of their children and their huge capacity to care for a child who requires special treatment and care. We as parliamentarians must understand how important it is to support those parents as much as possible. They are under the hammer in many ways trying to juggle their role as carers with their capacity to earn an income. It is extremely difficult for them to manage their lives.

During my second term in this place, life changed considerably because I was joined by my colleagues Hon Giz Watson and Hon Chrissy Sharp. In addition, the balance of power in the upper House changed somewhat. Two Democrats, Hon Helen Hodgson and Hon Norm Kelly, were also elected to this place. It signalled a very large change in the way people were voting. People were viewing both the Senate in federal Parliament and the Legislative Council in this State as Houses of review. They did not necessarily want Governments to have complete control over both Houses of Parliament. During that period, one of the best debates I heard was the debate on the abortion law reform. That signalled once again how well this place can operate when people are not rigidly stuck with party systems and are able to say what they think. In the weeks following the federal election, it was extremely interesting to see a person from the Family First Party and others raise the issue of abortion law reform at a federal level. They said, among other things, that they would not necessarily turn back abortion law, but ensure that good counselling was put in place so that people could be informed about the various choices rather than think that abortion was the only choice. This Parliament had already done those things. Following the abortion debate in this State there was a huge lift in the level of counselling, information and support that was made available for people considering abortions. What those people from the Family First Party and others were chasing was already in place, but had not been noticed. State Parliaments are grossly underestimated at times.

During that time, I managed to get support for setting up the new Standing Committee on Environment and Public Affairs. That was a very important change and I was pleased to have been involved. In these times such committees are essential to the functioning of Parliaments, whether state or federal, because we all know the huge environmental challenges that we will face in the future. We need good information on which to make our decisions when dealing with those issues.

During the next election there was another big change. We saw the rise of One Nation and the demise of the Democrats. At the same time there was a change of Government. I am sure I am correct in thinking that part of the reason for the change was based somewhat on the greening of politics in this State. Although some people do not like that view, it was certainly a fact of life. Had the Labor Party not given large commitments for the environment, I believe it still would have been on the opposition benches today. Most of the community did not hate the Court Government. I think people were pretty comfortable with the Court Government, but the major issue that defined the difference was the ecological future of this State.

During this term there has been a huge increase in the level of work done by committees, possibly to do with the change in format of sittings and Monday becoming a committee day. Whatever the cause, a massive increase has occurred in the work of committees. I am currently a member of the Standing Committee on Environment and Public Affairs, and the current workload far exceeds the work performed when I first came into this place. I was absolutely amazed at the amount of work that the poor committee staff had to pump through in recent times to get reports into this place in time for them to be valuable to members to use before Parliament prorogued. Those people who handle money and timetables around here need to look at that aspect carefully. We need to ensure that committees start work earlier on some issues that take a lot of research, and start to consider Bills much earlier than currently is the case. I do not know whether that will require some changes to standing orders. It would be good not to wait for Bills to come from the other place to start work if it is known they will require significant committee consideration.

The other notable feature during this period has been the work on the Parliament House building, as other members have mentioned, and the terrific work the President and his direct staff have done to mark the centenary of this Building. Like my colleagues, I was very impressed with the ceremony that we attended in the Chamber at which the choir sang, and the trip through history at a display on our way to the House. I very much appreciate the addition of the acknowledgment of the earlier part of our history in the Aboriginal People's Room gallery.

I turn now to some concerns I still have about this place, and I suppose that this is a wish list I leave with members. I am very concerned about the fourth estate. Hon Bill Stretch talked about our relationship with the media. One of the

worst forces holding back progress not only here but in practically every Parliament in the world is the relationship between politics and the media. We must grapple with that matter and find some way to make change. When one has a media that is not reporting things that should be reported, and reporting things that are trivial and focusing on the negatives all the time, it eventually becomes a threat to our democratic institution. We are currently reaching that point in this State. I now quote from a document by Noam Chomsky titled "Media Control", which commences -

... Let me begin by counter-posing two different conceptions of democracy. One conception of democracy has it that a democratic society is one in which the public has the means to participate in some meaningful way in the management of their own affairs and the means of information are open and free ...

An alternative conception of democracy is that the public must be barred from managing of their own affairs and the means of information must be kept narrowly and rigidly controlled. That may sound like an odd conception of democracy, but it's important to understand that it is the prevailing perception ...

That is certainly a concern of mine. Unfortunately we are helping to create that situation. We do it in our endeavours to criticise each other in some respects. Politicians fuel the types of stories that the media want to run by exaggerating the issues. Hon Derrick Tomlinson mentioned the report on the reserves Bill. I was struck by the way in which that issue was editorialised in *The West Australian*. The paper paid absolutely no regard to the fact that the Parliament, which was making the decisions, had been given wrong information. The level of dysfunction that was occurring in that community was hugely exaggerated to the point that this Parliament carried out an injustice against the residents of that community. An injustice would have been carried out even if a problem had needed action because everyone who lived on that land was evicted. The accused perpetrators were evicted along with their so-called victims. I do not know how anybody with a rational mind could consider it to be a great solution to break up a community of people because they were supposedly dysfunctional and then place them in another location where they did not have housing or any other facilities. It was extremely concerning to me that our only daily newspaper could ignore the information that was given to the committee. *The West Australian* decided that it did not matter that people were thrown out of their homes based on false information. That arose because we do not have a newspaper that reports the reality; it reports its own position. The newspaper takes positions on matters and then pushes those positions.

I will say a bit more on the Chomsky paper called "Media Control" because it refers to the establishment of the Creel Commission in the United States and states -

... [The Wilson administration] established a government propaganda commission, called the Creel Commission, which succeeded, within six months, in turning a pacifist population into a hysterical, war-mongering population which wanted to destroy everything German, tear the Germans limb from limb, go to war and save the world.

...

Among those who participated actively and enthusiastically were the progressive intellectuals, people of the John Dewey circle, who took great pride, as you can see from their own writings at the time, in having shown that what they called the "more intelligent members of the community," namely themselves, were able to drive a reluctant population into a war by terrifying them and eliciting jingoist fanaticism.

The relevance of that to the media is that the paper went on to talk about the way in which the public relations industry in the United States has picked up from the successes of the Creel Commission in creating the red scare and its aftermath. It states -

The public relations industry underwent a huge expansion at that time. It succeeded for some time in creating almost total subordination of the public to business rule through the 1920s ...

We are all very aware that government is heavily reliant on PR. More and more PR is being fed out so that the Government can get what it wants. In a small town like Perth, the PR people also work for our media in one way or another. They have close relationships with those people. A very unhealthy situation is created when PR is reported and not the truth. We do not seem to be lucky enough to have media that is able to properly analyse the arguments that occur in this place and to discuss them rationally with our community. If we do not have that, we do not have a democracy. If people do not know what is really going on and why people are doing things, the whole sense of what is being done is lost to them. Come voting day people will not make decisions based on reality but on perceptions that have been grossly distorted by media outlets. Unfortunately, the local media are willing participants in that process. It is much cheaper and easier to accept a whole lot of information that is pumped to them from a PR machine than to analyse things and make proper decisions about whether what people are doing will be good for the community. The media are not even presenting, as they should be, the arguments from both sides in a way that people can simply understand and base their decisions on.

It is important to understand, as I said before, that the relationship that I am talking about is somewhat fuelled by us. We need to modify our behaviour to an extent to prevent that from happening. Most members of this place would be guilty of putting a spin on something to get one over their political opponents. They would rather do that than present something in a straightforward and effective way because that will not gather attention or be reported as it is not

dramatic enough. We are allowing ourselves to be drawn into the maelstrom that is bringing down our repute in leaps and bounds. In doing that, we are selling off our democratic institutions. We need to take that very seriously.

We also contribute to that in other ways. I tried to amend legislation to set up a planning appeals tribunal. One of the issues that I tried to have addressed by that legislation was the ability of communities to have a say in issues that affect them, such as through their proximity to a development. We are all too readily not looking after the public interest in these cases. The bureaucrats who advise us are saying that it is too hard to involve the people and hear their voice because it will make a lot more work and things will be more difficult. That is a terrible mistake because we are not representing the people who elect us; we are electing to look after the ease of bureaucrats and the narrow vested interests. We could do a lot more to ensure that the public voice, rather than the voice of a very small group of people, is heard in the decisions we make.

The last issue on my wish list is for members who remain in this place to take climate change much more seriously. I do not think that members of either the Government or the Opposition have really grasped the seriousness of climate change and what it will mean for us in the future. Clearly, it is the most serious issue facing everybody on this planet; yet we carry on as though it is a myth and does not exist. All the scientific evidence indicates that not only does it exist, but also it is probably worse than was thought four or five years ago, and that we must act not in 20 years, but now. I remind members that the changes in our climate and the impacts on the environment that we are now seeing - water supplies have been cut by half - were caused by carbon dioxide that was pumped into the atmosphere 40 years ago. There is a 40-year lag time between when the carbon dioxide is pumped into the atmosphere and when its impact on our climate becomes apparent. If we look forward 40 years, and given the current level of production of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases, we would be very negligent if we did not do something about the issue. I urge members to get on the Internet and read about what is happening to the climate in Europe and other places in the world, what those countries are doing about it and how seriously they are taking the issue. I know that the British Prime Minister, Tony Blair, has put it down as his number one issue to deal with in his next term, and that is for good reason. We are not the only people suffering from the impacts of climate change; it is happening all over the world. It will have extremely damaging effects on Western Australia. I plead with members to have a good look at this issue during the parliamentary break and read all the current information. It is a very serious issue and we in this State are not doing anywhere near enough.

I wish to thank a number of people before I conclude my comments. The first group of people I would like to thank are my family, who, as other members have said, are the people who have to put up with my doing all sorts of odd things on weekends and turning up late to or not attending events that are important to them. I am lucky that I have an incredibly social family. They enjoy lots and lots of things that they do themselves. I guess we have regular meetings at home every now and then, rather than a family life. However, any family must suffer when one of the members of that family is a member of Parliament. Therefore, I thank my family.

I would like to thank my staff who have helped me over the years. I have had tremendous staff in my office. I started off with Jill Walker. Compared with her previous employment, I do not think she knew what had struck her when she came into my office. She had worked for Carmen Lawrence at one stage, who was somebody who knew how the political system worked and was rather more organised than I was. I was trying to find my way, and I think poor Jill got a terrible shock when she came to work for this person who was still working out what he was going to do. Jill is a tremendously competent person. During that time she did some wonderful work, on secondment, with the national forestry inquiry, which preceded all the agreements that were made all over Australia.

Jill was followed by David Coggin, who was a tremendous person to have working for me. He sent me to courses on time management and getting myself organised, because he realised straightaway what my major problem was. David was a tremendous person. He had fantastic ability and wonderful people skills. Any office anywhere in Australia would have a great person if it had David helping it.

My next two electoral officers are still with me. Because we went to 1.4 full-time equivalents, I was able to split the positions in my office between two people. Both of them were in fact activists rather than office-type people, which was my preference. One of them, Lynn MacLaren, is actually here tonight. Lynn will succeed me in my position when I finally give my notice. Lynn was an activist for PACAT - People Against Cruelty in Animal Transport - when I first met her. She was a person with tremendous organisational capacity, huge energy and a great grasp of politics. She learnt very quickly. I think she had a natural ability when it came to politics. Some people seem to be born to it. I believe she will be a great addition to this House, whether she takes over early next year or whether she is elected and comes into this place in May some time.

There is also Mark Hingston. He is a terrific researcher. He has learnt very well how to put good questions together. With Mark, I am never quite sure whether he is working for me or I am working for him, because it seems I am working on his issues rather than he working on my issues. However, it certainly keeps me very busy. He also keeps very busy himself because he is always trying to find more things to become involved with. Both Mark and Lynn have been a tremendous help to me. I know for sure that Lynn will have another occupation when I leave. I am not sure at this stage what Mark will be doing.

I also want to thank all people in this Parliament. I believe I have thanked most people in this Chamber. I thank the staff from the ministers' office, Teena and Janice. They have always been of great assistance whenever I have had a problem with questions, such as when I lose a question at the last minute and have to obtain a copy. I thank Janeen, who I think is superhuman. She is another person who is grossly overloaded with work in this place. She does two jobs from what I have observed. The attendants in this Chamber, the gardeners who keep the surroundings wonderful and the wonderfully friendly staff in the dining room and bar are people to whom I extend thanks. I thank Andrew, Shane, Oswald, Romeo and the gang. I also remember Marian. They are all fantastic people. They always have a smile even though we may make demands of them that might annoy them.

The information technology staff are always ready to help. On one occasion I had a problem with my computer connection and the IT staff fixed it. It was discovered that I had accidentally pushed the "on" button to off. I had not picked that up. They did not swear; they just fixed it and left.

I thank Ken Craig. He is a tremendously friendly person and extremely diplomatic in ensuring security for this place. His staff are all very good people. The library staff are absolutely brilliant. Whenever assistance is needed from the library, it is never too much trouble. If I have left out people, I am sorry because everyone in this place is like one big family. I have really enjoyed my time here largely because of other people. I have really enjoyed being a member of this Chamber. It is a very special privilege for any person to not only serve the community but also be part of the decision-making process on many important issues and make changes that matter and will make a difference in people's lives. That is a very satisfying position for anybody to be in, while at the same time getting paid for it. A sort of enmity is projected to the community about politicians. At times some very cross arguments go on in this place, but all the people here are decent, and they all believe in what they are doing. Although we have had very severe disagreements and differences in many cases, there are a heck of a lot of commonalities here as well. People forget that a vast amount of legislation goes through this place with a few minor amendments here and there that are not of great concern to the Government, and usually fix up minor administrative issues. If there were a bit more focus on the commonality, the community would have a much different picture.

Finally, I would like to thank my parliamentary colleagues. I have been absolutely blessed with the colleagues I have got because they are very special people. I am part of the most dedicated team of people that I have ever been with, and the wonderful thing is that there are no hard or fast rules that tie us to vote in a particular direction. However, we have managed to achieve consensus on issues over and over again with little to no bad will arising out of that process. Although a lot of people have thought that the Greens (WA) might have been a bit wishy-washy, more steel has been demonstrated by this group than any other party in the Parliament. When these people are really fighting for something, they fight very hard indeed. They nearly always stick to the rules perfectly - I cannot say always as I have not always done that. However, my colleagues have done so with respect for the people whose views they are opposing. The contribution that they have all made and the friendship and support that they have given me is invaluable. It will be something that I will never forget, and I hope that it is appreciated by the rest of the Parliament. I note that other members have kindly suggested that this influence has been an important one in our democracy, and I congratulate my colleagues on their good work and thank them very much for their support.

One of the great things throughout this Parliament has been the adjudication of our debates. It has always been done in an extremely fair manner by the President and also the current Deputy President, who was for a period the President, and Chairman of Committees. I thank them very much for the way in which they have conducted the Parliament, because it has been made a lot easier with support from the Chair. I thank you all.

[Applause.]

Question put and passed.

House adjourned at 6.59 pm
