

**WESTERN AUSTRALIAN COLLEGE OF TEACHING BILL 2003**

*Second Reading*

Resumed from 3 December 2003.

**HON DERRICK TOMLINSON** (East Metropolitan) [10.56 am]: I was going to speak at some length about the cumbersome and unworkable organisational structure of the College of Teaching - a committee of 19 with its own elected chairman. However, since time has run away from me, I will leave that for consideration of the Bill in committee. However, I say in conclusion that some people have high hopes that the Western Australian College of Teaching will do a great deal to improve the status of teaching to raise the esteem of teachers in the eyes of the public. As a former member of the teaching profession and as one who spent 10 years as a teacher educator, I am pessimistic about that being achieved. We can put all the structures we like in place, impose all sorts of requirements for registration, impose all sorts of requirements for compulsory attendance at professional development workshops and impose all sorts of penalties for misconduct or professional incompetence, whatever that might mean, but we will not change the status of the teaching profession until the teaching profession starts to respect itself.

I will refer to one of the great problems in the teaching profession. Perhaps I should confine myself to government schools. I have no capacity to judge what goes on in private schools; I have observed them only from a distance. My judgment and my observation of teachers in the public system are that they are constantly putting themselves, the schools in which they teach and their very profession down. That is sad, because in my opinion teaching is one of the most important professions and responsibilities in this society. More and more of the responsibilities for the moral and social, as well as the intellectual, development of children is being imposed upon schools as other institutions, such as the church, the family and the general community, withdraw. Greater expectations are placed on schools and therefore teachers to take on those responsibilities.

What do we hear? We hear teachers constantly putting themselves, their schools and the children down. Why, we ask, do government schools not perform as well as non-government schools in such things as tertiary entrance scores? We are constantly told that government schools have to take everybody: they have to take the dregs; they have to teach the dregs. I would suggest that those children go to school disadvantaged by the circumstances of their life, something which they did not choose but which is imposed upon them by the accident of birth and circumstances of family. An educational challenge would be to redeem their life chances and raise the quality of life of those children to the level of their more fortunate peers. I accept that teachers cannot do it alone because they will need more government resources to do it, and government schools should be resourced according to need. That aside, until the teaching profession accepts that responsibility and its own standing, it will not be raised in the public esteem in spite of anything this Bill might contain.

**HON PETER FOSS** (East Metropolitan) [11.04 am]: I am against the Bill, not because I am against the intent but because I am against what I think it will do to the teaching profession. I use the term "profession" because I believe that teaching is a profession. It is not a profession because the Government will introduce a system of registration. I am a lawyer. As a lawyer, I had to qualify, and then I had to obtain admission to the Bar. By becoming admitted to the Bar I became a lawyer, but that was not what made me a professional. It was not the obtaining of a law degree, the passing of the Barristers Board exams, or being admitted to the Bar of the Supreme Court. I know many lawyers whom I would describe as unprofessional. I know many lawyers who from time to time engage in what I would call unprofessional conduct. The mere trappings of what people must go through to become a member of a profession do not make them a professional. I am afraid that far too often people look at the trappings instead of what makes somebody a professional. In all sorts of walks of life people need to get some sort of tick to be able to carry out a job, but the mere fact that they have got a tick to carry out the job does not make them a professional. This Bill will not magically turn teachers into professionals if they are not.

I would like to examine what I believe is a very concerning trend in this State, and that is the general discontent of the public with public education. Why are people taking their children out of the public system? Why are teachers leaving the public system and going into the private system? For many years people thought that there was no particular advantage in sending their children to a private school except perhaps for the religious education, the extra curricula sports and perhaps some sort of social kudos. However, people are fast forming the view that their children can get a better education at private schools. I am a member of the council of a private, low-fee school. The school spends less money than a state school. It has a smaller budget and fewer facilities than a state school. However, it has a waiting list that means children practically have to be born into the school. People want to send their children to the school.

Hon Ed Dermer: Is the expenditure per student less?

Hon PETER FOSS: Everything. It is a low-fee school.

Hon Ed Dermer: That applies to the outlay of expenditure.

Hon PETER FOSS: It includes expenditure per student and the total budget, which are much lower. The facilities are nothing like those at a state school.

Hon Derrick Tomlinson: You are talking about an average expenditure per capita at government schools versus the average expenditure per capita at your school, are you?

Hon PETER FOSS: That is right, and the facilities and buildings. Ours is a cheap school. That is the philosophy of the school. The idea is to provide an inexpensive education. That can only be done by not spending a lot of money. The two go together. We provide a good education, and people are keen to send their children there.

Members might ask why people want to send their children to that school. There are many of those things I mentioned before but, more importantly, there is the quality of the education. I had my attention drawn to this the other day when a friend of mine moved her son from a state school to Swan Christian College. There was an instant change in the child. When he went home he said that the teachers really enjoyed being there and they really enjoyed teaching. They put in a huge amount of extra work. That happens in state schools too. Some teachers really enjoy being there and put in a lot of extra work. Unfortunately, the difference is that all the teachers are like that at that school, but people do not generally find that at state schools. Many teachers who hate it are there; they will not do the extra work and not exhibit that extra enthusiasm that makes the difference between a good teacher and a bad teacher.

People might ask why the government system is like that and the private system is not. I was talking in generalities, of course. One of the examples given by Hon Derrick Tomlinson was that the state schools end up with the dregs. I think there is something in that in that the worse the system gets, the more likely the state schools are to end up with the kids who do not want to be at school and the private schools will end up with the kids who do want to be at school. As any teacher will tell us, it is much easier to teach a child who wants to be at school than one who does not. If we are not careful, we will get a snowball effect, the result of which will be that as the proportion of kids who do not want to be at school increases, it will become all the more imperative for the remaining kids who do want to be at school to go somewhere else.

Hon Derrick Tomlinson: And within the government system there will be a tendency for people to elect for their children to go to the school of highest esteem rather than the school of lowest esteem.

Hon PETER FOSS: And that has happened already. Any teacher will say he can handle one or two ratbags in a class but it is very hard to handle a class full of ratbags.

Hon Alan Cadby: One ratbag can make a considerable difference to the quality of education.

Hon PETER FOSS: I agree. The honourable member may never have taught a classroom full of ratbags. I have friends who teach in schools that consist almost entirely of ratbags. Being professional, they work hard and I think give a good result. It is not impossible to teach a class of ratbags; it is just difficult, and it takes a very good, professional teacher to succeed in those circumstances.

Hon Derrick Tomlinson: You would not regard them as ratbags. You would regard them as children with challenging dispositions!

Hon PETER FOSS: Precisely. I thank Hon Derrick Tomlinson for that professional assessment and for politically correcting my terminology.

Hon Barbara Scott: Challenging behaviour.

Hon PETER FOSS: Yes. I think everyone knows what I mean.

Hon Alan Cadby: But the outcomes could be quite different.

Hon PETER FOSS: That is true, too. The important thing is that, even in the best schools, there will be teachers who are ratbags and who do not put in the work and do not act professionally. How many parents in here have not considered that at least one of their child's years at school was a total waste of time and have said that they hope their child does not get that teacher for another year? Every parent has been through that.

Hon Derrick Tomlinson: In the government system.

Hon PETER FOSS: Unfortunately, it is more common in the government system, because there are many unhappy teachers in the government system.

Hon Alan Cadby: It happens in both.

Hon PETER FOSS: Yes. If it were not so, it would be extraordinary. No profession is of uniform standard and no profession is entirely without its ratbags or its stars. We must be careful not to drive the top quality professional teachers out of the state system into the private system. There is nothing nicer than having a good class of kids who are keen to learn. There is nothing nicer than being in a happy school with a good principal. We all know that a professional principal is probably as important as anything else.

Hon Derrick Tomlinson: The most important.

Hon PETER FOSS: Yes. I have seen the attitude of schools change overnight with a change of principal. I will not mention which school it was, but the Department of Education removed a principal of a very good district school after the parents complained about him year after year. His method was to divide and rule. He would stir one half of the parents against the other half, and then switch around. Eventually they all got fed up with him and they asked the department to remove him. It took them five years to get rid of this bloke. What did the department do with him? It put him in a primary school! Do members know what he did in the primary school, a very good primary school, which had had 20 years of very good leadership? He destroyed it. The teachers at the school who had taught well and had given great satisfaction to the parents all left or transferred somewhere else and that school was destroyed. They eventually got rid of the principal, but it was too late.

The essence of professionalism is that a person deserves his position by reason of the quality of the service he provides. In some professions it is easier to determine. As a lawyer, it is quite interesting. I firmly believe that one can determine the quality of a lawyer by the quality of his clients. If a lawyer has a clientele consisting of ratbags and shysters, he will be a ratbag and a shyster, because a professional lawyer will not do the things that a ratbag and a shyster client will ask him to. He will not break the law or fiddle the facts, and he will not do all the things that ratbags and shysters ask lawyers to do. One can always tell! A lawyer will be dealing with some and the client will suddenly change to a lawyer who is slightly down the pecking scale, and then suddenly change lawyers again. He will finally end up with one of those lawyers who is waiting to be struck off, because he knows that lawyer is dishonest. He would never be able to take that lawyer's word or rely upon him doing the right thing; he would be always pulling swifties. One can always tell the lawyers who are doing well. Good quality clients come to them and recommend them.

Hon Graham Giffard: I do not know what you mean by "good quality clients".

Hon PETER FOSS: Good quality clients are ethical businesspeople who make their money lawfully, not the people who do dirty deals and sail close to the edge of the law. Good quality clients are the ones that the lawyer regards as ethical businessmen.

I found that the best way to get a client was to thoroughly defeat somebody in a case, in a professional manner, and the next time that client got into trouble, he would come back. That has nothing to do with qualifications. Every lawyer has the same qualifications and has to start from the same bottom rung. There will always be what I regard as unethical and unprofessional lawyers, who are interested only in taking money from their clients just as they are only interested in taking money from somebody else. At the other end of the scale are those who regard the law as a profession, whose duty is first of all to the court and then to the client, who do not incur too much by way of costs, and who do not send their clients down the wrong path that will make the lawyer a lot of money, but who advise the client in his best interests. That is professionalism as far as a lawyer is concerned.

I am sure teachers could define what it is that makes a professional teacher. It is not the qualification. Sure, that is *sini qua non*, but it is not what makes the person a professional lawyer and teacher.

Hon Derrick Tomlinson: Neither is it being a member of an organisation.

Hon PETER FOSS: Exactly. Engineers do not have any compulsory form of registration. Yet, of all the professions - nobody doubts they are professionals - they engage in things that most pose a hazard. How will an engineer know that, upon entering this building, for instance, the ceiling will not fall on him? It nearly did a few years ago. How does he know when he enters one of the high rise buildings in Perth that it will not fall over? We rely on the fact that it was designed by a professional engineer, who does not have to register under an Act. That engineer gets there by virtue of being tested by other engineers.

Hon Derrick Tomlinson: He does have a set of standards.

Hon PETER FOSS: But they do not have to be imposed from outside. The honourable member is right. In some ways engineers impose even more rigorous standards. One of the unfortunate things about government-imposed standards is that they have to be at the bottom or the minimum. The Government's standard has to be the minimum required to be given a tick. When somebody decides to be an engineer, it does not work that way. If a company wants to employ an engineer, it does not ask people whether they have the minimum requirements; it asks itself how good they are and which of the people applying for the job is the best.

One of the reasons that I think registration for teachers is inapplicable is that, when people need a lawyer, for instance, they have no idea how to choose one. At least the Government can say that this lawyer meets the minimum standard. However, who employs teachers? In the case of a private school it is the principal. Do members really think that the principal of a private school would just look at whether a teacher had a tick and then employ that person? Of course not. Once this Bill is passed, principals will have to look at that; otherwise they will breach the Act. Do members think that principals are capable of finding somebody currently? Of course they will look at people's qualifications and experience. They will talk to those people and discuss professional matters. A principal who is thinking of hiring a member of staff will engage in a substantial discussion to find out that person's philosophy of education, attitude to discipline and how he or she prepares. I do not know all the issues that would be discussed, but I know some of them. People must have the qualifications before a principal will talk to them, but that is not how a principal would choose people; that is their foot in the door, but it certainly would not get them the job. The principal is a professional. Depending on the professionalism of the principals, how attractive their schools are - that relates to how well they lead and run their schools - and how well they choose their staff, which is another measure of how they lead and run the schools, they will get the best teachers. If the teacher is not the best, the principal will have the leadership and capacity to raise that person's standards. It is like playing in an Olympic team. The team member's personal best today will get much better when he is up against champions. A professional and high-standard surrounding lifts the standard of everybody involved. It is human nature. If a person is doing better than others, those people would look at what that person is doing and they would improve, provided they are professionals. That is what professionalism is about - being chosen on one's merits and always striving to be the best and better than one is now.

Hon Derrick Tomlinson: And produce a good product.

Hon PETER FOSS: That is how being good is judged.. It is the product that is produced at the end that tells us whether a person is the best; it is not how many degrees that person has. The member has raised an interesting point.

I made a lot of the selections in engaging articled clerks for our firm over some 20 years. I often found that the worst practical lawyers were the people with first-class honours. We used to go mainly for those with second-class honours. That is interesting. The lawyers with second-class honours were very good lawyers. The lawyers with first-class honours tended to have their heads up in the clouds and did not know a practical problem when they saw it. They were brilliant at academics, and that is as it should be in academia, but when it came to solving people's problems, they had no idea. On the other hand, those who had second-class honours had the intellectual capacity, as well as a bit of practical knowledge. I would look at what vacation and term work people had done - work that indicated that they had some sort of practical appreciation of life. The law is not about academia; it is about taking a practical, ordinary, everyday problem, putting it with the law and trying to come up with a solution. I am sure that education has similar ways of melding the reality and the theory.

Hon Derrick Tomlinson: Regrettably, that is one of the things it lacks.

Hon PETER FOSS: Again, my knowledge of teaching has been gained through having both a wife and sister who are teachers, serving on a school council and having kids go through a school system. I appreciate that mine is not exactly a very close encounter.

Hon Derrick Tomlinson: My comment related to the process of selection. Teachers are selected on their minimum qualification for entry, and I am talking about a government system - people who go from school to university and back to school - and not on a consideration of their other qualities.

Hon PETER FOSS: That is very true and I think it is a shame. The same applies in this place. Whenever young people in their 20s tell me that they want to go into politics and ask me what they should do, I tell them to go out and get some life experience. There is no point in going into politics without some life experience, because people bring nothing to the place if they do not have life experience. That is why we are here; we are representatives of the people and we cannot be representatives of the people if we do not know what they do. I think that teaching would be served well by that.

Hon Paddy Embry: It would be nice if sometimes experience were brought to the consultative process before legislation was written.

Hon PETER FOSS: The situation I have been talking about is what I see as building professionalism. Many private schools are achieving that. The school of which I am a board member does that, and I know that the Swan Christian College does it. People notice the difference in atmosphere. There is a tone to the school that indicates that it is an educational establishment and it educates the whole person. That is what must be done in education. Nobody disagrees that that is what must be achieved. If we are failing in that - I think we are failing more in the state system than in the government system - why are we failing? Why are we not getting that

professionalism? It is not because teachers in the government system are not dedicated. It is not because they do not want to be professionals. It is not because they do not care. I believe it is because the system does not treat them as professionals. It is not run like a profession. It is run like a government department, and it has gotten worse. I have a nasty feeling that this is another bureaucratic compliance.

Hon Alan Cadby: Except it will affect non-government schools as well.

Hon PETER FOSS: Precisely, and which already have in place a system that works. This argument has been around for years. I can remember when my sister got all hot under the collar about professionalism. Sure, a person must be paid like a professional, but being paid like a professional does not turn that person into one. It is not sufficient. It is very hard to encourage people into teaching if they know they will be paid a pittance; I accept that. Other professions have a legal requirement that people get a tick. Some professions have a customary requirement that people get a tick and, therefore, they think they need a tick. No; we need to understand what professionalism is about. Private schools have managed to get it right. There is no reason that government schools should not get it right also. I will give members some examples of why government schools do not get it right. How many times have members heard a state schoolteacher say, "I have been told I'm teaching geography this year; I have never even learnt geography" or "I have been told I'm teaching maths this year. I'm a biology teacher; I was never any good at maths"? How often have members heard a principal say, "A load of absolutely useless people have been sent to me by the department; where it got them from I don't know"? At no stage in the process does professional judgment seem to be considered. There are principals who dodge the system. I am not sure how they manage it. Somehow they manage to get a reputation at a school. I have noticed that some schools in my electorate always get capital works and some never do.

Hon Paddy Embry: They write good letters.

Hon PETER FOSS: I think that some of them never give up. They are always on the telephone to the department saying that they need this or that. They are not relaxed. They have not retired into their job. They are keen. Sometimes it is hard to maintain that enthusiasm with the sorts of things that the education department has been doing to people for years. I can remember that was the case when my sister started work 40 years ago. I have not seen any change. I can remember when my wife worked in the system and we introduced workplace agreements. She was going to be paid more money because she had signed a workplace agreement. It took the department 12 months before it got the system in order to pay her. How many times have we heard of schools that do not have teachers at the beginning of the year and teachers who do not have jobs? I know it is complicated, but the education system did not even have my wife's details on computer. I would have thought it at least would have kept the names on a computer; instead, those details were noted on little cards and files. That is why the people working in the system could never put teachers in the right place; they had no idea who was going where.

Hon Derrick Tomlinson: They had hats.

Hon PETER FOSS: Hats?

Hon Derrick Tomlinson: They took cards out of one hat and put them into another hat.

Hon PETER FOSS: The system was primitive. Everyone had a computer on their desk but they did nothing with them. They certainly did not do anything to get teachers into the right schools in the right place and where they wanted to go. How often have we heard about a teacher who is sent to the country but who wants to go to the city and a teacher who is sent to the city who wants to go to the country?

This Bill is about leadership. I presume the Government wants to address the problem. I am sure everybody in government is or has been a parent at some stage and has had these concerns. All four of my children went to government schools. My daughter briefly went to Perth College, but the rest of my children were educated in state schools and went on to a state university. I support the system; I do not have a problem with it. I went to a private school and there is nothing that particularly put me off private schools, but I would like to think that I could send my child to a state school and be confident that the quality of education was good. If I were sending my children to school now - that is, if I had children of school age instead of children who had left school and gone to university - that decision might be different. Reluctantly it might be different because I am not confident, for instance, that my local school would provide the standard of education that I want for my children. That is because I am aware of a general discontent, not so much with pay, but with management in schools. Teachers are not treated as professionals. It is very important that some sort of system be established to do that.

I will talk about how the legal profession works, but I ask members to note that I do not say that this is what should be done in education. We must give teachers the responsibility to use their professional skills in making decisions relating to their work. We must listen to them and allow them to make some contribution to their school's philosophy of education and what they should be doing by way of professional development. We must build a team of professionals. As a lawyer, I used to seek out the best young graduates. Some people shy away

from having the best people working for them. Firstly, I think the best way to do well is to pick the best people to work with, work them hard and give them more responsibility than they think they can take. We should always try to challenge people's professional ability. Secondly, I would never give a young lawyer a job that I was not prepared to do. A lot of people used to think we had a wonderful system whereby a job that someone did not want to do would be given to an articled clerk. Disaster! If they wanted to crush a young lawyer, they gave him all the nasty jobs to break his spirit early on. I thought the best thing to do was to get them involved in the periphery of a really good case.

Hon Alan Cadby: It is the same with new teachers; they get the worst classes.

Hon PETER FOSS: I am sure they get the worst classes. They are the ones least able to deal with them and their spirits are broken. What is the attrition rate in teaching? I bet it is pretty high.

Hon Alan Cadby: It is pretty high in the first seven years.

Hon PETER FOSS: Why is that? It is because they get all the crappy classes. They are sent to the worst places and they get the worst classes. Is that clever? No, it is not. I understand why teachers do not want to continue with the worst class, but I know teachers who specialise in teaching what we might call a bad class; they do not have much problem with their students because they know how to handle them. If we could retain a wide range of teachers in schools, instead of having half go off to private schools, we might have schools that had enough good classes to hand around. The state system is running out of good classes.

No teacher can behave like a professional if he or she is not treated like a professional. I am not a professional teacher, I am not a professional principal and I am certainly not a professional director general of education. I cannot tell anybody how to treat a teacher to achieve the things I have just talked about, but I know they are not happening. I know they can happen because I have seen them happen in private schools. Teachers in private schools are not paid more; in fact, often they are paid less. What happens is the state schoolteachers get an increase in pay, private schoolteachers apply for a flow on and they get the flow on about six to 12 months later. They are not therefore paid more; they are generally paid less.

Hon Paddy Embry: They have other commitments too, such as sport.

Hon PETER FOSS: Their extracurricular obligations are huge. They do not go home at three o'clock. They are willing to stay on at the school and they are also willing to come back on weekends because they enjoy their job. It is a professional challenge, they feel like professionals, they are involved, they have command over their life and they have job satisfaction.

Hon Paddy Embry: Team spirit.

Hon PETER FOSS: Yes. There is no logical reason that it could not happen in state schools. With the resources that government has, as I said, state schools have far more than my school ever had. We took years to build up the school with which I was involved. We started in that school with just a few classrooms. In state schools - bang! - everything is there to start off with - gyms, covered areas and sporting grounds. We had to build all those things. The parents at my school planted grass on the oval and cleaned the windows to keep the fee structure low. That is not regarded as bad; it is regarded as one of the positive and good aspects of the school. The school is developing its strategic planning and, because the school has become more established, the parents requested more meaningful work. The school has run out of the exciting work and is now down to rather boring things.

Hon Graham Giffard: Do you think your school is a niche school or do you think you operate in a more broad way?

Hon PETER FOSS: It is definitely operated more broadly. The Anglican Schools Commission, which in some ways is copying the Catholic Education Commission, established it to provide a religious education to anybody. The notion is that nobody should be prevented from attending a private school purely because they cannot afford it. It went slightly wrong in our case because we announced in advance the location of the suburb for the school, which had the unintended effect of driving up the socioeconomic status of the suburb. We thought we were in a suburb that did not have a very high socioeconomic status. The developer marketed the area by saying that St Mark's Anglican Community School would be there. I think the increase in status may have occurred in any event, because the suburb is fairly close to the coast. It is one of those strange things that occurs when people select a suburb for that reason: it is hard to stop the socioeconomic status going up.

However, the more the education system averages out over the whole area, the more available it is. The state schools in England do something like that. My children went to a local state school that was run by the Anglican Church. The process there was to fund it as a state school but run it through the Anglican educational system. I do not fully understand how it works. I know that other similar models work. I would not recommend the

English education system as it is driven by class. The biggest problem faced in England is becoming a problem here. We lived in Kensington on the most expensive land in England. It came out in the newspaper that our house was on the most expensive block of land in the whole of England. However, the local high school was one of the worst in England because nobody in that expensive area sent their children to that local school. One hundred per cent of children were sent to English private schools. The school also drew on Notting Hill Gate north of Kensington, so the high school in Kensington was pretty rough. It was self-fulfilling. Parents would be mad to send their children to that school unless they wanted daily knife fights, drug problems and everything else.

Something must be done for the state system. We should not detract from what private schools do, but duplicate it in the state system. That used to be the case. One could previously guarantee as good an education in a state high school as that found in any private school - even better. I remember when Hollywood Senior High School achieved the best results in the State. There was Perth Modern, but Mod was a bit special as it had a little different selection method. It is a little unfair to compare Perth Modern, but Mod wiped the floor with all other schools. I attended St George's College, which had about half former state school and half former private school students. That was once the case in the make-up of University of Western Australia students, but it is now massively weighted towards former private school students. UWA takes the top students, and the top students opt to go to private schools. I happen to think that is sad. I am a believer in the state school system, but I do not believe that people can be persuaded back to the state system by punishing the private schools. Professionalism sends people to private schools, not snobbery. People send children to those schools because of what they offer.

A few other matters are causing problems. Discipline is a difficulty. People have gone off discipline. Speaking in my justice area, the biggest single problem with children who end up as delinquents is inconsistent discipline by their parents. A child needs some sort of a stable environment.

Hon Barbara Scott: And order in their lives.

Hon PETER FOSS: Indeed. Delinquents' parents will one day let them get away with absolutely everything - stay out until midnight, drink, smoke etc - and the next day the children will be beaten to a pulp for something; they will be really beaten up. Those kids are disciplined, but it is not the harsh discipline that is -

Hon Graham Giffard: That's abuse, not discipline.

Hon PETER FOSS: It is abuse. The argument might be that they are getting tough discipline. Even if the discipline is not to the point of abuse, inconsistency is the issue. Children are trying to learn rules; that is, the rules of grammar, rules of language and rules of society. These rules are absorbed through the pores and are not instructed in the sense, "This is what you do." It is learned by observation. If parents have aimless, undisciplined lives themselves, children will have problems. Of course, we do not want to be anally retentive and go too far in that discipline. However, if parents are undisciplined with their children, it is not surprising that their children do not fit into the ordinary rules of society. We need discipline and to recognise the place of discipline in the raising of our children. The State will continue to lose to private schools parents who recognise that aspect. If a school does not provide discipline, parents will go somewhere that does.

Teachers must be treated as professionals in the system; that means professionalism from the director general all the way down in the system. Everybody must be seen as a professional. If the legislation is to register anyone, let it register senior people in the department. It is far more important to achieve a higher quality in our senior educators than is the case at the schools workplace. If we want to guarantee the future of our system, statements must be made to people in the education department. Prove to us that they can manage this body of professionals in a professional manner. Do not treat teachers like children, objects, numbers and things to be shuffled and ordered around. Give them a sense of worth and a part to play. Ask them how to solve the problems. Ask teachers how to stop the movement of children to private schools. Has anyone asked teachers? I do not think so. I have not heard it.

I see this Bill as counterproductive. Again, it is another regulation with which teachers must comply. They will be told that they have not filled in their form. Improvements will not be made by punishing people. Professionalism is encouraged by making people want to work in that manner. Why would people want to fill in another darned form and have another fee to pay? Telling teachers to do this, that and the other represents regulation.

Hon Derrick Tomlinson: Like with hairdressers' registration.

Hon PETER FOSS: It is. It is another bureaucratic load on teachers to stop them doing their job properly. I cannot support it. There are some good checks in the Bill. However, the essential means to save our state system is to get the same professionalism in the state system as that found in the private system. We must learn from the private system. People will move to the state system if they know they will receive a quality education

there. Teachers are professionals, and should be treated as such. This Bill does the reverse. It is window-dressing and counterproductive.

**HON PADDY EMBRY** (South West) [11.48 am]: I will speak briefly because Hon Peter Foss has covered most of what I had in mind. My speech will be rather disjointed. I see a huge division between schoolteachers in the state system and the decision makers in education. In fact, moves have been made to have a manager appointed to manage, say, three small schools in country areas. Principals will also be at these schools. The prerequisite should be that managers come from the teaching profession. If the manager has no experience at the coalface, even though he or she will advise the principal, good decisions cannot be made on a subject with which that person is not fully conversant.

By way of analogy, I refer to the Royal Air Force; I am sure the Australian Air Force is very similar. The Chief of the Air Staff of the Royal Air Force is always drawn from the division of pilots. The head of the Royal Air Force does not come from the accounting, intelligence, education, medical or armament sections. A pilot is always appointed. The nucleus of the function of an Air Force is flying. Surely the prime focus in teaching must be teaching. People in decision-making positions must not only have been teachers, but also teachers with reasonably current experience. Of course, in places like "Silver City" - I believe that is the term - the majority of workers have been teachers. However, they do not want to teach any more. They get to the stage of almost manufacturing a job so that they can stay in "Silver City". They would be terrified if they had to go back to the coalface of the classroom. I know several people who have said that - maybe in slightly different words, but that is the message they have given.

I believe that Hon Peter Foss was 100 per cent right when he talked about getting satisfaction from a job. Probably because of my age and the age that my wife might be, we seem to have seen a tremendous exodus from teaching of people between the ages of 50 and 60 years. That is very sad, because they are the teachers with the most experience, and they are needed. They get fed up for all sorts of reasons. A young teacher who has just come out of college naturally has tremendous enthusiasm etc. That is the advantage of youth. However, age and experience also have advantages.

Hon Derrick Tomlinson interjected.

Hon PADDY EMBRY: Exactly. I have read about what the department wants to do to encourage teachers to go to country areas in particular. It states that it will have more in-servicing and those sorts of things, which most teachers say is a complete and utter waste of time. Most teachers who have been in the department for a long time say that it is a regurgitation of methods that they learnt years ago. Things tend to work in a cycle, as they do in many aspects of life. Fashions in clothing work in a cycle. I agree 100 per cent that it is another form of bureaucracy. I can see some advantages in it. However, I have a great fear that the disadvantages will outweigh the advantages.

I will introduce a humorous note. This is the opposite of what Hon Peter Foss said. One of my sisters-in-law was in a religious order, and she was teaching in the Catholic school in Bunbury. She complained to the principal that she was teaching mathematics while an atheist was teaching religion. Catholic schools do not always get it right either. It probably was not humorous for the people involved. It was serious, because Roman Catholics who send their children to Catholic schools do so for a variety of reasons. A major reason is discipline, about which Hon Peter Foss spoke. However, they also want their children to receive basic Christian instruction, because it is a subject in which they have always been interested.

The religious instruction in Roman Catholic schools today is not really Roman Catholic doctrine. When I went to Catholic schools it probably was, particularly in my primary school days. They were turning out little theologians. However, modern Roman Catholic schools teach Christianity. Of course, they teach some Roman Catholic doctrine, but very little. For many right-wing Roman Catholics, they do not teach enough. A cousin of my wife teaches at Aquinas College. I made an interjection about this. She was told that, after hours, she needed to show an interest in the college's rowing activities. Gaye was never a rower.

Hon Barbara Scott interjected.

Hon PADDY EMBRY: Hon Barbara Scott, of course, would have been a perfect candidate for that. It was part of Gaye's duty to attend and participate in the training on a weekend, and to encourage the students. I am sure she did it very well.

Hon Barbara Scott interjected.

Hon PADDY EMBRY: I do not know. She is a very early riser, so that was probably fine for her. My wife taught for a period at Hampton Senior High School many years ago. At that stage it was the largest high school in the State. It could not even raise a football team. The culture among the students at that school at that time was that they were a bit silly if they got involved in sports. I believe the private schools have developed a sports

culture; the children are encouraged to participate in sport. As Hon Peter Foss said, that is part of an all-round education. When parents are educating their children, they do not want pure academia. When children are part of a team sport, it enhances their ability to work as a team, to cooperate with others and to do what they are told. They are important qualities that children need later in life. They must do what their employer tells them to do if they wish to keep their job.

I interjected and said what happened with my wife's salary. She wrote a number of letters, all to no avail. Eventually, I was able to sort it out over the telephone. The basic person to whom I spoke - I guess he was fairly basic - said, "I can tell you what your wife has been paid. I cannot tell you what she should be paid." I said, "I am perfectly aware of what she has been paid. I have copies of the papers with me. You haven't been listening to my question." Eventually it was sorted out. When the ministry moved from one building to "Silver City", it lost a lot of documents, and they happened to include the qualifications of a number of teachers. Mistakes are made. We all make mistakes. Mistakes have been made in the private school system; there is no doubt about that.

We have had the advantage of our children going through both systems. There were good and bad aspects of both. There is no way that the private school system has it all right. Anyway, what is right today will not necessarily be right tomorrow. As I said, my wife is a teacher. She has taught in the private school system, and she has taught every grade from kindergarten to tertiary level. Therefore, she has a fair amount of experience. In the early days of our marriage, which was after she had been teaching for five years, she said that she would never take a job in a private school because the standards were not high enough. She was educated in a private school, but she said that the standards were not anywhere near as high as they were in the state system. She was not going to, as it were, potentially lower her reputation as a teacher by accepting a job in a private school. However, I can assure members that as time progressed the balance of the scales reversed. That is very sad. Most children in Western Australia go to state schools, and we need to improve the state school system. There is no question about that. As Hon Peter Foss said, that should not be done in a way that will have a negative impact on the private school system. Let us learn and benefit from some of the new ground that private schools have made. Of course, when it comes to the dollar, we are saved a lot of money by the private school system. The ratio is quite huge. Of course, the wealthy schools get virtually nothing.

I believe that one of the dangers for the Roman Catholic system is that it could become too bureaucratic, similar to the state system, and it will lose some of its quality if it is not careful. I advise the House that I will not vote for the Bill for the reasons I have stated.

**HON NORMAN MOORE** (Mining and Pastoral - Leader of the Opposition) [12 noon]: I am another of those former teachers who has a view about this legislation. I am also married to a secondary school principal and most of my friends are teachers or former teachers. I have had a very long interest in the so-called teaching profession. It has always been of concern to me that the community's attitude is that not many teachers are professional or that teaching is on the bottom rung of professions. The tertiary entrance examination scores of students who want to study education have invariably been lower than those who seek to study the other professions, such as law, medicine, engineering, architecture and the like. I have always thought this to be grossly unfortunate because for young people to become members of any profession, they need to be taught by professional teachers. It is the capacity of teachers to teach young people well that gives those young people a chance to become involved in any profession they wish. Every doctor and lawyer has been taught by a teacher. The tragedy is that although a doctor can aspire to significant monetary benefits, a teacher can aspire to only piddling monetary benefits.

Hon Graham Giffard: Compared with what a doctor might earn.

Hon NORMAN MOORE: Yes, and compared with the benefits available in other professions. These days, a secondary school principal gets paid about \$85 000 a year. That secondary school principal is responsible for, in some cases, 1 500 students, 100 to 150 teaching staff, 50 non-teaching staff and the management of a very significant budget and organisation. It would be regarded as a joke if people in the private sector or indeed the other professions were asked to manage an enterprise of that significance and accept a salary of that nature. It is fair to say that new teachers get paid quite well when compared with other professionals in the early days of their careers, but as time goes on, of course, the salary increases for teachers are much less than what can be expected in the other professions.

I have read the second reading speech and looked through the Bill, and I wonder what this board will do. The second reading speech states that the role of the Western Australian College of Teaching will be to promote and enhance the teaching profession. That is a very worthy and laudable objective.

[Quorum formed.]

Hon NORMAN MOORE: However, the second reading speech does not tell us how it is intended that this college will go about promoting and enhancing the teaching profession. That is fundamental to what this is all about. Many teachers in both the government and non-government system are very professional. Indeed, there are many highly professional teachers, and they do not need somebody to promote and enhance what they do. On the other hand, many teachers in both the private and government system are very unprofessional. Maybe something must be done about them. I would like to know how this body will achieve that, given the way in which it will be constructed. I was fortunate enough to be the Minister for Education for a number of years in the early to mid 1990s. During that time I put forward a proposition that was along similar lines to what is proposed by the Government in this Bill. However, there were some quite significant differences. I began discussions about an organisation called the centre for professional excellence in teaching. I was seeking to create an organisation which would take responsibility for professionalism in education but which would be run by the education profession. I sought to acquire the Claremont Teachers Training College site as the home for the education profession. The college would have housed the professional association I was seeking to create, as well as all the other subject associations and various groups that are involved in the professional development of teachers.

Hon Barbara Scott: It is a lost opportunity.

Hon NORMAN MOORE: The problem was that when I tried to acquire the Claremont teachers college from Edith Cowan University, it told me that under no circumstances could I have it, even though I was prepared to pay. The tragedy is that this idea did not progress, and the Claremont teachers college was put on the market. I am not sure whether it has been sold. I tell the Government to get hold of the college while it is still available. It is the spiritual home of the education profession. The college started in 1903, and is where the first teachers in Western Australia were taught. It is a magnificent old building that reflects many years of hard work by many people who went into teaching for all sorts of reasons. It is a building that contains a lot of facilities that would be advantageous to an organisation such as the College of Teaching that the Government is now setting up. It has a library, lecture facilities and a range of other amenities that would be useful to an organisation that is heavily involved in the delivery of professional development.

The thinking behind my plan was that the teaching profession would never be a profession until it “controlled” the way in which its profession operated and grew. There is a very good argument for the College of Teaching, or whatever it is to be called, to have a significant role in professional development and, indeed, for the members of the profession to meet certain professional development requirements of the college before they can become members of it. I do not mean that people should meet those requirements before they are able to teach, but they should certainly be required to meet them before they can become members of the profession. I was disappointed that that goal was not able to be achieved in my time. However, it may still be possible. The current Government has a lot more money than we had. Maybe the Claremont Teachers Training College site is still available. The parliamentary secretary might want to check that out. I think he would find that it would be a magnificent facility for a college of this nature. My successor, Colin Barnett, set up a body at Fremantle. I cannot recall the name of the organisation, but it was housed near the prison. I think it was the only place he could find, but I did not believe it appropriate for an organisation of that sort. I think we lost a good opportunity to go the whole hog.

What I had particularly in mind at that time was that this body - we can call it what we like - should be controlled and run by the profession itself and not be subject to an Act of Parliament that says there will be 19 board members of whom some will be appointed by the minister and some will be elected. A membership of 19 is ludicrous, but to have a representative body running a profession is to my mind a contradiction in terms. The bodies that represent the interests of other professions are elected from within those professions. They comprise those who are regarded as the best people to manage the affairs of the particular profession. What the Government is saying here is that the State School Teachers Union of WA will have a member, universities will have members, the department will have a member and so will other organisations. I have always been opposed to tripartite representative type organisations.

To go back a step or two, when I proposed the Curriculum Council, which eventually came into being, it was not envisaged as being a representative body at all, but rather that it would comprise 12 or so citizens of Western Australia who could make judgments on the curriculum from the point of view of the community. Because of the nature of the Legislative Council at that time, it became a body made up of representatives of every organisation one could think of in the education business. This is what we will get now with this legislation. It will not make it a representative organisation of the people who are in the profession. It will make it a plaything of the bureaucrats who run the system now and always have done. The Curriculum Council became just another extension of the former Secondary Education Authority and was made up of people who represented particular vested interests. The community was not involved.

The organisation the Government is setting up will again be the plaything of the various bodies that are involved in the education business. The same names, faces and attitudes will emerge in this body as they have in every other body that has been set up in education. At the end of the day the minister will have some say in what goes on. I believe it is a lost opportunity. I acknowledge that it is important that at the beginning of these sorts of creations the Government gets involved. That is why I had the view that I, as the minister, would acquire premises and initially set it up and provide the resources to make it work. I could live with what the Government intends to do now if it were an interim measure and if the Government were to say that, in three years, the board will disappear; once the profession is established and there is some serious professional activity going on, the board will be a representative body of the people in the profession and all the representative organisations will not get a guernsey as a matter of right.

I desperately want to see all teachers in Western Australia having a professional approach. I suspect that this organisation will not necessarily deliver that outcome because there is a fundamental problem in the system; that is, the education system in Western Australia basically is run by the Government and the teachers union. Every teacher who works in the government system is employed by the Government; there is one employer. That one employer has over generations taken the view that teachers are there to do as they are told by the department. The department sets the rules, regulations and requirements. Teachers simply do as they are told. The capacity for professional judgment and flexibility was not part of the deal. Some of the directives given to teachers in the good old days provide an idea of the culture that has grown up over many generations in the government school system. For example, teachers were directed to open the windows at one o'clock every day to let the air in; to light the fire every morning at eight o'clock to provide warmth for the children; not to go out on week nights; and, in relation to female teachers, not to associate with males during the week but on only one night at the weekend.

Hon Ed Dermer: How far are you going back?

Hon NORMAN MOORE: About a year or two! I am clearly exaggerating, but I am seeking to create an understanding of the culture of the system that has developed from that. The department has always wanted to control what goes on in every school and what every teacher does. That attitude is slowly changing.

When I first became Minister for Education a document was provided to me by somebody in the department, and that document was then leaked to the media. It was all about the devolution of responsibility in schools. I had not read it, let alone ticked it off, when the teachers union called a half-day strike because it thought that it was some way in which we would let parents become involved in decision making in schools.

I made the decision to engage Dr Norm Hoffman, who was the previous director general, to undertake a study into the devolution of educational responsibilities in Western Australian schools. I was seeking to have Dr Hoffman investigate whether we could break down the notion that every good idea and everything that should happen in schools should be decided in head office, and whether schools should be given vastly more responsibility to make decisions about things that go on in schools. Not all knowledge resides in head office; in fact a lot of impediments in the system reside in head office. The teachers union has been vigorously opposed to the concept of devolution because it finds it much easier to control the system by having one employer running the show, with the union as the advocate and defender of the people who work in the system.

I find it a contradiction in terms that a person can be a professional educator and an active member of a teachers union. As far as I am concerned, the notion of professionalism in teaching is that people are employed as teachers and their job is to deliver the curriculum and to provide the education they think appropriate to every child in the classes that they teach. It does not matter how long or how much work it takes for them to achieve it; that is their obligation. Like lawyers, they are not told that they work from nine to five and then stop worrying about clients. If it takes them 24 hours, seven days a week to give their client the best outcome, that is what they, as professionals, are expected to do. That is what professionalism is; it is not about working from nine to five and having three or seven weeks holiday. Professionalism means doing the job and putting in the effort and expertise necessary to deliver an outcome. In schools it is the delivery of a balanced, proper education for every child who is under the teacher's responsibility.

When I was minister the teachers union went on strike because I would not give teachers a 30 per cent pay rise. After the strike it implemented work-to-rule arrangements under which teachers would not do anything after 3.30 pm, including coaching school teams or being involved in extracurricular activity outside the set hours they were employed to work. That organisation was having a dispute with the Government that it said would not affect the children. It cancelled country week - the one week of the year when every country school sends kids to Perth to engage in sporting and cultural activities. Schools would spend all year preparing and saving and looking forward to that event. In about 1995 or 1996 the teachers union cancelled that event and said it had a dispute with the Government. It said the dispute would not upset children. Many teachers said to me that they

would take those kids to Perth, they would get parents to drive the buses and the whole works, but it did not happen.

That is an example of how it is very difficult for me to reconcile a professional educator with a member of a union who every three or so years - four years now because of the electoral cycle - says he wants a 30 per cent pay rise and that unless he gets it, he will take it out on the children. If the parliamentary secretary is serious about professionalism in education, he must do something about the significant influence that the teachers union has in the system. I would ask those in the education department, again when I was the minister, why it was that every time a teacher had a problem with the department as the employer, he or she would go to the teachers union. I was told that that was how it always happened: if any teacher did not like what was happening, he or she would go to the union. The union would go to the department and they would sort it out. Generations of teachers have got justice in their relationships with their employer only by going to the union. I asked people in the department why they did not provide some support for their employees and treat them like adults and professional people, so that when they had a problem they would go to the department, the employer. The teachers would then feel confident that the department could sort out their problems. However, it has never worked that way. Teachers trot off to the union, the union trots off to the department, they do a cosy deal somewhere along the line and sort it out. In this business teachers know that the only way to sort out their problems is to go to the teachers union. We now have a system, which I used to talk about before 1993 as a cosy joint venture between the education department in Western Australia - the Government - and the teachers union in Western Australia, the representative of the employees, and they both run the system together as a joint venture. There cannot be this sort of professionalism we are talking about in the government school system whilst there is such a dominant union and one employer, which happens to be the head office of the Department of Education and Training which is made up of people who are well meaning but who believe their role in life is to make sure that everything that goes on in every school in Western Australia is according to their determination and their dictates. It just does not work! In every other profession, professionals work for a whole range of employers. Most are invariably not unionised, except for the medical profession.

Hon Derrick Tomlinson: And lawyers.

Hon NORMAN MOORE: I suppose they are to a certain extent, but they do not cause as much trouble as the Australian Medical Association. They are not as obvious. That situation enables professional people to move from place to place where they get professional satisfaction and can find a workplace that meets their professional requirements. Teachers in the government school system go from one government-controlled school to another; albeit there are variations from school to school about what teachers can and cannot do, and some are very good and some are not so good. I am trying to say that it is very difficult. This applies not only in Western Australia but also around the world, because invariably Governments run the vast majority of education systems in the world. Government bureaucratic organisations are invariably the employers and the employees are the teachers with their unions. It is an ongoing battle to see who has the upper hand. There is a regular - in this case every four years - demand for more money and an industrial dispute for a year. Those involved get over that, and after another three years it all happens again. It is as regular as clockwork and is totally counterproductive. It does not provide good outcomes. I guess I have to take some responsibility for this. I refused to give in to the teachers union, because I argued that there could be a pay rise but there must be a trade-off. In those days enterprise bargaining required trade-offs. If teachers wanted more money, they either worked harder or differently or put different systems in place in exchange. They should not simply get a pay rise because it happens to be that time of the electoral cycle.

As a result of quite a long dispute, which, I might add, the teachers union won and I lost, fewer teachers are now doing less work out of school hours. That dispute occurred at a point in time when things changed, and they have not gone back again. I regret that very much. One of the things I enjoyed most about being a teacher was the fantastic interaction with young people outside of school hours when I took them on camps, footy training and all the other occasions. I met kids as human beings and did what I was professionally employed to do; that is, make a contribution to their growth as human beings and individuals. The only way to do that is outside the regular classroom.

Hon Ed Dermer: In the less formal environment.

Hon NORMAN MOORE: Absolutely. I spent many of my school holidays taking kids on excursions and things like that where I got to know them as human beings. It was fantastic and I loved that part of the profession, but I left quite happily after 10 years because I could not keep doing that without the support of the system. As an aside, I remember on one occasion organising a year 12 geography excursion to the south west, and it was ruled out of order by head office. I was told it was too close to the leaving examination, as it was then, so I could not take the students. The people running the show in those days were basically dictators. I understand this is changing, it is improving, but there is a long way to go.

Hon John Fischer: I do not know whether it is improving. The kids from the Isolated Children's Parents' Association just about had their camp in the Carnarvon area cancelled this year because they could not get a teacher to take it on.

Hon NORMAN MOORE: I should take some responsibility for that sort of problem, because it is a legacy of 1994-95. However, what is improving is that the head office is slowly and begrudgingly letting school principals make more decisions. Some school principals cannot make decisions because they are ill-equipped to do so, but others are very good at it. There are some brilliant school principals in the government school system and some very average ones. The same applies in the private sector, too. It was put to me by a person whose views on education I greatly admire that we ought to put -

Hon Ljiljanna Ravlich: Were you referring to me?

Hon NORMAN MOORE: If the member has the same ideas as this person, that is good. That person's view was that maybe we should institutionalise the fact that there are two different sorts of teachers. Firstly, there are those who want to be professional educators; they want to be involved in the whole of life experience of children in their educational years. They want to be involved in pastoral care, excursions and after-school activities. They work on the basis that their job as professional educators is to deliver all-round education and it does not matter how long it takes or what work has to be put into it - the salaried people, in a sense. Those people are paid a salary, just like most professionals who work for organisations, and are required to do the job that is contained within their job description. Secondly, there are teachers who would be called craftsmen - those who just want to teach mathematics at secondary school level, for example. They do not want to be involved in yard duty, coaching footy teams or excursions. All they want to do is teach mathematics for a certain number of hours a week, and they should be paid a wage of so much an hour. They would teach and they would not be expected to do anything else, because some people just want to do that. They would be professional mathematics teachers in a sense, because their role as professional mathematics teachers would be to understand mathematics and have the professional attributes and qualifications to deliver the education of mathematics. However, they would not be required to be involved in anything else at the school because they do not want to be involved.

Hon Ed Dermer: Would these two classes be open for the teachers to self-select?

Hon NORMAN MOORE: Yes.

Hon Barbara Scott interjected.

Hon NORMAN MOORE: I do not know whether this is done anywhere. Another example of what could be done was put to me by a group of physical education teachers. Physical education of the sort that I think we should have is not taught in primary schools. I had a study conducted into that matter. Some physical education teachers said to me that they would like to form a company, which they wanted me to employ to deliver physical education in primary schools. They said that they would visit every school in the area that they were contracted to cover and would teach physical education for two hours a day. Physical education would be taught to every kid by a professional, and then those teachers would go to another school. They would not be part of the school community; they would just deliver a program that was not being provided. The problem is that most of the teachers in primary schools are women over the age of 40 who are not all that fussed about doing physical education. However, kids should be taught physical education in primary school. We still have the crazy situation in which physical education is taught in secondary school, when it is too late. That sort of contracting, in a sense, for the craftsman is something we should look at in the management of our schools. However, at the same time, those people who are to be professional educators on a "salary" must be prepared to do the professional thing in education; that is, to start at the beginning of the day when the job starts and finish when it finishes, not when the teachers union or the education department says that they start and finish. There is always a contradiction in terms. A professional teacher has set hours, and that does not make any sense to me, even though you, Madam Deputy President (Hon Kate Doust), and I both know that the majority of professional teachers work vast hours. My wife works countless hours every week in running her school, and I regard her as a highly professional person. However, her requirements are not to do that. It is set in concrete that she must do a certain number of hours a day and a certain number of weeks a year, but that does not seem to work.

Returning to the Bill in detail, I have some enthusiasm for what the Government is seeking to do. I think the aim of the exercise is heading in the right direction. In a sense the Government is heading in the same direction that I was seeking to head in 10 years ago. How time goes by! If the Government really wants this to work, and if it wants teachers to feel that they own their profession, it must get rid of all the hangers-on who will be given a guernsey as a result of this legislation. The Bill provides that the college will be a professional body of and for teachers. If it is a body of teachers, it must be made up of people in the profession. I do not see how on earth appointing representatives from the education department, the Catholic Education Commission, the Association of Independent Schools, universities, the Independent Schools Salaried Officers Association of WA, the State

School Teachers Union of WA, the Western Australian Council of State School Organisations, and the Parents and Friends Federation of Western Australia has anything to do with the teaching profession. Those people are all in the profession, presumably, but many of them would not have been in a classroom in the past 50 years. Why will they be a significant legislated part of this body? It is like this Parliament passing legislation to provide that the medical profession will be controlled by the people we choose from the health department, the medical board and the teaching hospitals, who will all get a guernsey. That is not what the Government should be seeking to do when it sets up a body such as this. I hope that the board, as it will be constituted, is only a temporary arrangement and that, in due course, the members of the college - those professional educators - will be given the right to decide who will manage their profession. Basically, the Government is saying that it does not think they are good enough yet to work out how to manage their profession, and that is why it has provided that all these people will help them. That has always been the attitude of the education department towards teachers: they do not know how to do it, so the department tells them how to do it. The Government is saying that it does not think the profession is mature enough to manage its own affairs, so it has provided that these people will do it for them. I would never have accepted that had I been in charge of this Bill. My concern at the time was that if the profession were to elect its own management, the teachers union would simply organise the numbers and would eventually take over. That would be an absolute tragedy, because the teachers union is there for a reason. I think its role has been necessary over the years. However, I hope that, in achieving a true profession in which the professional people involved can relate to their employer in a way that does not require a union, the teachers union will fade away into history - along with some of the people involved in it, without being disrespectful to anyone in the gallery.

Hon Graham Giffard interjected.

Hon NORMAN MOORE: There is a person in the gallery with whom I had a number of differences of opinion over the years, but his heart and soul are in the right place. Certainly, the good education of children is his main reason for being, and I acknowledge that. The only problem was that he won and I lost, and I have not forgotten it - and I was in the Government, which is a bit funny.

Here we are with what I think is not a bad first step. The Bill is significantly flawed, as has been pointed out by a number of my colleagues. Hon Peter Foss has said that we do not need a college of teaching. I think we do need a college of teaching. I think it is a good name; it is certainly better than the name I had - the centre for professional excellence - because I could never get my tongue around it easily. I think a college of teaching is a good idea. We put this forward as a policy idea back in 1989 when I was shadow Minister for Education. I wish the Government well, but I believe it will not achieve what it is seeking to achieve because the system is fundamentally flawed. The system does not provide for professionalism in teaching. It is too controlled, too bureaucratic and too big, and it simply does not provide an environment in which professionalism can flourish. If the parliamentary secretary can tell me that the Government will change the system and start devolving authority and decision making to people who are involved in teaching children and that it will have a far closer relationship with schools and teachers and their communities, he might get somewhere.

I will conclude on this point: I do not see this issue as a private school-government school issue. It has almost been suggested that government schools are full of non-professional teachers and private schools are full of professional teachers. That is not the case at all. As I think Hon Paddy Embry said earlier, the Catholic school system must be careful that it does not go down the same path as the government school system by becoming a big bureaucracy. The Catholic school system allows a significant amount of decision making at each school level, which is not yet allowed in government schools. I have come across some very unprofessional teachers in non-government schools, but those schools have a greater capacity to enhance professionalism because of the relationships that exist between the school management and individual staff members. They therefore get a close professional relationship where the decisions are being made. That is what gives teachers in non-government schools greater professional satisfaction than often is the case for teachers in government schools.

A lot of things can be done in education, but having this ongoing debate between private and government schools is totally unhelpful. The parliamentary secretary's minister must pull his head in whenever he feels the need to criticise what is a significant part of the education system. He is the Minister for Education and Training - that is, every child's education - not the minister for government schools. He must recognise that. There are good things happening in some government school and in some non-government schools, and there are bad things happening in some private schools and in some government schools. The minister has responsibility for the whole lot. If he sees what works well in non-government schools, he should replicate that in government schools. If there are good things happening in government schools that private schools could take advantage of, he should encourage the transmission of those ideas as well. Ultimately, we are all here for one purpose; that is, to make sure all children achieve the education that will give them the capacity to have a life they find rewarding and fulfilling. I support the Bill, but we still have a long way to go before we achieve what I have been hoping to achieve all my professional life; that is, a recognition in the community that teachers are indeed highly professional people.

**HON RAY HALLIGAN** (North Metropolitan) [12.42 pm]: I certainly agree with many of the comments made by members on this side of the Chamber. All of us will remember the time when we went through school. As has already been said, teachers can make a big difference to one's attitude towards class work and towards particular course subjects. My experience is one of having had some particularly good teachers and, unfortunately, some particularly bad ones. The good teachers encouraged not only me but also others in the classroom to embrace the subject they were teaching us and they assisted us all the way along the line when we were having problems. However, teachers who were not of that inclination, whom I would classify as bad teachers, sat back and let us do the work at our own pace. If we were not inclined, for a variety of reasons, to expend energy and learn that part of the curriculum, at the end of the day, usually at examination time, our results showed their inaction and their unwillingness to put sufficient effort into providing what we, as students, required.

Teaching has evolved over many years. I agree with what has been said that teachers should be considered professionals, or at least given the opportunity to show that they are professionals and to be recognised as such. To that extent, I agree with Hon Norman Moore that the Bill before us is a good step.

I am a little concerned about certain aspects of the Bill. I agree with other members who referred to the bureaucratic aspects of it. It appears to me that there may be some deficiencies in some of the definitions in the Bill. There is mention of teaching but not of a teacher. The definition of "teaching" in the Bill is -

. . . means undertaking duties in a school that include -

- (a) the delivery of an educational program designed to implement the curriculum framework approved under the *Curriculum Council* . . .

I agree with many other speakers that teachers are required to teach students not only the subject itself - which will make their students more knowledgeable about that subject - but also to teach them how to apply that knowledge. To me, that would go towards making a well-rounded education. Hon Norman Moore called teachers who teach in that way professional educators. That is a very good term that could be used to describe them.

Teaching is one thing, but another term we hear relating to universities is lecturing. I have been in a room of 400-plus people and a lecturer - not a teacher by my definition - has used an overhead projector to teach the class. Those of us in the back of the room could see only a bit of light. We could not see the words that were being scribbled on a piece of clear plastic that was projected onto the wall. Lecturing! I lecture my children periodically. When I do I am trying to get across to them exactly what I want to get across to them, but I am certainly not teaching them.

Professional educators can teach someone something, and they do that. I will use the analogy of teaching people to drive a car. People can be taught how to move a car from one direction to another, about gear shifts if it is a manual car, about using the brakes and so forth. However, when people are on the road they tend to do their own thing, which is when the quality of the education tends to show. If they were taught not only how to handle a vehicle but also how to participate once they were on the road with other road users, we might not have the problems we have today. However, I believe teachers can teach students certain matters, whether it be mathematics, English or whatever, but it is preferable for the students to be taught how to apply that knowledge in a manner that is more meaningful to them. In the long run the community therefore requires something a little different and certainly in many instances someone who is a little different. Certainly the attitude of teachers wanting to become educators and therefore professional educators is an important distinction that has already been spoken about and one that needs to be moved forward.

Certain aspects of the Bill, as I mentioned to the parliamentary secretary, cause me a little concern. One is the fact that there will be some devil in the detail; that is, the regulations. The Bill outlines -

For the purposes of section (1) -

**"seriously incompetent as a teacher"** includes such conduct as prescribed in the regulations;

**"serious misconduct the nature of which renders a person unfit to be a teacher"** includes such conduct as prescribed in the regulations.

In both instances "includes" is used. It appears that it has already been decided what some of those things might be and they will be added to by regulations. In his second reading speech, the parliamentary secretary stated -

After commencement of the Act, all teachers entering the teaching profession will be required to hold a teaching qualification approved by the college; have been teaching, whether or not full time, for at least one year in the past five years; have achieved standards of professional practice approved by the college; be proficient in written and oral English; and not have been convicted of an offence or engaged in serious misconduct that would render them unfit to be a teacher.

Hon Derrick Tomlinson; Hon Peter Foss; Hon Paddy Embry; Hon Norman Moore; Hon Ray Halligan

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That is all one sentence; I am not sure it is good English. Again, it refers to rendering a person unfit to be a teacher, and the Chamber does not have that definition of “teacher”. I think the parliamentary secretary is saying - I am guessing, and he can tell me if I am wrong - that such people are unfit to be involved with children. The parliamentary secretary stated later in the second reading speech -

They will also be required to demonstrate their fitness to be in charge of a Western Australian classroom.

What does that mean? How does a teacher demonstrate fitness? We can guess what it means. I would like the parliamentary secretary to tell me in his response exactly what that means. I know what I would look for. Being involved with children, I would be very concerned if people had convictions of any description that would cause parents concern about that person’s involvement with their children. That would come under that definition.

I have always believed that education goes beyond the three Rs. I have had difficulty with the manner in which children are examined on many subjects, a great number of which they may never use in a lifetime. The Curriculum Council decides for one reason or another the subjects it believes everybody should be examined upon. In many instances, I do not agree with those choices. Rightly or wrongly, that is my personal opinion. It relates back to education beyond the three Rs. I am a great believer in the three Rs. If children learn more of that type of thing by rote, it will assist them in the future

However, it is not only a matter of learning; it is also a matter of being taught how to apply that knowledge. Children must learn how to research. Throughout our lives, we must undertake research of some form or another, and then apply that research through analysis to draw conclusions. In that way, we move forward. I have met many people throughout my life who have degrees. I could give an example of a person who had a number of degrees but who had absolutely no idea how to apply the information obtained. How do I know that? This same person who was made my boss came to me to ask me how to do his job. It was most unfortunate. That is the worst example I could provide. That is a problem with the education system, not the individual. We hold in great store people who go through universities and come out with a piece of paper and say, “Look at me; aren’t I good?” I am not sure too many people have asked of the degree holders how they intend to apply that information. The expectation is that after having spent four, five or seven years at university, people will move to positions in which they will receive a great deal of money. It is not like an apprenticeship in which people learn as they go. In years gone by, apprentices did not receive a lot of money initially. It was understood and accepted that the apprenticeship was part of the learning process. When they became fully qualified, they had not only the educational qualifications, but also the experience. If they were competent and considered competent, they received top dollar. People pass through universities with an expectation that they will have learnt, even parrot fashion, the texts placed before them, and be able to write all the correct answers on the examination papers. However, I suggest that some people do not know how to apply that information. Why is that the case? It is because they were not taught how to do so. A lecturer provides the information, but does not ask students to absorb it, understand it and apply it.

The Bill refers to professional educators. I sincerely hope that we have professional educators in our system. A couple of examples of professional educators are Bill Mann and Merv Hammond.

Hon Derrick Tomlinson: Hear, hear!

Hon RAY HALLIGAN: I have been to both their schools, and have been involved in some of the activities in which they have taught students at those senior high schools. Girrawheen Senior High School often puts on breakfast, and people from the community are encouraged to come along. I attend as often as I can. Invariably, students cook the breakfast, present it and wait on the tables - they do it extremely well. Although the breakfast usually starts at 7.30 in the morning, I am told that the students, even though they are asked to be there at 6.00 am, often turn up at 5.00 am, such is their enthusiasm. That can only be a reflection on the teachers in the school. The students want to do well.

Hon Graham Giffard: I thought you were going to say they were innumerate!

Hon RAY HALLIGAN: Not at all. They are absolutely marvellous. That is why that school receives its deserved accolades.

Hon Derrick Tomlinson: In many fields.

Hon RAY HALLIGAN: That is true.

Debate interrupted, pursuant to sessional orders.

[Continued on page 837.]

*Sitting suspended from 1.00 to 2.00 pm*