

I place my appreciation of the Parliament, its members and the parliamentary officers, on record and wish you well in your coming deliberations.

I now declare the Third Session of the Thirty Fifth Parliament of Western Australia officially open.

[His Excellency and the members of the Legislative Assembly withdrew from the Chamber, and the President resumed the Chair.]

[Questions without notice taken.]

NATIONAL RAIL CORPORATION AGREEMENT REPEAL BILL 1999

Introduction and First Reading

Bill introduced, on motion by Hon N.F. Moore (Leader of the House), and read a first time.

GOVERNOR'S SPEECH

Distribution of Copies

THE PRESIDENT (Hon George Cash): For the sake of accuracy, I have obtained copies of His Excellency's speech which will now be distributed to members.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY

Motion

HON RAY HALLIGAN (North Metropolitan) [12.08 pm]: I move -

That the following Address be presented to His Excellency:

May it please Your Excellency -

We, the Members of the Legislative Council of the Parliament of Western Australia in Parliament assembled, beg to express our loyalty to our Most Gracious Sovereign, and to thank Your Excellency for the speech you have been pleased to deliver to Parliament.

We in Western Australia are indeed fortunate to have people of the calibre of His Excellency the Governor and Mrs Jeffery, who are known not only as tireless ambassadors for our State, but also as people who make a significant contribution to the needs within our community. It has been my pleasure to encounter His Excellency and Mrs Jeffery at many functions, and I have found that we have something in common in having served in Papua New Guinea at the same time. While we would both be considered servants of the public, my role did not involve the military forces. It is obvious that we also share a further interest - concern for the youth of this State.

Much has been said about so-called problems with our youth in general. These generalisations give people the impression that our young people are running amok, and that everything wrong with society is being caused by a rampant, unruly mob of drug taking youth who have no respect for the community or the law. However, it is well documented that 95 per cent of young people are law abiding. While that leaves 5 per cent of young people who could be termed hard core offenders, there are still some problems to be found within the 95 per cent. There is an expectation that young people will perform at a learning institution to an extent far in excess of the requirements in my day. Everyone nowadays is expected to leave a learning institution with a degree or diploma and this, coupled with society's misconceived perception of the younger generation, creates an enormous burden for them to shoulder.

Some of the difficulties encountered by our youth could be said to be caused by a number of things: Lack of jobs; access to illicit substances - tobacco, alcohol and drugs; peer pressure; and a breakdown of the family unit. Each of these concerns could be spoken about at length, but in the time allocated to me today I will concentrate on but one aspect. I refer to jobs or, as I like to describe it, income generation. If training were encouraged from an early age, it might help to reduce the problems associated with the other three. The present unemployment rate for youth is high, and much higher than anyone wishes it to be. While there is no panacea to correct this situation, we continually hear that more jobs need to be found, more jobs need to be created, and more training is required to make young people job ready. It is a simple matter to make bland statements and try to convince people that one has the answers to these problems. We hear these statements every day on the radio. We read them in the newspapers under different banners, such as editorials and contributions from television and radio presenters, some people from business and others who write to newspapers purely in an effort to create a profile for themselves. All too often the effort is a waste of everyone's time because of a lack of substance in the presumptions presented.

It is important for the youth of today that something meaningful be developed that will provide a path for them to follow, and that what is gained from the exercise assists in making them skilled in the many facets of life's endeavours and holds them in good stead in their future years. I am talking about training in enterprise. I refer to enterprise in its broadest sense, and not only in a commercial sense; that is, they need to be proactive about the things they need to do in this life, which will provide for their future needs and those of their families. For as long as I can remember, whenever anyone spoke to school leavers about how to make their way in the world, the message, more often than not, was to find a job. This often meant sitting back and waiting, either for *The West Australian* to arrive to look for the few jobs that were advertised, or for someone else to find or create the jobs that people may or may not want. People have developed a mentality over the years that a job will mysteriously appear at some stage, but that in the meantime it is all right to sit back and wait, or undertake

training that will make them better prepared for that job when it arrives. Then they can either sit back again or undertake some more training. Unfortunately, this can become a revolving door of insecurity and hopelessness.

What seems to be ignored all too often is that self-employment is a form of employment, along with full-time employment, part-time employment and casual employment. People should be asked to consider self-employment. Once again, there is the perception that the jobs that become available will place the employees in a position of comfort until they retire. Often no preparation is made for the unforeseen redundancies, caused through a host of things such as amalgamation of divisions within businesses, liquidation of companies, or even competition, whether it be locally, nationally or internationally.

We again see the revolving door syndrome at a later stage in life, because of lack of training in developing enterprise and finding ways around or over obstacles. Far too many people believe that entrepreneurs are born and not made. While there is no doubt that it helps to have been born with certain traits, many that are required to make a success of self-employment can be learned. I now quote from *The Practice of Entrepreneurship* which was published by the International Labour Office. I ask members to reflect on some of these quotes, when they think about what young people will require in their future years.

Many people go through life wishing that they were someone else or that they were doing another type of work.

The biggest asset to sustaining entrepreneurial ability is a positive attitude.

Good habits are difficult to master, but once acquired they become important assets.

You must be willing to learn from experience and change with the times.

Being an entrepreneur is more than a job or a career: it is a life-style. . . .

You are responsible for everything in your life, including your successes and failures.

This publication encourages entrepreneurial training and highlights -

many of the personal aspects of entrepreneurs with which most people can identify, and which can be developed over a period of time.

It refers to -

. . . the understanding that you can take control of the personal aspects of your life to make your work more productive and more entrepreneurial. Understanding that the personal aspects of your life can have positive effects on your business activities should give you the incentive and motivation to develop your personal entrepreneurial characteristics to the fullest extent.

As I said at the beginning of my speech, with this type of training our youth would be better prepared for that great unknown where they are expected to find ways to generate sufficient income to satisfy their needs. At the same time, with the additional skills of leadership and the ability to make decisions and use time effectively, youth would not only be in a far better position to keep out of harm's way by not submitting to peer pressure, but also would be better placed to make a positive contribution to society.

One may also ask what type of business the young people might start, particularly when they have had little experience in the workplace. With appropriate training, they would be able make a decision on the basis of market research and business planning. Of course, sufficient demand in the community would need to be identified, in relation to what can be supplied at a price known to be acceptable to the customer. This demand could be for something that already exists or an entirely new product. Although a new product may be a rare occurrence, it is not impossible for people to find something totally unrelated to their field of employment or experience. It should be remembered that the safety razor and the modern fountain pen were invented by salesmen. Many other inventions found the light of day because a need was identified.

It is also often felt that large amounts of capital are required before anyone should think about starting his or her own business. This, of course, is not the case and many businesses are started with second-hand equipment and little cash. Also some form of support and guidance is often required to assist people who are starting a business for the first time. Fortunately this form of assistance appears to be readily available through service clubs, community organisations and some government agencies, to name a few. Some will say this whole exercise would be difficult to achieve. Cynics will say it cannot be done. However, I have had 13-plus years proving otherwise. We are moving towards a time of immense change when the types of employment enjoyed by our parents will no longer be available to our youth.

It is important that our teaching institutions place themselves in a position to provide the type of training necessary to better prepare our young people for a new way of life which involves different forms of income generation. This must occur in primary, secondary and tertiary institutions. With this type of training, our youth will be better placed to show the strength of character to overcome peer pressure, demonstrate initiative and decision making, create a clear pathway for their future income generation requirements, be a role model for those who follow them, acquire good habits and develop a lifestyle of which they and others can be proud.

I thank members for their indulgence and commend the motion to the House.

HON MURIEL PATTERSON (South West) [12.23 pm]: I formally second the motion.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Hon Bob Thomas.

House adjourned at 12.24 pm