

MS McCARTHY: There is just one way you can get through that. As far as I know you can use it in Western Australia and in Queensland, where the doctor may use the confidentiality ethic rule, so the doctor may interpret that anyone over the age of 14 as being a mature minor. If the doctor is prepared to stand by that decision, there should not be a problem regarding anaesthesia. In other States - for example, in New South Wales - there is actually a law (the law of contracts for minors) which allows minors, being from 14 to 16 - -or from 14 on, to have - - it guarantees their rights of confidentiality in terms of anaesthesia or a dental procedure. In the Northern Territory it is slightly different, where you have to have both parents, until you are 16, to sign it.

You would have to go to your State Attorney-General to do it, but if you don't want to bring it out into the open - because sometimes it is more difficult if you have legislation spelling out the guidelines; you might end up with legislation that you don't want - you would be better to try and make sure you have a bank of doctors who are prepared to interpret in that way.

CONVENOR: Thank you.

MS DOWNEY: I think you would probably be able to hear me without a microphone.

CONVENOR: I don't know. Everybody might not.

MS DOWNEY (President, Catholic Women's League): I don't think I will distort what I have to say by this (referring to microphone). It is just a question that I want to ask and it is in regard to an interview with Mrs Broad in a broadcast on Radio 6PM and 6WN two weeks ago in which she said that she had contacted women and women's organisations from Northampton to Esperance and did not have one supporter for the Lusher bill.

I find this very disturbing as I know now that the Women's Action Alliance, the National Council of Women, the Women's Service Guild, the Catholic Women's League - and there were probably many more - were not contacted. I have just returned from Esperance where I made inquiries about this. Also among those that I contacted were women from Esperance, Bunbury, Busselton, Narrogin... (speaker did not use microphone at all and made transcription very difficult)... all women vitally concerned in their areas, but nobody had heard of Mrs Broad's inquiry.

Also in this interview Mrs Broad made her opinion on abortion very clear. My question is: Is it a custom of the Women's Advisory Committee to make public their personal opinions? It is my understanding that it is an advisory body to collect data for submissions, and in this case the Prime Minister's Department.

CONVENOR: Thank you. We will let Sue answer first and then we will give

her some support.

(ACCLAMATION)

MS BROAD: You would say I am in the hot seat at the moment. Yes, I will answer it as best I can. I didn't say I had contacted all women or all women's organisations. In the time available, when the National Women's Advisory Council decided to find members of the council's views on it, it didn't give me very much time. I don't know all the women in all those towns. I will admit I don't know all the women's organisations.

I rang those that I had contact with. The group I rang in Port Hedland, as far as I know, is the most actively involved in the community in Port Hedland. I did this in most of the country areas. I rang as many of the women's organisations as I could in Perth. If I made the point over air that I was favouring abortion, I apologise. That wasn't it at all. I was purely and simply commenting on the Lusher motion, which was the withdrawal of benefits for women seeking abortion for anything other than the imminent death of the mother, and I felt this very much discriminated against women in the lower income bracket, victims of rape, incest, single girls. I just felt that as it was young girls, it discriminated against these people. It was not an issue on whether we condoned or were supporting abortion on demand or not.

As I say, I did not, I am sure, say I had canvassed all women or all women's organisations. It would have been a sheer impossibility. But of all those I did ring in all the areas, I had positive support for the action I took.

(ACCLAMATION)

MS DOWNEY: Well, I - -

MS BROAD: Before you say anything else, can I comment on this?

MS DOWNEY: It is your opinion that a girl of 16 who is unmarried and without means of support for her child....(still away from microphone)....

MS ROBERTS: Thank you for bringing that matter to our attention. You have highlighted one of the very difficult areas we have to cope with, and that is communication between women. Sue is one woman in the State of Western Australia. She doesn't only represent Western Australia. She is expected to comment on isolated children in the whole of the nation, and I would say to you - as I do to the people in my State - that if you have an area of concern, please contact Sue and not wait for her to come to you. It is just not physically possible and, as women, we are there to put our opinion. Obviously as individuals we each have opinions on this, but I would once again point out to you that the Lusher motion was not on abortion, whether you are pro or for abortion; it was whether abortion was

going to be charged as a claim against Medibank.

I know Sue's opinion and she is against abortion, but she spoke up for those women who would be disadvantaged in society if they could not afford an abortion - and I support her on that.

MS DOWNEY:.....(still away from microphone)... but my question was: Is it the function of the Women's Advisory Committee to make public their personal opinions - of anybody in the position that you people are? Don't you think it would be taken notice of? It is my understanding of an advisory body that it is to collect data for submissions.

CONVENOR: Madam, I do have here in front of us the guidelines for the establishment of the National Women's Advisory Council. No.3 of the guidelines says:

"The Council may do all things necessary or convenient to be done for or in connection with the performance of its function."

We felt in this case it was necessary for us to give an expression of opinion, and this is why we did it. I should say to you that before we made that public statement, all members of council were consulted. We have said from the beginning that we would never give an opinion as to whether we believed in abortion or whether we did not believe in abortion because we believed that was a private matter. However, we felt this was not a debate on abortion but was as has been explained before - a debate on whether medical benefits should be available - and we also felt it was the case of a Federal Government trying to bring in a motion which would override State laws, and that was what we were very concerned about.

We could debate this problem I think all night. I would believe that as the issue has been settled in parliament, we would be wise to get onto other things, and not continue debating this all night because this is something which is very divisive and no way will we all agree on it.

I would ask the audience's permission that we do not continue with that subject unless somebody feels very strongly, and if so we will perhaps allow two more speakers. What do you think? Should we close that subject and go onto something else? (Affirmative response.)

Thank you. We won't have any more discussion on the Lusher motion this evening. I will take some hands from somebody who has something else to bring up.

MS DOWNEY: I have never been gagged before.

CONVENOR: Madam, I don't think you were gagged. I think we gave you a fair go.

MS RITA MILLER (State Secretary of Rural Women's Association): I am from Naremben. I would like to say that we recently had

a meeting in Trayning of all rural women. We advertised it well over the air. We invited Sue Broad to come as our guest speaker to speak on her position as our delegate to the council. She came. She spoke very well and gave us a very good description of her work with the council. We advertised this meeting far and wide. We had it over the "Always on Sunday" programme. We advertised it as far and as well as we could, and yet we had about 10 people come. I was very disappointed to see that so many people had the opportunity to come and meet Sue Broad and to hear what she had to say, and to hear the work of the council, and yet so very few turned up.

I think Sue has done a marvellous job and we in the country are very proud to have her as our representative.

(ACCLAMATION)

CONVENOR: Thank you. We are very pleased to have her on the council, too.

MS GERALDINE CAMPBELL (Women's Relief Society, Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints): I am a little late, but I want to revert back a couple of topics to the issue of family planning momentarily. I want to challenge the statement that there is no perfect method of contraception and, at the risk of putting the cat amongst the pigeons and certainly at the risk of being told I am very old-fashioned - I am quite prepared for that - I'd like to suggest that in unmarried persons chastity is a very perfect method of contraception, and in married persons continence is equally practical.

(ACCLAMATION)

CONVENOR: Thank you. I don't really know which one of us should be the one who answers that question. I think perhaps we should draw lots for it.

MS JAN OCHERTELL (Women on Welfare Campaign): I really must object to one of the statements made by a member a few minutes ago about the situation of women on welfare and the fact that they are a burden, so to speak, on the taxpayer.

I feel that our group is very much concerned about the issues of discrimination and the anomalies in the Social Security Department, but we are also concerned about the kind of scape-goating that goes on with regard to welfare recipients. We do feel that they have the lowest status in the community anyway, and any sort of scape-goating, such as saying - "They are such a burden on the community" and "Really, they should be able to manage on the money they get" (despite the fact that it is below the poverty line" - is very damaging to these women.

We feel, if you are going to talk about scape goats, you could look at the thousand million dollars that is being lost currently in tax dodging, and that was

reported in "The National Times" only a few weeks ago.

CONVENOR: Look, I don't think we said that at all. I don't think any of us said it. I think we did point out that 23 per cent of the taxpayers' money was spent on welfare payments. I don't think we were saying anything against that.

MS OCHERTELL: No, I am not saying you are. I am saying that sort of comment which is commonly used in the community, especially by the government-- the fact that so much money is spent on these people and they are a burden on the community.

CONVENOR: No, we are not saying they are a burden on the community, but I think it is important for everyone to know just exactly how much money is spent on welfare. There are many of us probably who think more should be; there are others who think too much is. We are just stating the fact of how much there is.

MS OCHERTELL: Yes, but I still feel that it does disguise the issues; that there are people who are really living off the community, as you say or as the phrase would go; people who are tax-dodging and the rest.

CONVENOR: If anyone is tax-dodging now, let's clear it up.

MS McCONNELL: No. I used that figure of 23 per cent, which is the right percentage certainly, but it is just a matter of "We have got this much cake." The great problem is to see how we are going to divide it up among the people. It certainly was no reflection on anybody receiving Social Security payments. That is their right, certainly, but it is a matter of "How are we going to make our resources stretch to cover all the needs?".

MS JENNY HALL (Women on Welfare): I agree, but the thing is this: The problem of the 1,000 million dollars which has been avoided is not going into revenue and being directed towards people who are on welfare. It is just going out, and it is not being highlighted in the media.

CONVENOR: It has been highlighted in some of our media and I believe that most of it has been stopped now.

MS HALL: It hasn't. It has been advertised in "The West Australian" and advertised in "The National Times".

CONVENOR: What - tax todgers?

MS HALL: Tax avoidance schemes. Anyone who earns over \$20,000 is allowed to - -

CONVENOR: Do you mean the people who think they can give you the guidance for tax avoidance? Is that what you are referring to?

MS HALL: Yes.

CONVENOR: I don't know what we can do about that.

MS HALL: This source or potential source of income which could be used to raise the level of income of Social Service recipients to the poverty line - - they are living about \$30 below the poverty line at the moment.

CONVENOR: I suggest you bring that up to your ombudsman in Western Australia.

MS HALL: We go to our ombudsman. He is absolutely hopeless.

CONVENOR: I am sorry - I don't think that's in our area. I don't think we can do anything about that.

SPEAKER: But raising the level of income for Social Security recipients surely is within your area.

CONVENOR: No, it's not.

MS HALL: But to comment on women on welfare?

CONVENOR: All we can do is send our comments to the Minister for Social Security with our recommendations, which we will certainly be doing.

MS DOROTHY COLLIN (Australian Federation of University Women in W.A.): May I pick up a point from Irene Greenwood, if I may call her so? Australia has ratified some ILO conventions which relate to discrimination against women already, and at the National Australian Federation of University Women Conference in Melbourne in January of this year we did put on our books a resolution which we may take to our international triennial in Vancouver in 1980. This will be of this form:

We will be asking that international conference to direct its representatives at ILO or at UNESCO to work in what way they can as NGO representatives to draw the attention of ILO and UNESCO to the fact that the Australian Federal Government and some State Governments have been extraordinarily and regrettably tardy in implementing and enacting legislation to bring States into line with the conventions, which are indeed (some of them) already ratified.; so that those people such as NCW who do have international conventions and who may have representatives with "second level status" (I think it is called) at these bodies may wish to add a little stir to our Christmas pot on that point.

The question that I wanted to draw your attention to which is current at the moment, arising from the Williams report, is education. There are three quite reasonable pages in that report which point out that girls are still not getting through to the universities - that is, the top career branch of post-secondary education, if you like, in the numbers that men are. They are getting through to TAE but they are not getting through to the universities, and it may be in fact that the counselling that they are

getting pre post-secondary needs to be looked at.

The other point that is made within that report is that girls are still not getting into maths and science as the men are.

I want also to draw your attention to the current airing of the possibility of reimposition of tertiary fees. This will work, as so many other things do - and you all know it - mostly against the women; particularly against certain trans-educational women. So I would really urge you, if you can bear to write 25 words to (in this State) "The West Australian" against the reimposition of tertiary fees, because this is well worth doing now before this possibility gets any further. If the matter of stringency concerns you, the fact is that with any tertiary funding those fees are far, far below 10 per cent of the cost of tertiary funding and the imposition and implementation is really barely worth it, so you aren't effectively starving tertiary funding.

I would also say that I do think we should appreciate the efforts that members of National Women's Advisory Council are putting in. They don't, as far as I know, get a parliamentary salary or an electoral allowance, or much of it, and they get plenty of jobs and plenty of brickbats and perhaps we can save those for the men. I hope that at least we can hold ourselves together so that in this State we get an antidiscrimination bill. Thank you very much.

(ACCLAMATION)

MS ROBERTS: Thank you very much for bringing those matters to our attention. Some of us are going to be looking at the Williams report, and I have already looked at it. I think you have raised a very important question - of raising the level of awareness of girls that they can do most things they want to if they really want to. Over the past decade the attitude of girls to education has changed dramatically. I think most States are well advanced now with education and education opportunities for women and girls. It is a very important area and I am glad you mentioned it.

I think the Schools Commission and the reports which it has brought out have done a great deal to implement better education opportunities for girls, and it is up to us all as mothers and people who are aware of these problems to encourage our girls to make sure they go as far as they possibly can. Thank you for bringing that to our attention.

CONVENOR: Would anyone else on the panel like to comment about the first remarks about the ILO conventions?

MS GREENWOOD: Thank you, Mrs Collin, for bringing attention to the facts. I would like now to explain. I was not referring to the

ILO convention No.111. Those of us here who worked for the Equal Pay Council, which had representatives from 30 organisations on it, know how and why that was ratified. I was referring to the one that originally came through the third committee of the United Nations as DADAR - the Declaration Against Discrimination Against Women. That is something quite separate. That is the United Nations convention. We can still go on with that.

I had not meant to make a debate. I want to say "Thank you", but we well know why it came about when it came about. It was because we had taken for so many years so many submissions to the Leader of the Opposition, Mr Whitlam, that he said when his government came in, one of the first things he would do was to see that that convention was ratified. He therefore appointed a woman judge to the court. He therefore put in a government submission to the court and he therefore saw that the equal pay and No.111 against discrimination against women in employment were ratified.

I am referring to the United Nations convention, which is quite another matter. This is a lifetime struggle on the part of the organisations I have been attached to, and we are very well au fait with all of it. What I do want to do is supplement what Mrs Collin said, and that is this: There is another matter in regard to the Williams report. It refers to Murdoch University. Murdoch University is totally innovative. It is interdisciplinary and it set up the first women's studies department under the Department of Social Inquiry in the University of Murdoch. It also was intended to set up a department of study of conciliation of disputes in order to settle affairs; to international recourse of conciliation and arbitration and not by taking matters to war. It was to be a peace studies course. These interdisciplinary courses are very important and if we are incorporated under the University of Western Australia, as has been suggested for reasons of shortage of the number of students at Murdoch, and just made to be agricultural at Murdoch - agricultural and veterinary, with specialised courses - then we are going to lose the opportunity for mature women. What Murdoch's innovative courses again were were courses for mature women with children, and quite a number went to Murdoch to begin with but, for one reason or another, have had to drop out.

To lose Murdoch would be disgraceful because it is only the second university in Western Australia and because of its innovatory and initiative processes. It is women who will suffer most because it is women who are benefiting by the part-time and mature-age courses which Murdoch provides.

CONVENOR: Irene, I'm sure you won't let it go.

I think Jan would like to make some comments about the remark Mrs Collin made.

MS MARSH: Basically to agree Australia has ratified convention 100,



which is the Equal Pay convention. That followed the granting by the Conciliation & Arbitration Commission of equal pay, but in fact we don't have equal pay in Australia; that is, if you take a broad definition of "pay" and include things such as over-award payments, overtime, fringe benefits, superannuations and all the sorts of things which in fact people take home, or potential pay. It is a myth to say that men and women do have equal pay. But in terms of the award provisions we do have equality. That has been achieved and we have ratified that convention.

Convention 111 rightly was ratified following the setting up of the discrimination committees, and that was all that was needed to in fact be able to ratify that convention, and there is in fact a national Discrimination Committee and people in Western Australia have access to that committee or to the State one (there is one in each State, including Western Australia), and I think Pat Giles used to be a member of the Western Australian State one. She was the chairman. (Sorry, Pat.)

I just can't stress the importance of using either the national or the State Discrimination Committee in this State, given that we haven't got legislation here.

In terms of the United Nations, I think there is a declaration which has been around for some time. I might be wrong on this. There is now a draft convention and I think that is the area that we are working to now; to get us to either accede to or ratify it - and I think that is the important scheme; discrimination legislation on a national level, to in fact be able as a country to play a large part in ratifying that United Nations convention.

CONVENOR: Thank you, Jan. We are getting near the end of our time, so could I ask the next few people with questions to be as brief as possible?

SPEAKER: I had no intentions of speaking tonight. I came as an observer. However, I wish to revert to the lass over here about welfare. Mrs McConnell I understood to say that 23 per cent went on Social Security. I understand in that that you were only just making a statement, but this lass over here is right in what she is saying. There is more in it than meets the eye, because it is a fact that these girls have been told (and it has been brought to me as a lay person) that they are living on taxpayers' money.

Some of these girls through no fault of their own are on welfare, and it is hard enough being on welfare and it is alright if a girl who is on welfare can stick up for herself, but what of the very young girls? That's all I wish to say.

CONVENOR: Thank you, madam. We do take your point.

MS NORMA SHAW: I represent the 99 per cent of women who aren't here. You have all talked a lot to me about committees and groups, and I don't represent any committee or any group. I came here to see what women are doing for women and what women want. Most of us are very, very concerned. We are doing jobs. We have children. We have husbands and we carry on. I think the fact that this was publicised - - I never even knew we had a Women's Advisory Committee until today, and I came here to see what was what.

What comes to my mind is that there are many, many different groups of women and none of them know exactly where we are going. One person wants money for education, one wants it for welfare. What the Advisory Committee (I beg your pardon here) is advising you to do is to sort out all these factions because women are against each other. They are against each other. We have not got any guidelines. If we employed these things in business, we would be in a mess. Firstly we have to develop some priorities. That's all. Women should get together with their priorities. You can't have all the money that is in the budget. We know that. We have 23 per cent being quoted, and two per cent and four per cent. It doesn't mean anything to me, but I would like to see women get together for what they all want, and get some priorities. Thank you.

(ACCLAMATION)

CONVENOR: All I can say to you is that we are 12 (because, as I told you, two are missing) women with quite different ideals and from quite different backgrounds, and with quite different priorities. We have so far managed to work together, trying to decide which are the best priorities and which are the things that we should do first. We are guided in some of our priorities by some of the requests we receive from government, and this is why we have spent a great deal of time seeing how we could help migrant women - because we were asked by government to do this.

We also, as we told you, initiated some research (as we told you) into the problems of the woman at home. We have also suggested that the government give money towards another group of women who are investigating problems of women in the workforce. All told, we are trying to do as much as we can for all women and be accessible to all women.

There is no way that every woman is going to have the same ideals, because we are all different people, and the best thing that we feel we can do is to try and sort out what the things are which are most needed urgently in the community and try and do something about them. As I said earlier, it's only by hearing from you all that we can really resolve which are the things

that are needed most in the community. There is only one "cake", as it were, and all we can do is hope that it is divided up fairly - and any recommendations that we put to government we only put because of the feedback we get from you.

That probably isn't helping you but that is about the best I can say. I think before we close, there are just a few things that we would like to ask your help about. One of our jobs as a council is to help the government with its activities in the Mid Decade for Women - the middle of the decade which started in 1975 with International Women's Year. This is a programme where there will be a series of conferences. Hopefully there will be some in this State and then there will be a national conference and a world conference. I think one of the panel would like to just speak to you for a couple of minutes about this, and perhaps it might be Dee. Would you like to do this?

MS BOSS-WALKER: I don't seem to have much choice!

Beryl put it in a nutshell. The United Nations is holding a conference, which is going to be in June or July next year, and we are responsible for the national plan of action; the council is responsible for the national plan of action. Each State is devising means whereby it can send delegates to a national conference which we propose to hold in February in Canberra. Each State is going about it in different ways. Hopefully it will be regionalised so that we can get as wide a representation as possible.

We are putting together a national plan of action for discussion which will be made into a pamphlet form and which will be distributed before we hold all these meetings in regional areas, and from those meetings and from the delegates we will be able to formulate a national plan of action which can then be taken to the United Nations conference next year.

CONVENOR: Would anyone like to ask any questions about that?

SPEAKER: I like to ask about how we are going to get women to these conferences, because one of the problems with women is lack of money. Some people can be very effective in their own State but unless you have that contact between States, and perhaps the world even, you don't get that sense of solidarity when you are all working together for the same aim.

MS BOSS-WALKER: The delegates to the national conference will be funded by the council. That means their accommodation and their air fares (which, of course, to you is very relevant, and to most isolated places will be - the Northern Territory as well) so the delegates won't have to put into their own pockets. That is what we are very aware of. People

who are very effective in their own communities may not have to (and should not have to) dip into their own pockets all the time to make their voices heard - and so that is our responsibility; to get those delegates to that national conference.

SPEAKER: Might I ask what number of delegates will be permitted to go from each State to the conference and how they will be chosen?

CONVENOR: That will be more or less up to each State - how they will be chosen. As yet we have not been able to work out the numbers. The Department of Home Affairs, which we are part of, and the Foreign Affairs Department have to put a joint submission into Cabinet, asking for money for this exercise, specifically for the conference. We are waiting on exactly how much money it will be, but it is very important to make sure there is sufficient money to bring people from States such as Western Australia.

I don't know whether Karen or Sue might have any further information on this. (No, that at this stage.) We are still working on this. We did have a meeting with the Foreign Affairs Minister, Andrew Peacock, about 10 days ago and he was very happy with the arrangements we were making and was very enthusiastic about what we are trying to do. As you know - those of you who write to governments - "things hasten slowly". We just have to keep on. Sue will know what is going on just as soon as we do and she will no doubt let you all know.

MS BROAD: If I could just say a few words, I did convene (I won't say a "meeting") a small group of women last Friday night. Because we don't have a State Women's Advisory Council here, someone had to get things moving and I got a small group of women together last Friday night. I won't say we have actually formed a committee but I will say that we have a working party from which we hope a committee will be formed to help organise things in Western Australia.

We have made an approach to the State Government for funds towards running a State conference. Whether we will have regional conferences or not is yet to be decided, and how these will be funded, or if we will try to help fund people to a State conference; but a move has been made and I suppose I could say at this stage that we are waiting for an answer from the government to see whether we will get any funding from them or not before we know how we can go about organising anything further.

CONVENOR: Is there anything further on that?

SPEAKER... (away from microphone)... committee this time, regarding funds and the allocation of funds that are coming from

the Commonwealth to this State, the allocation of \$50,000. There were submissions put in to the Commonwealth on how to spend this money. Three of them were approved. There have been no letters sent out to say that in writing, and if this money is not spent and allocated for the purposes which were drawn up in the submission, I believe it goes back into revenue. Could you do some query on that?

CONVENOR: I don't think I know much about it, but Dee might because she is involved in the IVOC.

MS BOSS-WALKER: Could you tell me how you know that you have got the allocations for those three projects?

SPEAKER: Apparently by word of mouth. This came up at a meeting the other day.

MS BOSS-WALKER: Through Social Security? Because Senator Guilfoyle has to O.K. everything that goes through.

SPEAKER: I believe there was definite approval for three of the submissions but we have not got the money yet.

MS BOSS-WALKER: You have not got the money yet?

SPEAKER: That's correct.

CONVENOR: But have you got the approval in writing?

SPEAKER: That's what we are looking for.

MS BOSS-WALKER: It was my understanding that the State didn't put any money at all into IVOC.

SPEAKER: There have been submissions which have gone from this State, too, and there has been an approval, as I understand it, of three of the submissions.

CONVENOR: What we are getting at is - how do you know they have been approved? Have they been approved in writing?

SPEAKER: They have not been approved in writing and this has been put in as a formal request. We are getting rather anxious because we have only the May meeting to go before we get to June, and then on 30th June the money goes back into revenue.

MS BOSS-WALKER: It is not my understanding that the money will go back into revenue because there aren't very many projects at the moment which have been O.K.'s from the hundreds which have been put up from each State, so I would be very cautious about saying that it will go back into revenue. I would say that it is still available after June.

CONVENOR: We have somebody down here who has probably got some information.

SPEAKER: There is one other thing for the International Year of the Child. Could I address this question to perhaps the lady in blue?

I believe there is some talk of maintenance and child support being cut out. Could you please clarify that situation? Is there a bill going through parliament at the moment?

MS BRYCE: No. I haven't heard anything as to that; nor has the council. I think perhaps what you are talking about is the fact that some organisations have made submissions to the joint parliamentary committee to this effect - that maintenance be cut out because of the great difficulties in enforcing maintenance rulings of the courts. That is seen by some organisations as a solution to this massive problem. That certainly is not the council's view, but I think perhaps there have been press statements from organisations on that and I think it is something very much floating up in the sky and that's all.

SPEAKER: Could you please tell me if it is unconstitutional that Western Australia have a different application of the Family Law Act in this matter? - because I understand that s.51(22) relates to marriage and divorce as a Commonwealth issue.

MS BRYCE: As a Queensland lawyer I am certainly not going to comment on Western Australian laws, I can assure you.

CONVENOR: (Could you bring the microphone down here?) We might get that International Year of the Child business clarified.

MS JOAN POPE (Children's Activities Time and Australian Youth Performing Arts Association): I am not representing the IYOC but the grapevine in Perth is a pretty effective one. The situation is that with the IYOC funding, there was \$50,000 made available to each State through the Commonwealth funding. There was also a seeding grant, we believe, of \$4,000 available for projects. This State Government has not matched that seeding grant and so effectively it has been returned. It would be very doubtful if there could be any retrospectivity in regard to that, even at this stage.

The general feeling is that out of some 30 or so applications which presumably should be being treated with some degree of confidentiality and clearly aren't, there were three, we believe - "we" as an ordinary person and not as a committee member - which did receive the approval of a recommendatory committee. Presumably they have not met with the recommendation of the State minister concerned, who would in turn pass it on to Senator Guilfoyle. The delay is lamentable. These applications were in in August and September of last year, and for a slogan for IYOC that said "Coming, Ready or Not" it's getting really very disappointing. I think many of us in Western Australia are just attempting to rationalise the situation by saying:

"Oh well, there's a lot of money being spent on Top Hat for 150th celebrations and perhaps that's all we can do with it at the moment."

MS BOSS-WALKER: Can you explain it to me? I'm not quite sure. Have the three projects you are talking about got up to Senator Guilfoyle?

MS POPE: They may have, but I don't believe they have been forwarded from the relevant Minister in this State. But there is a degree of doubt as to whether internal revenue will in fact absorb that \$50,000.

MS BOSS-WALKER: No.

MS POPE: I know it is getting into a detailed area for you, but it is something - because many of the people who are concerned with IYOC projects are women, and often confused, inarticulate and ineffective - with a degree of disappointment in this State particularly.

CONVENOR: Dee, as you heard, is very involved with this and I am quite sure she will do a little bit of a follow-up here and see just exactly what the position is.

SPEAKER: The three projects have not gone....(away from microphone)....

CONVENOR: Thank you. That, of course, is out of our area.

Ladies and gentlemen, I am terribly sorry but I think we will have to close down. We can't be here all night, as you could imagine. I do want to thank you all very much for coming to meet with us. If any of you have any special things that you still wish to speak about, we won't be darting out the door ahead of you. Also, if anybody is interested to have a copy of this pilot scheme from Knox, if you would like to come up someone will give one to you.

Thank you all for your attention. I hope you have signed the paper and I hope we will hear from you many times. Thank you.

(ACCLAMATION)

MEETING CLOSED AT 10.15 P.M.

-o0o-