

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Tuesday 10 October 2000

Mr Speaker (The Hon. John Henry Murray) took the chair at 2.15 p.m.

Mr Speaker offered the Prayer.

ASSENT TO BILLS

Assent to the following bills reported:

Smoke-free Environment Bill
Plant Diseases Amendment Bill
Westpac Banking Corporation (Transfer of Incorporation) Bill

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

Precedence of Business: Suspension of Standing and Sessional Orders

Motion by Mr Whelan agreed to:

That standing and sessional orders be suspended to allow:

- (1) the Premier to move a motion at the conclusion of question time congratulating all persons involved in the preparation and staging of the Sydney Olympic Games; and
- (2) the following speaking times to apply:

Premier	-	unlimited
Leader of the Opposition	-	unlimited
Minister for the Olympics	-	unlimited
Shadow Minister for the Olympics	-	unlimited
All other members	-	15 minutes each.

PARLIAMENTARY STAFF OLYMPICS EFFORTS

Mr SPEAKER: Before the House deals with other Government business, I want to acknowledge the efforts of the parliamentary staff over the Olympic period. Members may not be aware that over the last 2½ weeks the Parliament has hosted over 4,500 members of the Olympic family, including the competitors and officials from the United Kingdom, New Zealand, Saudi Arabia, Zimbabwe, Palestine, Kazakhstan, China, The Ukraine, Macedonia, Switzerland, Ghana and St Lucia, as well as the national Olympic committees of the United States of America, New Zealand, Slovenia, Slovakia, Germany and the United Kingdom.

Also, the International Court of Arbitration for Sport chose Parliament House for its official function, and a number of visiting heads of State were also hosted. Many parliamentary staff gave up their own Olympic tickets to be available to ensure that the teams enjoyed their experience at the New South Wales Parliament. I would like to personally thank David Draper and Maureen Morgan for their management of the Olympic functions. The catering staff did an outstanding job for the entire Olympic period. I know David and Maureen both gave up tickets they had purchased for Olympic events to look after our international guests.

I also acknowledge the efforts of the Parliamentary Security Services Manager Nigel Mulvey, and his team, who acted professionally and efficiently during the Games. On one evening there were over 1,000 people at four different Olympic functions in the building, and security managed this task with ease. Members will agree that the parliamentary building looked its best for the Olympic period, and that is due to the work and commitment of Stafford Bennett and the Building Services staff. Finally, I thank the attendants from both Houses, who provided tours for many of our international visitors and assisted in hosting members of the Olympic family whilst they were visiting Parliament House. I am sure all would agree that the staff did a magnificent job.

REGISTER OF DISCLOSURES

Mr SPEAKER: In accordance with clause 21 of the Constitution (Disclosure by Members) Regulation 1983, I table a copy of the Register of Disclosures by Members of the Legislative Assembly being ordinary returns as at 30 June 2000.

Ordered to be printed.

AUDIT OFFICE

Report

The Clerk announced, pursuant to the Public Finance and Audit Act 1983, the receipt of the Performance Audit Report entitled "NSW Department of Transport—Management of Road Passenger Transport Regulation", dated 6 September 2000.

JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE UPON ROAD SAFETY

Report

The Clerk announced the receipt of the report entitled "Report of a visit of inspection to Europe and North America by a delegation of the STAYSAFE Committee, 3 March 2000-24 March 2000", dated 20 August 2000.

PETITIONS

North Head Quarantine Station

Petition praying that the head lease proposal for North Head Quarantine Station be opposed, received from **Mr Barr**.

State Taxes

Petitions praying that the Carr Government establish a public inquiry into State taxes, with the objective of reducing the tax burden and creating a sustainable environment for employment and investment in New South Wales, received from **Mr Debnam** and **Ms Hodgkinson**.

Orange Police Station Upgrade

Petition praying that consideration be given to the upgrading of Orange police station from category three to category two, received from **Mr R. W. Turner**.

Manly Hospital Paediatric Services

Petition expressing concern at the decision of the Northern Sydney Area Health Service to discontinue paediatric services at Manly Hospital and praying that full services at Manly Hospital be maintained, received from **Mr Barr**.

Wallsend After Hours Primary Care Service

Petition praying that assistance be provided to enable the continuation of after hours primary care services to residents of Wallsend and surrounding districts, received from **Mr Mills**.

Macksville Hospital Funding

Petition praying that sufficient recurrent funding be allocated to Macksville and District Hospital to enable restoration of hospital services to the level that existed prior to cutbacks instituted by the Mid North Coast Area Health Service, received from **Mr Stoner**.

Non-government Schools Funding

Petition praying that the Government reimburse the \$5 million in funding that has been withdrawn from non-government schools and reverse its decision to withdraw a further \$13.5 million in funding in 2001, received from **Mr Hazzard**.

Yass Public School Special Support Unit

Petition praying that the Government reverse its decision to close the special support unit at Yass Public School and that it guarantee the continued existence of the unit to permit educational security for students, parents and staff, received from **Ms Hodgkinson**.

Darnick Train Services

Petition opposing the closure of the passenger train services to Darnick railway station, received from **Mr Black**.

Pittwater Road, Narrabeen, Speed Limit

Petition praying that a speed limit of 60 kilometres per hour be introduced on Pittwater Road, Narrabeen, received from **Mr Brogden**.

Ku-ring-gai Municipality Transport Study

Petition praying that a comprehensive transport study be undertaken to investigate and recommend short- and long-term solutions to problems caused by increased traffic movements in Ku-ring-gai municipality, received from **Mr O'Farrell**.

Windsor Road Upgrading

Petitions praying that Windsor Road be upgraded and widened within the next two financial years, received from **Mr Merton**, **Mr Richardson** and **Mr Rozzoli**.

Pambula River Bridge

Petition praying that the bridge over the Pambula River be replaced to provide a permanent, flood-free access over the Pambula River, received from **Mr R. H. L. Smith**.

Warrell Creek Pacific Highway Realignment

Petition opposing the Roads and Traffic Authority's design and access arrangements for the realignment of the Pacific Highway at Warrell Creek and praying that the House rejects the authority's proposal and provides proper access to nearby properties, received from **Mr Stoner**.

Kempsey and Macksville Pacific Highway Upgrade

Petition praying that the House improve safety on the Pacific Highway and fast-track the proposed bypassing of Kempsey and Macksville, received from **Mr Stoner**.

Export of Puppies to Asia

Petition praying for opposition to the export of puppies to Asia, received from **Mr Amery**.

National Parks Entry Fees

Petitions praying that the proposal to introduce a \$6 entry fee per car per day into national parks be rejected, particularly in Bundjalung National Park and Iluka Nature Reserve, received from **Mr Fraser**, **Mr George**, **Mr Piccoli**, **Mr Souris** and **Mr Stoner**.

State Environmental Planning Policy No. 5

Petition praying that a moratorium be placed on State Environmental Planning Policy No. 5, received from **Mr O'Farrell**.

MINISTRY

Mr CARR: In the absence of the Minister for Public Works and Services, and Minister Assisting the Premier on Citizenship, the Minister for Transport, and Minister for Roads will take questions on his behalf.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

Mr SANDY HOLLWAY INTERNATIONAL OLYMPIC COMMITTEE AWARD

Mrs CHIKAROVSKI: My question without notice is directed to the Premier. In view of the community goodwill generated by the Olympic Games and the Premier's public support for Sandy Hollway, when will the Premier formally advise President Samaranch that the people of New South Wales would be delighted if the International Olympic Committee upgraded its award of appreciation to Mr Hollway from silver to gold?

Mr CARR: It is a matter of public knowledge that the Minister for the Olympics and I have different views on this matter. But one thing about which no-one in this House will disagree is this: The Games that we have just been through were, to the great credit of the people of this State, the best in Olympic history. The people who deserve credit for this, the people who deserve gold, are the people of New South Wales, who stood with us right through the long, drawn-out and sometimes difficult period of putting the Games together. We will pay tribute to them in full detail when the House debates the motion I will place before it after question time. For his part Sandy Hollway, a man always of modesty, has said very clearly that he does not seek further recognition. He got the gold he wants, which is the gold the public has extended to all involved with the Games—not least the Minister, who, to his great credit, can report to the people of New South Wales and to this House on Games that have been acknowledged by everybody in the world who takes an interest in these things as the best they have ever seen.

OLYMPIC AND PARALYMPIC GAMES VOLUNTEERS

Mr W. D. SMITH: My question without notice is to the Premier. What is the Government's response to the fantastic effort of the volunteers during the Olympics and the upcoming Paralympics?

Mr CARR: The question comes, of course, from a member who served as a volunteer during these Games. I thank him for his efforts. He would be the first to concede that he was only one, if the Paralympics are included, of a total of 62,000 Australians who have served or will serve as volunteers.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I call the honourable member for Murrumbidgee to order. I call the honourable member for Murrumbidgee to order for the second time.

Mr CARR: Let me disclaim any credit drawn only to this State. The thing I noticed about the volunteers is that they came from all over this country. I met volunteers from Western Australia. There were volunteers from the bush as well as from the city.

Mr Armstrong: And Condobolin.

Mr CARR: And Condobolin. Condobolin was very prominent in the volunteer ranks. Far from these Sydney Games being some sort of example of city-country divide, what is very apparent from the volunteers from rural New South Wales is the loads of goodwill demonstrated by the people of rural New South Wales—indeed, rural Australia—to a great Australian effort. More than 40,000 people from all walks of life marched as one through our Olympic city on Thursday. They gave up their time to make the Sydney Olympics the best ever. We all know the facilities, the planning and the transport were first class. The weather, for which I disclaim any credit, was outstanding and the competition was unforgettable.

But our volunteers were the people behind the Games. The Games could not have been as successful as they clearly were without the efforts of the volunteers. The volunteers presented to the world as confident,

capable and willing people driven by the best and happiest of ideals. They showed visitors and locals alike how satisfying it is to be part of a great collective effort and to help others. The volunteers provided medical, security, spectator, transport and games services; they also worked as technical officials. At every turn there was a helpful person ready to give directions. Nobody could have become lost in any of the Olympic venues. It was impossible for a visitor to our city from overseas or from interstate not to find his or her way around.

Members will remember the hot, humid first Saturday: hundreds of people were driving to the Norwest Business Park in Sydney's west to take buses to Olympic Park, the equestrian centre at Horsley Park and the mountain bike course at Fairfield. Volunteers were directing cars in the hot sun and guiding people to the right bus stops. The temperature was almost 30 degrees and there was very little shade. One would expect even the most dedicated volunteers to be tired, hot, bothered and thirsty at times. But that was not possible in Sydney. A young family was helped with its pram. Cheerful directions were given to the waiting buses, along with a chat about the afternoon sport. During the 17 days of competition the St John Ambulance volunteers treated almost 11,000 people.

The Minister for Education and Training reminds me that many of the volunteers were teachers. While walking in the Royal Botanic Gardens at lunchtime I met a teacher from a Bankstown school, who said, "I am a volunteer during the Games." In other words, this primary school teacher gave up her holidays to be at the Games, presenting a friendly and happy image of Australia. At one of the rowing events at Penrith I met a volunteer who was a teacher of hearing-impaired children in a Penrith primary school. She was giving up her school holidays to work in the hot sun for Australia. The TAFE training is very significant. Everybody noticed that the volunteers were the best trained they have ever encountered at any Olympics. TAFE did the training. I am sure the training package, the approach to training at least, will be taken up by cities who host future Games. One volunteer was quoted in the press as saying:

I became a volunteer not to be praised but to give something back to the community ... I will go home with no medal in hand but the experience and memories of the Games, the friends I made. The pride burning in my heart for the Games' success is worth more than all the gold medals won by the greatest athletes of the world.

That is the spirit of the volunteers. Following the Paralympics I will write to every volunteer, applauding their efforts and informing them how they can become involved in next year's International Year for Volunteers. We have a great tradition of volunteering in Australia. That tradition is being continued now in the fighting of bushfires around the State. I think at one time 90 bushfires in different parts of New South Wales were being fought by volunteers of the Rural Fire Service. Surf lifesaving is another example of the volunteerism which underpins life in this State. The State Emergency Service is yet another example of a volunteer organisation on which we are so dependent in moments of great stress.

In the International Year for Volunteers the Government will step up activities designed to encourage people to enlist in volunteering. Our plans include awards for active citizenship in country towns, recipients to be nominated by local councils and local members of Parliament. A series of volunteer expos will be held in conjunction with local government across the State which will reveal the opportunities for volunteering in local communities. Before that, however, another great volunteer mobilisation must be addressed. It is the second-largest peacetime volunteer mobilisation. I refer to the 15,000 volunteers for the Paralympic Games, which start next Wednesday. I know those volunteers will do a great job.

The *New York Times* wrote, "The Games were great, but the Australian people were even greater." International Olympic Committee President Samaranch described the volunteers as the most dedicated and wonderful volunteers ever. He is right. The State and this House will be forever in their debt. Today I can announce, with the assistance of a sponsor, that the Government will strike a medallion to thank our volunteers. The Leader of the Opposition had a good idea. I want to continue the spirit of bipartisanship in this House by acknowledging unstintingly the value of the suggestion put forward by my good friend the Leader of the Opposition. I underline the fact that the Government is seeking a sponsor or sponsors. The spirit of the volunteers is such that they would bridle at any suggestion that the cost of the proposed medallions, which is likely to be as much as \$1 million, would be paid for out of taxpayers funds.

That is the last thing they want; it would undermine the concept of their volunteer effort. The Government is quietly confident that sponsors can be found in the private sector to make this gesture possible. There are enormous logistical problems involved in distributing a memento to tens of thousands of people, but we will work at practical solutions at no cost to taxpayers. The Government wants a fitting tribute to the men and women who did us proud. In this instance I thank the Leader of the Opposition for a great suggestion. As the Opposition well knows, a good idea out of the Opposition will always be appropriated by a Government ever ready to listen to constructive criticism in the pursuit of the better government of this great State.

AUSTRALIAN LABOR PARTY ELECTORAL CORRUPTION ALLEGATIONS

Mr SOURIS: My question is directed to the Premier. Can he assure the public of this State that no systematic electoral corruption is practised in the New South Wales branch of the Labor Party, following revelations of widespread fraud involving the Australian Labor Party in Queensland and serious allegations raised in New South Wales involving senior ALP figures in the Illawarra?

Mr CARR: One would have to ask Kerry Jones, who is surely an authority on these things, about practices in the Liberal Party which I have long been persuaded are less than wholly savoury. If I were aware of any criminality—and the Leader of the National Party is talking about criminality—I would be duty bound to report it to the police; it is as simple as that. Honourable members can rest assured that the minute I become aware of criminal activities, no matter what side of politics they are expressed in, that evidence will go to the police, the Independent Commission against Corruption or any other relevant investigatory body. I hope that every member of this House would feel similarly bound. In fact, there is an obligation on any member who is aware of criminal activity or tampering with a ballot or with the enrolment of electors to do precisely that. The member should feel duty bound to report it immediately to the police.

SYDNEY 2000 PARALYMPIC GAMES

Mr THOMPSON: My question without notice is addressed to the Minister for the Olympics. What is the latest information on planning for the upcoming Paralympic Games?

Mr KNIGHT: A little over a week ago Sydney, New South Wales and Australia completed staging what has been widely regarded as the world's best Olympic Games ever. However, the job is not yet finished. We have only finished stage one; stage two is still to come. Our job will not be finished until we have run an equally successful Paralympic Games. That is why, as an unabashed fan of Paralympic sport, it is my pleasure to inform the House of the state of planning for the Eleventh Paralympic Games. In terms of the number of athletes, the Sydney 2000 Paralympic Games are the second largest sporting event in the world. It is worth repeating that they are bigger than the Winter Olympics and the Commonwealth Games.

They will bring 4,000 athletes from 125 countries to Sydney. Indeed, many of these athletes are already here and are engaged in pre-Games training. Also in training are the 15,000 Paralympic volunteers. We all acknowledge that it was the enthusiasm, warmth and hard work of the volunteers who helped make the Olympics so special, and I know that the Paralympic volunteers are equally as committed as their Olympic counterparts and will ensure a successful Games. Indeed, many volunteers at the Paralympic Games are Olympic Games volunteers who are backing up.

With the Paralympic Games to begin in eight days time, on 18 October, no doubt we will have a repeat of the great outpouring of enthusiasm and community support that we most recently saw with the Olympic Games. Already the response of the Australian public to the Paralympic Games has been fantastic, and it is growing stronger every day. The Paralympic torch relay has visited other State capitals and has been very well received wherever it has gone. It will arrive back in our State on Thursday and will travel through the southern highlands, skirt around Sydney and up to Newcastle before returning to Sydney via the Central Coast. I certainly urge everyone to line the streets and cheer the Paralympic flame as it comes past.

I can also happily report to the Parliament that the public's enthusiasm for the Paralympic Games is translating into strong ticket sales. The opening ceremony no longer has any tickets for sale, and the closing ceremony, which is the last event of the whole 60-day festival of Sydney 2000, is also selling strongly. For the sporting competition, there is a dual system of ticketing. Reserved seats to a number of heavily-in-demand events can be purchased. Some of this reserved seating has already been completely sold out at a few key events, such as the men's wheelchair basketball medal games.

Most importantly, we have introduced the unique concept of a day pass to take advantage of the fact that 14 of the 18 Paralympic sports will take place at Sydney Olympic Park. The day pass, which costs only \$15 with a concession rate of \$8, will allow spectators to visit as many sports as they can on the one day of competition. Seats are allocated on a first-come-first-served basis in the unreserved section for every sport on every day of competition, including those sports for which there is also separate reserved seating.

I would urge those who purchase day passes not to use them to sit in one venue all day watching one sport. Enjoy the smorgasbord of sport that is on offer. Get out and see the full range of sports available. Every

sport in the Paralympic program is equally exciting and equally deserving of support. It would be terribly sad if our smaller indoor venues were overflowing with spectators whilst the stadium and aquatic centre had meagre crowds for their large sizes. At the Atlanta Paralympic Games it was sad to see sometimes only 2,000 or 3,000 spectators watching great athletes compete in final events in a stadium that could house 85,000 people.

I certainly hope that people with day passes will move around, enjoy the stadium experience and support these great athletes. Some of Australia's greatest athletes will be competing in these Games. The incomparable Louise Sauvage, who is undoubtedly Australia's most successful track athlete in the past decade, will compete in four events. In the pool there will be a number of superstars to cheer on. The great Priya Cooper is going for gold in six different swimming events, and Shevon Paton, whom I had the privilege of presenting with the Young Paralympian of the Year award a few years ago, is trying for five gold medals and already has more than 30 world records to her name.

People should go to the wheelchair rugby, which is commonly known as murder ball. It is the only sport I know of, other than motor racing, which has people with panel beating experience on duty at the venue. They should watch one of my personal favourites, goalball, which is a game for the visually impaired. People hurl themselves around the court in order to stop the opposition from getting the ball past them and scoring a goal. The competitors cannot see the ball; they can only hear it because it has bells inside. It is a unique sport, and it is the only sport I have ever watched where the crowd cannot make a noise until a goal is scored, and then the tension erupts into enormous cheering. People should cheer on athletes in every sport. If you thought the Australian team did well in the Olympics, you ain't seen nothing yet.

Australia is aiming to be the dominant nation in these Games and improve on its second-place finish in Atlanta. Until the very last day of competition in Atlanta, Australia's Paralympians led the medal tally and were only pipped at the post by the American team, which was drawn from a population more than 10 times that of Australia. The Paralympic Games will be a great community event. Nowhere is this more evident than in the fact that more than 300,000 school students and teachers will come on school excursions to the Paralympic Games. The majority of those students come from New South Wales and will enjoy a remarkable experience during their visit to the Paralympics.

In conclusion, I want to leave the House with a story from the Atlanta Paralympics which epitomises the spirit of the Paralympic Games and is one reason that I love Paralympic sport. Different sports at the Paralympics are reserved for elite athletes with certain types of disability. For example, wheelchair rugby is for athletes who need to use a wheelchair, while goalball is for athletes with a visual impairment. Boccia is a sport at the Paralympics reserved for elite athletes with cerebral palsy. Within most Paralympic sports there are various categories of the extent of an athlete's disability, and athletes generally compete against others in the same classification group.

In the case of boccia there are three classifications. The athletes with the most physical disability—and I stress that this is a physical disability—are confined to an electric wheelchair. They personally have very few motor skills and have an assistant who places a slide at the direction of the athlete. Some athletes are able to drop the ball into the slide, while others use a stick attached to their head to knock the ball in. Notwithstanding the high level of physical disability, this sport is played with great vigour and the competition is very intense. Prior to the Atlanta Paralympics, Australia had never won a medal in this event.

Two teenagers from Australia, Chris Bignall and Tu Huynh, made the play-off for the bronze medal in the teams category. The pressure on them was intense—they would either become the first Australians ever to win a medal in the sport or go home empty-handed. Chris and Tu approached this task with a combination of classic Australian determination and larrikinism. They looked at how elite Australian athletes in other disciplines, such as swimming's Mean Machine and rowing's Oarsome Foursome, both psyched out their opponents and psyched themselves up. When the competitors were announced to the crowd for the bronze medal play-off, out came Chris and Tu in their motorised wheelchairs, grinning from ear to ear, their heads completely shaved, and carrying a sign proclaiming their nickname: the Gruesome Twosome. Of course they won. What hope did their opponents have?

The story of the Gruesome Twosome represents the spirit of the Paralympic Games: gritty determination to succeed and win, allied with a sense of fun and spirit, of camaraderie, that is sometimes lacking in modern sport. It is those feelings that people will leave the Paralympics with, and it is for those reasons that I urge all Sydneysiders, indeed all people of New South Wales, to support the Paralympics and enjoy a very special experience. But do not do it simply for the Paralympians, much as they deserve your support. Do it for yourselves; you will have a ball.

HOSPITAL WAITING LISTS

Mrs SKINNER: My question is directed to the Premier. In light of the repeated claims of the Minister for Health that waiting times are the measure of success of our hospitals, how would the Premier rate them now that the number of people waiting for more than a year for surgery has blown out from 1,656 to a record 7, 800 since the last election 18 months ago?

Mr CARR: As a measure of this Government's openness, we publish waiting times on the Internet—indeed, I think we are the only jurisdiction that does that. By the way, the highest commendation comes whenever the honourable member visits a region of New South Wales and we get a headline like "Hospital wait list on the improve". We will charter a jet to get her around the countryside. People may not believe this sort of thing coming from the Government—it looks a little like self-praise, almost profligate—but they certainly believe it if the Opposition says waiting times are on the improve. The shadow Minister is implying one message in the bush—in this case, Coffs Harbour—and another message in the House, trying to turn good news into bad. Waiting times vary.

Mr Hazzard: Get it in bigger print next time.

Mr CARR: The honourable member for Wakehurst should workshop his interjections. He could get a motivational speaker in the Blue Mountains to work with him. New South Wales hospitals continue to deliver the world's best performance standards, including consistently having the best record in waiting times in Australia. We are happy to debate these issues at any time.

OLYMPIC AND PARALYMPIC GAMES TRANSPORT

Mr GREENE: My question without notice is to the Minister for Transport. What is the latest information on the transport system's performance during the Olympic Games and preparations for the Paralympic Games?

Mr SCULLY: It is appropriate to congratulate all transport workers and volunteers on a magnificent effort. They have done Sydney and all of New South Wales proud. There are two people who cannot go unmentioned: the co-ordinator general of rail, Ron Christie, for his leadership of the rail agencies; and the chief executive of State Transit, John Stott, for his role in delivering Olympic bus services. During the Olympics I visited more than 30 CityRail stations, the world's biggest bus depot at Regents Park, ferry wharves, and the Transport Operations Centre in the Transport Management Centre of the Roads and Traffic Authority [RTA] at Redfern.

I should like to relate to the House a story about a rail worker whom I met at Central station late on the night of the closing ceremony. He told me that two women and their children who were having chemotherapy treatment were having difficulties getting through the crowds to get back to Westmead, where they required further treatment the following day. He volunteered to drive them, at the end of his shift at Central, to the hospital, and did so. That sort of commitment is typical of the commitment of all our transport workers.

During the Games Sydney's transport was stretched to its limit. More than 38 million journeys were taken on Sydney's public transport. On the biggest day of the Games, Saturday 23 September, more than 400,000 people travelled to Olympic Park by public transport. There were peak hours the likes of which Australia has never seen. Of course, there were some glitches, but they were quickly overcome, usually thanks to the quick response of transport staff. CityRail's task was bigger than that of any other transport provider. There were 30 million passenger journeys—more than double what CityRail would normally expect. At the same time, CityRail provided most of the transport to Olympic Park for the closing ceremony.

The State Transit Authority deserves special recognition for assisting Bus 2000, the Olympic bus provider, by providing at short notice a number of extra buses. In total, State Transit provided 450 buses and hundreds of drivers. More than 20 managerial staff, including the chief executive, also provided managerial assistance to deliver the Olympic bus service. During the Games private or State Transit buses made more than one million passenger journeys to Sydney Olympic Park. The bus drivers were greatly assisted by the navigators. More than 1.2 million journeys were taken on the ferry fleet, which is about three times the usual patronage. The ferries set a new record for the number of passengers carried—as many as 96,000 on 29 September. The previous record was set on 1 January 1901, when Sydneysiders celebrated Federation.

The system of clearways and Olympic routes devised by the RTA and the Olympic Roads and Transport Authority [ORTA] proved very effective throughout the Games. The RTA's Transport Management

Centre at Redfern was the headquarters of the Olympic transport effort, hosting the Transport Operations Centre. Sydney Harbour itself was managed by the Sydney Harbour Operations Centre. I take this opportunity to acknowledge the efforts of all the staff of all the agencies in that operations centre, which ran a seamless operation in terms of managing the harbour, the spectator craft, the hotel ships, the charter vessels, and of course the sailing events.

With the Paralympics yet to come, the job is not yet completed, and it will take some time to evaluate the lessons to be learned. But the great lesson learned was the benefit of greater co-ordination. After the Paralympics, a core group of ORTA staff will be retained in the Department of Transport to ensure the effective co-ordination of major events in the city. Preparations for Paralympic transport are well under way, with ORTA again co-ordinating in co-operation with the transport agencies. As the Minister for the Olympics said, the Paralympics is an event that is to be compared to the Commonwealth Games and the Winter Olympics. In fact, I am advised it is as big as the 1956 Melbourne Olympics. Some 650,000 spectators are expected to attend, and CityRail will operate three separate timetables for the opening ceremony, weekdays and weekends. These timetables will be similar to those used successfully for major events such as the Rugby League State of Origin and the Royal Easter Show.

HOSPITAL WAITING LISTS

Mrs SKINNER: My question is directed to the Premier. In view of the Premier's statement earlier in question time about the supremacy of the State's hospital system, how does he explain the theft of body parts from five deceased people from hospitals in New South Wales, which he admitted earlier today?

Mr CARR: I do not. I cannot. The Minister may be able to.

HUMAN TISSUE RETENTION

Mr MARKHAM: My question is directed to the Minister for Health. What is the Government's response to recent inquiries in North America and Europe into the emerging and long-term retention of human tissue from dead people without the knowledge of their families?

Mr KNOWLES: A member of the Opposition asked a similar question, and I am about to provide an answer, but members opposite want to chatter. For those who might be interested in the report, this serious question deserves an answer.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I call the honourable member for Gosford to order.

Mr KNOWLES: In 1996 a woman discovered that without her consent her dead daughter's heart had been retained at the Bristol Royal Infirmary in the United Kingdom. That led to a public inquiry into that hospital. The most substantial finding was that the hearts of 11,000 children were being held in hospitals across the United Kingdom. Last December 850 organs were found in a storeroom at the Alder Hey Hospital, which triggered an immediate inquiry into whether consent had been given for their retention. That inquiry has been extended to cover all hospitals in the United Kingdom.

Since then, hospitals have been trying to identify the relevant parents and any human tissue and sales. This enormous task has been made doubly difficult where hospitals in the United Kingdom have lost or inadvertently disposed of organs after notifying the next of kin. In Ireland a public inquiry into post-mortems commenced in February. These experiences have sent shock waves not only around the United Kingdom and Ireland but around the world. National inquiries are either about to commence or have commenced in the United States of America and Holland, and I am advised that other countries are gearing up for similar investigations.

There is clearly a need for a similar inquiry to be held in Australia, as there is little doubt that similar practices have occurred here—most likely for decades. It is important to stress that these practices have always been linked to issues surrounding research, teaching and the advancement of medical and scientific knowledge. However, the critical issue relates to the degree of informed consent by the next of kin. As the Bristol inquiry identified, there are two fundamental principles associated with the gathering and retention of human tissue: first and foremost, respect for the deceased and their families; and, second, the value of continued access to human material for the advancement of medical care and treatment.

Preliminary inquiries initiated in New South Wales indicate that the consent forms for post-mortem examinations which are currently given to a next of kin at some of our major hospitals do not evidence approval

for long-term retention of human tissue. In addition to hospitals, it is clear that university medical faculties also hold quantities of organs for extended periods, as do our morgues, and it is uncertain how much, if any, of the human tissue held is identifiable. These circumstances are almost certainly paralleled—I emphasise "almost certainly paralleled"—in all other States and Territories. Whilst the retention of human tissue for these purposes is not unlawful, it is equally apparent that, in contemporary society, legitimate questions need to be addressed concerning the right to know and what constitutes proper and informed consent.

I have written to all other State, Territory and Commonwealth health Ministers seeking a nationally co-ordinated response to questions similar to those asked overseas as to how, and under what circumstances, human tissue can be obtained and retained for medical and scientific purposes. In the United Kingdom consistent information is now contained on post-mortem consent forms which details who is agreeing to the post-mortem examination, their relationship to the deceased, how they want organs, tissues and other body parts disposed of and whether the organs and tissues may be retained for diagnosis, training, medical education and research. Australia should accept no less.

I have requested the immediate development of nationally consistent guidelines to assist the medical and other health professions in relation to the retention and respectful management of human tissue. In the meantime, I have asked the New South Wales Chief Health Officer to immediately commence an audit of New South Wales facilities to identify past and current practices and to comply with contemporary community standards, in particular the need for better informed consent. The Chief Health Officer will do this in co-operation with the appropriate academic institutions and the professional colleges, and will immediately publish interim guidelines for non-coronial post-mortem examinations, with particular reference to long-term retention of human tissue.

It is important to emphasise that many items of human tissue are held by our hospitals and universities as the result of willing donations by many people. They are essential to medical research and crucial for training and finding cures for many of the illnesses that beset us as a society. This is not an attempt to discourage donations but to ensure that donations occur with the full knowledge and agreement of the next of kin. It is also not an attempt to discourage autopsies, which are a fundamentally important part of the investigatory procedures that lead to better health care.

Having regard to the level of concern about this issue in other countries, the Government has established a helpline for members of the public who may be interested in registering their particular concerns and inquiries. The helpline number is 1 300 139 250. Obviously, the line will be unable to provide instant advice on specific cases, but will help people begin the process of inquiry and will link to any required counselling services.

SNOWY RIVER WATER FLOW

Mr D. L. PAGE: My question without notice is directed to the Premier. Given that the final report of the Webster Snowy River water inquiry states that all allocations to the Snowy River above a 15 per cent additional flow would require an offsetting reduction in irrigation diversions, what assurance can he give the House that the proposed water required to boost the Snowy's flow to 21 per cent can actually be achieved through savings within the system alone?

Mr CARR: The best assurance is the positive and supportive reaction of irrigators to the Government's announcement. The irrigators—those most affected west of the Great Dividing Range—have said on record that they support the approach that the Government has taken. When we made the announcement we said that we were intent on protecting and safeguarding the interests of irrigators and honouring the rights of existing water users. I think they would be the first to agree that there are opportunities for greater efficiencies and reform in the system that will enable us to meet the twin objectives of seeing the riverine environment of the Snowy rehabilitated and at the same time ensure that the interests and livelihood of other water users in New South Wales are protected.

DAIRY INDUSTRY DEREGULATION

Mr PRICE: My question without notice is to the Minister for Local Government, Minister for Regional Development, and Minister for Rural Affairs. How is the Government helping dairy communities to adjust to dairy deregulation?

Mr WOODS: I commend the honourable member for Maitland for his commitment to dairy farmers in his electorate. Members on both sides of the House will acknowledge the difficult time that our dairy farmers

are having. I want to add my strong support for the protests by dairy farmers right across Australia against the alarmingly low prices they are presently being offered by supermarkets. The deregulation of the Victorian dairy industry in July this year and subsequent deregulation in other States have led to massive changes in the \$460 million-a-year industry in New South Wales.

I am pleased to announce today that the State Government will provide \$500,000 to help dairy communities adapt to these major changes. This funding comes from the Regional Economic Transition Scheme—a \$5 million-a-year program which was initiated by the Carr Government three years ago. Under that program, dairy communities can examine ways to get their milk products into new markets, obtain assistance for the establishment of new industries or the expansion of existing industries that have the potential to provide job opportunities in those dairy communities, and provide business training for dairy workers who are looking for new opportunities. The Government will be working closely with those dairy communities, particularly in the Northern Rivers, the mid North Coast, the Hunter region and the South Coast as well as the Murray region. That includes communities such as Kyogle, Lismore, Dungog, Singleton, Gloucester, Hastings, Bellingen, Kempsey, Taree, Conargo, Berrigan, Bega Valley, Tweed Valley, Shoalhaven and many others.

As members would be aware, as part of the deregulation a \$1.7 billion industry rescue package was set up, and 1,700 New South Wales dairy farmers will receive some \$192,000 each in order to restructure their operations to compete in the new deregulated market. I want to acknowledge the work of my colleague, the Minister for Agriculture, during this difficult time. He is working closely with the industry as well as putting considerable pressure on the processors and the supermarkets to give dairy farmers a far better deal for their product than they are presently getting.

We on this side of the House have a strong belief that governments have a role in regional development—a statement denied by the Federal Government, which has said that it does not have a role in regional development. We believe that governments need to intervene to ensure that economic growth spreads right across New South Wales and throughout Australia. We do not think one can claim to have a prosperous Australia if prosperity is not spread across the State and the nation. Part of that belief is an acknowledgment that although some communities are growing strongly, others are facing difficult times. That will continue to happen, and as a government we need to have the ability and capacity to lend a hand when it is needed, and that is why this Government implemented the regional economic transition scheme.

This Government has put a regional economic transition scheme in a number of places such as Broken Hill and Eden and it has been significantly successful in some places. We are seeing results from those programs. Earlier this year I informed the House that just in the last year the number of jobs that will be created through the regional economic transition scheme program in Eden exceeded those lost when the Heinz tuna cannery closed its doors for the last time. Only recently I announced \$1 million for the new Cellulose Valley Technology Park in the Northern Rivers. We will work in partnership with local councils and community organisations in those dairy towns most affected to help them to seek out new economic and job opportunities.

We do have that underlying philosophy of a belief in country New South Wales. We have dismissed the notion that markets alone will deliver a fair share for the people of regional and rural New South Wales. We recognise that the Government must intervene if country areas are to receive the level of job creation and growth generated in the cities. We have a broad capacity to offer that assistance to regional communities and to businesses in those communities through local government and in partnership with local government and local industry. I have often said one cannot impose growth and economic activity—the jobs growth that we want—with the knowledge we have in Macquarie Street. We need the knowledge that is out there in the regions, possessed by local people and communities, through local government and local industry, and we need to work in partnership with those organisations if we are to see the growth that we need there. We will continue to work strongly with the regions for that job creation.

Questions without notice concluded.

SYDNEY 2000 OLYMPIC GAMES

Mr CARR (Maroubra—Premier, Minister for the Arts, and Minister for Citizenship) [3.13 p.m.]: I move:

That this House:

- (1) notes the worldwide recognition that the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games were the best ever conducted and expresses its thanks to the many Australians who made this possible including:

- (a) all those responsible for Sydney's successful bid to host the Olympic Games, including the previous Coalition Government;
 - (b) the many hundreds of thousands of people in both paid and volunteer roles who directly or indirectly contributed to the successful delivery of this massive event;
 - (c) Australia's athletes who produced the nation's best ever performance at an Olympic Games; and
 - (d) the people of New South Wales who enthusiastically supported the athletes from around the world, warmly welcomed visitors to our State and accepted the inevitable inconveniences by an event of this size with great tolerance and good humour.
- (2) recognises that New South Wales in particular, and Australia in general, has a tremendous opportunity to build upon the increased international reputation for Australia and Australians and is united in pursuing this potential legacy for the benefit of all citizens of New South Wales.

On the Saturday after the opening ceremony, as Helena and I came down from the Opera House along East Circular Quay, where I talked to people from all over Australia and New South Wales about the style of what promised to be a great Games, the thought occurred to me that here was the happiest people in the world, in the most favoured nation of the world, at the happiest time in its history. How lucky we are to be Australians at this time, and how significant the opportunities are that now greet us. The Olympics were an opportunity to highlight the Australian success story to the world, to show them the kind of nation that Australians from both sides of politics, from all walks of life, from the city and country, have created here.

The nation we have created is one of the longest running democracies in the world. It is one of a handful of countries that has been a democracy from the very start, a multicultural society with strong unifying traditions, with a good, sound, honest and accountable system of government—a society in short that works, with a competitive economy that has been shaped, as I argued in the *Sydney Morning Herald* in an article on 5 October, by a contribution from both sides of national politics since 1983. This is a good time to be an Australian. I think the world senses it because of this huge event, the Olympics.

On the Town Hall steps on Tuesday last week I had the honour of acknowledging the contribution of our athletes. All honourable members of this House could subscribe to the sentiments I was proud to present on the steps of the Sydney Town Hall. I had the privilege of thanking the volunteers last Thursday in the Domain and many members took part in celebrations for volunteers in their communities. The Minister for the Olympics was mobbed by volunteers as he stood in Macquarie Street applauding them as they went by. The goodwill was there. The enthusiasm of people involved in this huge effort was noticeable for all to see. So, we say thank you to everyone involved in this herculean effort. It demonstrated that Australians are great organisers—something for which we have not been given credit in the past and something with which we have not credited ourselves in the past.

I say these Games are a volunteers' Olympics and a workers' Olympics. I visited the Labor Council on Thursday night and I said to that gathering, "I come to this home of the labour movement to thank the workers, the unions and the volunteers who made the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games a resounding success." I pointed out that those 16 great venues had been built on time and on budget by, yes, a unionised workforce; and that the unions had signed up to do so by setting a goal in the memorandum of understanding signed between the Labor Council and the Government on 23 December 1997 of "high-quality delivery of projects within the specified time and cost parameters".

That agreement spelled out that there would be a high premium on workplace safety. There were dozens of workers who lost their lives in building the facilities in Atlanta—in a largely non-unionised or wholly non-unionised work force—and the same, I am told, in Barcelona. But our work force was protected by labour laws that prevail here, by a commonsense relationship between employers and unions that prevail in this State, and by the high priority we gave and the unions gave and, to be fair, management gave. I pointed out when I addressed the Labor Council that Mario Barrios, the CFMEU's delegate at the stadium, ran in the torch relay through Fairfield. He is a member of one of the Fairfield branches. He was followed by 50 children wearing t-shirts that read "My dad built the Olympics."

I do not think that was a reference to Mario in every sense! It indicates, however, the pride of those who worked on and were associated with these projects. There you have it, in this State, Construction, Forestry, Mining and Energy Union members wearing with pride T-shirts that said, "We built the Olympics." I am not being one-sided about this. The management was darned good too. You do not get successful industrial relations without quality management and quality union representation. We had it on those sites. It is a great tribute to the social co-operation we now have in this country. To be honest, we did not have it in the early 1980s or in the mid-1970s. But we have got it now.

One example suffices to make this point, and again it directs credit towards the unions and to the employer organisations. One hundred workers, I am told, could not continue to be employed by one of the caterers out at Homebush Bay. Michael Costa, the Secretary of the Labor Council, rang Bill Healey of the Retail Traders Association and raised this problem with him. Bill Healey told me that he was able to place those 100 workers in the retail industry in Sydney. So the retailers were prepared to offer those jobs. But, just as significantly, the workers were prepared to adapt their expectations and move from the hospitality industry into the retail industry. That is a flexibility and a level of social co-operation we have not had in the Australian system in years past. If you are running a complex, multi-dependent society in the modern era, it is a great asset.

Another strength to emerge in industrial relations is the level of training to which we committed ourselves. By the way, all workers who worked in the venues were unionised. The head of the Liquor, Hospitality and Miscellaneous Workers Union, the branch secretary, said on 12 March 1999, "The Olympic award delivers the best rates of pay for working at an event ever negotiated in Australia." What I realised, when I reviewed this evidence last week, is that we were prepared to pay high wages and, yes, an Olympic bonus to the workers involved in all aspects of this exercise, but, as I said to the workers at Central Railway on the last Friday of the Games, "You earned every cent of it."

That was a highlight of the Olympics for me—going through Central station last Friday with the Minister for Transport and union secretaries Nick Lewocki and George Panigiris. We went around and met the rail workers, and there were a lot of volunteers there as well. The rail workers' faces beamed with pride when the transport Minister and I said to them: "You've delivered. Your effort has been extraordinary. Great on-time running. Great help for the overseas visitors. Everyone is praising you." Some of them were from non-English-speaking backgrounds and wore badges that indicated they spoke Arabic or Greek. It is interesting to reflect on the Australian success story. They were in a new homeland, migrants to Australia, in the work force, in the railways, proud of what their adopted country was doing, and helping visitors along their way and saying in effect, "I'm a signed-up Australian, proud of my cultural heritage of Greece"—or somewhere in the Arab-speaking world—"but I am here able to help you and talk about Australia with pride." That is a great thing. That is a wonderful thing.

So at the Labor Council last Thursday night I went through all the evidence of the contribution that the work force made and of the effort by the police—not only the police who are down here in Sydney working on Olympic sites, showing great skills of crowd management and handling difficult situations, with only a handful of arrests on that last celebratory Sunday night in the city, with perhaps one million people pressed into the city, but the police who held the line, who did the job right across New South Wales where numbers were, of necessity, down. So we pay tribute to them.

The transport contribution was extraordinary. I know the Minister will continue to thank his work force. Then there are the taxi drivers. Remember Houshang ("Call me Harry") Afshar? I read in the paper that he went out of his way to track down a reporter from the *Washington Post* who left expensive camera equipment in his taxi. So I tracked him down and had him drop by the office so that I could congratulate him. He was bursting with pride that he had made a big, acknowledged effort to present Sydney. If I remember correctly, he is from Iran and drives a taxi in Sydney. He went to a lot of trouble to see that an influential overseas visitor got back camera equipment worth tens of thousands of dollars. He was a great advertisement for the country that he is now part of. This was an extraordinary effort.

I mentioned the contribution of TAFE and I mentioned the teachers who were prominent out there at the venues, but I place on record in this House how proud I was to go down and thank the unions on Thursday night for the contribution of the unionised work force. In doing that, I am really saying something about the kind of society Australia has become—one where social co-operation is more the norm than the exception. As a result, we are a competitive society. One source of that competitiveness is our multiculturalism. What was very apparent to anyone who went, as I did every day, to various lives sites around the city and mixed with people and asked them about their Olympic experience was that you could be talking to an Indian family that had been in Australia for only a few years but were permanent residents or citizens, or to people who may have been descended from First Fleeters, and they were all bursting with pride at the opening ceremony and at the plaudits that the Games were getting. It was very touching. They would say things to you like, "The world is saying these are the best Games in the world. Are we going to have them again in 2004?" I was programmed by the Minister to say, "No, we're not." I dampened any expectation that somehow we were going to be part of an exercise to wrest them from Athens.

But I have never seen Australians so united, and united in pride at their country's achievement. It was a unifying experience. All the ethnic communities that are part of this society made a contribution in one way or another. I was able last week to go to a Chinese function in Sydney and talk about their effort to look after visitors from China. That would only be one example. I spoke to the Armenian community during the visit to the Games by their Chief Minister. They were making a huge effort with the Armenian athletes and officials. So it was a unifying experience, an opportunity to send a message to the world about the happy and benign multiculturalism that is part of our life.

The other theme to come out of these Games is that these were very much public sector Games in New South Wales. The Minister for the Olympics said the lesson out of Atlanta was that you had to have the authority, the experience, the clout, the numbers, the finance of a government standing behind the Games, that we could no longer maintain the fiction that the Olympic Games could be a private sector undertaking. I suppose Los Angeles was a happy example of a private sector Games, but the experience since then was such that the Minister recommended to the Government, and the Government was happy to accept his recommendation, that we had to make it clear we were behind them, that we were backing them and were planning them at every point. That is why we asked the people of New South Wales to support us when, in this place, we said the Minister for the Olympics had to be the chair of SOCOG. There was the normal robust controversy about that at the time, but it was a decision that has been totally vindicated.

We could not have pretended this could have been done without the authority of the New South Wales public sector delivering the transport plan and delivering the security. I acknowledge the huge private sector involvement in the Stadium and the SuperDome and in other aspects of the Games, but fundamentally it was a public sector undertaking. That would contradict many views, popular in some circles, that there is no future for the private sector, that everything must be handed over to the private sector if you want efficiency. This was, by any test, a great exercise in efficiency. Public transport, for example, and the security arrangements were great exercises in efficiency. The budget is not that different from the preliminary budget worked up by Ministers Webster and Baird back in the last Coalition Government. When I saw Robert Webster at a business function yesterday I touched on this issue with him. That is an interesting reflection on the expertise brought to bear during this exercise by both sides of politics.

The shape of the Homebush Bay site is not that different from the original planning under a Coalition government and the budgetary outlines are not that fundamentally different. This Government had to move in and do additional things. I think the best example of that is the rail link at Homebush Bay. I am sure that the Minister for the Olympics will address those considerations in detail in his contribution. This vast undertaking reflects credit on governments from both sides of politics in New South Wales. Nothing this big done since the bid was won in September 1993 could have been accomplished without political as well as social co-operation—the co-operation I referred to earlier.

Because I have already had the honour of thanking volunteers, both in the Domain on Thursday and in the House today, the athletes on Tuesday last week and the workers in my address to the Labor Council, I will not trespass on the time of the House by going into further detail. I just want to say, following the announcement by the Minister on Wednesday last week, that for all the controversy he has walked through, my assessment is that these Games would not have been the success that they were without his judgment and his strength, especially at crucial moments in their preparation. In all the major policy issues that we had to address—like the Minister for the Olympics being the chair of SOCOG, the need for a separate Olympic Roads and Transport Authority and the need for an Olympic Co-ordination Authority—the Minister's judgment has been proven right. That recognition is implicit in what President Samaranch took it upon himself to say about these Games being the best ever.

Given the Minister's announcement last week, I warmly applaud him for his huge and special contribution to the success of this great Australian undertaking. He would be the first to add that it is an honour to do something like this for a nation as fundamentally decent as this nation, Australia, and how proud we must all be as Australians that the world has seen something of what we are made of. The world has seen our organisational capacity and the friendliness and co-operation that are woven right through our society. The big ask—volunteerism—which was there in the Olympics, is there also in the bushfire season, on the patrolled beaches, in the orange uniforms of State Emergency Service workers, and throughout Australian life. This is a fair, funny, competitive, decent and happy nation. The world has seen that through the Olympics. For all of New South Wales, a New South Wales that has earned gold, it was a special honour to do this for Australia.

Mrs CHIKAROVSKI (Lane Cove—Leader of the Opposition) [3.33 p.m.]: On behalf of the New South Wales Opposition it is a great pleasure to place on the record our congratulations to everyone involved in the Olympic Games. Undoubtedly they were an enormous success for Sydney, New South Wales and the whole of Australia. For two weeks we saw the energy, enthusiasm and dedication of the people of this great nation and we showcased that to the world. I think it can be said that Sydney truly shone from this massive undertaking. People breathtakingly watched as the spectacle of the opening ceremony unfolded in front of them and they enjoyed the party atmosphere that prevailed at the closing ceremony. In the two weeks of the Olympic Games the people of Sydney, New South Wales and Australia took the Olympics to their hearts and made them their own.

The success of the Games was made possible because so many people put in so much effort over so many years. Of course, the first accolades must go to the athletes because the athletes of Australia performed magnificently. The 628 athletes who made up the Australian team—a record number of athletes—did themselves and their nation proud. Whether they achieved gold, silver or bronze medals, to the credit of this nation they participated in the Games with such enthusiasm. They should all be congratulated no matter where they finished in the Games. Accolades should also go to everyone who worked so hard and so successfully over the past decade and right up to the end of the Games to bring Sydney 2000 to the world. That includes the volunteers and also people like Ric Birch and David Atkins whose creative genius made the Games so special.

As I watched the opening and closing ceremonies I wondered what people in some parts of the world might think of some of our Australian icons. I talked to some of the volunteers who did the tap dancing in the tin sheds. Every Australian who watched the opening ceremony knew what those tin sheds were all about. I was sitting with some Americans who did not have a clue about what was going on. When I explained to them the significance of the tin shed in Australian culture they appreciated the humour involved in it. The other interesting float at the closing ceremony was Priscilla, Queen of the Desert. We all loved the movie and thought it was fabulous, but a few people were quite perplexed about the shoes. When I told them that a lot of the people in the Priscilla float had pulled those dresses out of their wardrobes to wear for the night they were somewhat amused about the fact that they regularly paraded every year in the streets of Sydney at the Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras. A lot of people are probably still a bit perplexed about the way in which we showcased Sydney to the world but all of us enjoyed the party.

The hundreds of thousands of Australians from Sydney, regional New South Wales and throughout Australia who made up the record crowds of spectators did themselves proud. Tributes have to go to the people of this State who outdid themselves as hosts to the world. There was an overwhelmingly positive response from visitors and from the international media representatives to the manner in which visitors were greeted, supported and cared for during their stay in our city. The national pride that was on show to the world was truly unprecedented. The sense of community spirit and enthusiasm engendered during the Games celebrations was remarkable. I am sure that the Games have produced for us all memories that will last a lifetime.

We must remember that the story of Sydney 2000, which unfolded from September 15, began in 1991. It began with a decision and a commitment from Nick Greiner and his Government to seriously bid for the Games. Nick Greiner, Bruce Baird and Rod McGeoch, together with John Coates and the Australian Olympic Committee, drove the bid along. This initial stage, which was critical, saw significant decisions being made without which the enormous success of Sydney 2000 would not have been possible. This included the decision to develop Homebush as the core site, plus the planning and the commitment of funds that gave us the sporting facilities that make Homebush such a unique facility.

Having made the decision to bid for the Games it was obvious that the best chance of success would be to make the bid the blueprint for the best Games ever. The blueprint that Nick Greiner, Bruce Baird, John Coates, Rod McGeoch and then John Fahey created sees us all celebrating today. The Sydney Organising Committee for the Olympic Games [SOCOG], along with John Coates and Nick Greiner, refined and developed that blueprint which provided the links and the constancy between the initial decisions and the successful finale that we all witnessed last month. It was that same blueprint that Michael Knight, Sandy Hollway and David Richmond, with the support of hundreds and thousands of others, finally put into place.

I am deliberately bracketing Michael Knight, Sandy Hollway and David Richmond as a group. They must all be given credit where credit is due, just as they would have been expected to take responsibility if the Games had not gone well, and just as they were expected to take responsibility for problems along the way, such as the ticketing debacle. I am delighted that the Premier agrees with me and is on record as saying that he believes that Sandy Hollway's contribution should not be devalued in the total context of the success of Sydney

2000. Anyone who has had any dealings with Sandy Hollway will know that he is truly a gentleman. In many ways he kept SOCOG together through some difficult times. I say to those who do not believe that his contribution should be properly acknowledged by the International Olympic Committee that they are alone in that debate.

During the volunteers parade on Thursday a number of volunteers made the point of coming up to me with signs they had made which said, "Gold Gold Gold for Sandy." I urge the Premier, as I did in question time today, to do all he can to make sure Sandy Hollway's contribution is acknowledged. I remind honourable members that when Sandy Hollway talked about accepting the accolades, he did so on behalf of the staff of the organisation, that is, SOCOG. He made it very clear that any award for or acknowledgement of his position was because of the staff he worked with. That is the mark of the man. Since 1991 literally hundreds of thousands of people have contributed to the final effort. Those people know in their own hearts the level of their contribution. Each and every person, from those who sold the concept of Sydney 2000 around the world to the 47,000 volunteers who put the icing on the cake last month, can stand tall today.

All of those contributions built on the natural assets that the original bid team identified and which gave Sydney the edge over other cities in the race to stage the 2000 Games. Those assets included the interest in and appreciation of such a wide variety of sports that is such a critical element in the cultural balance of New South Wales and Australia, the availability of an outstanding core site at Homebush, the potential for a variety of world-class venues and facilities to accommodate a comprehensive range of Olympic sports, and our strong multicultural society. That is why it did not matter where those who competed in the Games in Sydney came from; somebody in the crowd was cheering for them. It was quite heartening to listen to the crowd at various events cheering on competitors from around the world. They would go for the Australians first but then they would urge the other competitors to do their best. It was interesting watching Tatiana Grigorieva in her competition.

Mr O'Farrell: Hear! Hear!

Mrs CHIKAROVSKI: I know the male members of the House enjoyed that competition greatly, but at one stage she was competing against a girl from Germany, whom the crowd was urging to do her personal best. It did not matter that at one stage she did not get over the bar; as she ran down the runway the crowd continued to give her a roar. The Australian crowd wanted everyone to do well at the Games, and that is because we are a multicultural country. Whilst we are very much Australian supporters first and foremost, we also acknowledge that people who are seeking to achieve should be encouraged no matter where they are from.

That is something that distinguished the crowds at these Games from the crowds at Atlanta. The overwhelming reason these Games were such a success was the willingness of the New South Wales community to embrace the Olympics at every level. We should not forget the calibre of the field that Sydney beat to win the right and honour to host the Sydney 2000 Games. In the final analysis Sydney was preferred to cities like Berlin, Milan, Istanbul and, of course, Beijing. It was that foundation on which the preparations for the Sydney 2000 Games were built. It was those preparations, which continued throughout the 1990s and up until the time of the Games, that made the Games such a success.

I should like to put on record the Opposition's appreciation of the contribution of all members of the SOCOG board and the staff of SOCOG in bringing us Sydney 2000. As I said, Sandy Hollway was an integral part of that, as were all members of the board. We need to acknowledge their contribution and to thank them for the time and effort they put in. I also acknowledge the contribution made by the Minister. It is true that the Minister has received widespread acknowledgement for his capacity in bringing this enormous project to fruition. I congratulate him on his success, as I congratulate the Premier and the Government on the success of the Games. I congratulate also John Coates and the Australian Olympic Committee. I congratulate every official, every volunteer and every athlete. I note the Premier has been generous in spreading the accolades to all those involved in the success of the Games, and I commend him for that. The wonderful celebration was indeed a massive collaborative effort in every sense, and it would be silly for any one person to try to claim kudos for the event. It would be silly for anyone to try to deny that all who contributed deserve recognition.

Today we focus on the positive and honour those who deserve the accolades. Of course there were mistakes; there were errors and misjudgments. Many of those have been well documented. But let us talk about the enormous undertaking of staging the Games. The cost has been variously placed at between \$7 billion and \$8 billion. I expect when the final figures are done that the total may well be more. The enormous contribution in time, facilities and funds from the public sector that supported the effort has not been properly identified in

SOCOG budgets. The commitment of the public sector, which was referred to in much detail a few minutes ago by the Premier, and the commitment by public sector staff leading up to and during the Games, represent an enormous and as yet still unquantified cost to the public purse. The complex task of transporting, accommodating and organising well over 10,000 athletes from 200 nations was an enormous challenge. Dealing with 5,000 officials, 16,000 accredited media representatives and another 4,000 to 5,000 unaccredited media representatives was an enormous logistic and administrative challenge. The fact that there was mainly favourable coverage from the international and national media is an indication that this enormous task was generally well handled.

The clincher in the success of the Sydney 2000 Games was undoubtedly the volunteers. Around 80 per cent of the 47,000 volunteers came from New South Wales and the Australian Capital Territory, but the remainder came from all over Australia. For instance, around 1,000 came from Western Australia. The volunteers were the heroes behind the Games and they deserve every accolade that has been handed out to them by so many people, including the President of the International Olympic Committee. I say to those who were directing the human traffic at the Homebush Bay precinct that some of them should take up new careers in stand-up comedy. Some of the people sitting in the lifesaving towers and directing traffic were truly very amusing. They were part of the reason that the crowds were as good humoured as they were. These people kept cracking jokes. Again, not all the overseas visitors got the jokes, but they appreciated the humour with which they were being directed.

During my time around the Homebush site I met countless of those volunteers. They never stopped smiling from dawn to dusk. The humour, enthusiasm and friendliness they displayed were priceless. They were immeasurably good for our reputation. Their countless hours of hard work on the ground was an essential element in making sure everything ran like clockwork. Last week I applauded the decision by the Government to hold a special parade for volunteers as a public statement of its appreciation of their efforts. I also proposed, given the extraordinary effort and commitment shown by the volunteers, that it would be fitting for the Government to strike a special commemorative medallion as a small token of appreciation. I am delighted that the Premier has taken up that suggestion. It means that the volunteers will have a lifetime keepsake they can wear with pride as a small thank you for their part in ensuring the Games were the best ever.

Many other people worked around the clock to help stage the Games. The dimensions of the total work force were staggering, with an estimated figure of 130,000, including 80,000 contractor and sponsor staff and more than 3,500 SOCOG staff. The task of staging the Games as a whole and its component parts was enormous. For instance, there was a total cast of more than 12,000 for the opening ceremony, supported by a crew of more than 4,500. Again, accolades in relation to the opening ceremony were heard from around the world. Given the enormous effort that went into staging the opening ceremony, they were truly deserved.

In short, as one would expect in a project of this magnitude, SOCOG handled some aspects very well, some competently, some poorly and some—like ticketing, as we know—appallingly. However, in offering our congratulations today the Opposition acknowledges that the final assessment is that the Games were an outstanding success. We also acknowledge the contribution of the International Olympic Committee. The IOC does not always receive good press. In the past the IOC has had a reputation for being dictatorial and self-focused. Some of those criticisms have undoubtedly been valid. However, I am sure the success of Sydney 2000, combined with the reform program the IOC already has under way, will provide a foundation on which the reputation and standing of the IOC can be significantly improved. I acknowledge and give thanks to John Coates, Phil Coles, Kevan Gosper and all Australians on the IOC for the work they do. I also acknowledge the work of President Samaranch and his executives. In short, the Opposition warmly acknowledges the success of the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games and the role of the IOC in them.

I have left it until last to speak about the athletes. The Olympics are the world's greatest festival of sport. There is no other occasion when so many athletes from so many different countries come to one place to compete in such an enormous range of sports. It was this unique opportunity to experience such a range of sports at elite levels that caught the imagination and won the support of Sydney, New South Wales and Australian sports fans. Attendance at all events outstripped the expectations of the International Olympic Committee and overseas commentators. Public support was unprecedented across the board, and not just at what have been referred to as the glamour events, such as swimming and athletics, but for sports which were not all that well known on Australian soil, such as handball.

Of all the events at the Games which I think Australians had never heard of, handball was the sport that captured everybody's hearts. I was very lucky to have the opportunity to watch the Australian men's handball team in action. When they played Spain they were up against the team which eventually won the bronze medal.

Spain was one of the tough teams in the competition. The Australians were never going to win; they knew they were never going to win but that did not stop them from giving it absolutely everything they possibly could. And the crowd was extraordinary. At the end of the game when the Australians had lost, the crowd got to their feet and cheered them as if they had won. The crowd cheered the Spanish team as well, but they cheered the Australian team as if they had won because they had seen the effort those young men had put in to try to keep the Spanish team to below 40, which is what they did. It was an outstanding effort.

After the game, instead of walking off the court and going to the dressing room, the members of the Australian team stood around for hours signing autographs and being involved with the crowd. That is what it is all about. It is not always about winning; it is about putting in the best effort and saying to the Australian public, "We are here because we want to do what we can to establish our sport and to do our best by you". And those young men certainly did. I congratulate the Australian men's handball team. If there is a sport that this country should take up with enthusiasm and have in every school, it is handball. As someone pointed out to me, all we need to do is take a few AFL players and transfer them to handball and Australia would quickly become a world leader in handball. So to Zoltan Marczinka and the boys in the team: Well done, we look forward to you qualifying and competing in Athens in 2004. The atmosphere in the stadium when those young men were competing was the same as that in all the other Olympic venues.

As we know, the aquatic centre was jam-packed, and the barracking and the involvement of the crowd drew comment and applause from commentators and spectators from around the world. The swimming competitors were unanimous that the atmosphere at the aquatic centre was something they had never experienced anywhere else in the world. Again, that is a tribute to the huge and knowledgeable crowds that flocked to the aquatic centre every night and also to the competitiveness of the Australian team. That competitiveness sparked the crowds, which further lifted the swimmers, which infectiously spread to the other teams present. In all, it was a magnificent spectacle and probably the most successful swimming meet held anywhere in the world. And the memories will linger for a long time: the Australians led by legends such as Susie O'Neill, Ian Thorpe, Michael Klim, Grant Hackett and, of course, Kieren Perkins.

But there were international stars as well—the strong American team and the Dutch stars Inge De Bruijn and Pieter van den Hoogenband. And who could forget Eric Moussambani from Equatorial Guinea, who is now better and much more affectionately known worldwide as Eric the eel? He has become part of the legend of the Sydney 2000 Games. Let me throw in a plug. As honourable members know, I looked after the St Lucian team during the Games. I can report to the House, with great pride, that my two St Lucian 50 metre freestyle swimmers, one male and one female, both did personal bests in our pool, which meant that they both established national records in St Lucia. And they were very proud and excited about that, too.

But it was not only the pool. The athletes in Stadium Australia from around the world were supported dramatically by the Australian crowd. Australians love sport and they love to support people who are out there striving to do their best. Day after day the stadium was filled with constant roars of appreciation for a fantastic run of achievements from the best athletes in the world today. The focus of Australian celebrations was undoubtedly the success of Cathy Freeman in the women's 400 metres. It was a magnificent win for Cathy, for Australia, for the Aboriginal community and for athletics in Australia. Cathy Freeman carried herself with a relaxed and confident dignity that not only won the admiration and affection of Australians but also drew applause on the international stage. As 110,000 people cheered as she ran around that track, I felt as if we had seen the rise of a new and continuing star in athletics.

We were also charmed by the grace and natural poise, as well as the talent and dedication, shown by the likes of Melinda Gainsford-Taylor and Matt Shirvington. There were also new stars bursting on the stage of Australian and world athletics. Who could ever forget the look on jumping Jai Taurima's face when he won that silver medal in the long jump? That boy will certainly win the gold medal in Athens if he gives up smoking. If he can jump that far when he smokes a packet of cigarettes a day, how far could he jump if he gave up smoking? So, Jai, give up the smokes, concentrate on the jumping and the gold will be yours in Athens. I know that all Australians were cheering the achievement of Tatiana Grigorieva in the pole vault.

Mr Fraser: It was wonderful to watch.

Mrs CHIKAROVSKI: As the honourable member for Coffs Harbour says, it was wonderful to watch. But it was not only swimming and athletics. Our achievements were across a whole range of sports. The Premier and I shared the excitement of Australia winning gold at the beach volleyball. The Premier was cheering enthusiastically as Natalie Cook and Kerri-Ann Pottharst won the gold in the beach volleyball. Senator Chris

Schacht, who was in the front row, almost had a heart attack. For those who do not know, he is the president of the women's volleyball association in Australia. As one can imagine, his enthusiasm throughout the tournament had been overwhelming, but when the girls came within a point of winning the gold medal we all got slightly worried because we did not think Chris would cope with the excitement. Having said that, he and I both shared a victory salute that has been captured in a picture somewhere, which shows the level of enthusiasm the politicians in the crowd had for that particular volleyball gold medal.

But it was not only the beach volleyball. Australia also won gold in the equestrian team event. Who can forget Michael Diamond and his incredibly moving tribute to his late father after he won his second gold medal in the trap shooting, or the wonderful surprise when Lauren Burns won gold in tae kwon do? My personal congratulations go to the women's basketball team, the Opals, who achieved the best ever result of any male or female Australian basketball team by winning the silver medal against the Americans. These were wonderful moments. They were wonderful highlights. They were wonderful achievements, and they are achievements on which we can build even greater achievements in the future.

There were some sad moments. We all felt for Jane Saville, who missed out on gold as a result of being disqualified 120 metres from the finish line. We all felt for Matt Shirvington, who was somewhat disappointed that he did not make the final in the 100 metres sprint. I do not know whether one could see it on television, but at the end of his race when he crouched down he looked absolutely devastated. I simply say to Matt, as I said to him the other night, "Your achievement in getting to the semi-final is something which you should be absolutely and completely proud of. All Australia cheered you for getting to that semi-final. You are only 21, you have a lot of time to go, and we know that you will make that final in Athens in four years time, so well done."

I pay tribute to the current Australian sports development programs. Those programs commenced largely after Australia had a disastrous Olympic Games in Montreal. The Fraser Coalition Government made a commitment to establish the Australian Institute of Sport, and I should acknowledge the great work done by Bob Ellicott in bringing the Australian Institute of Sport to fruition. As we know, following the establishment of the Australian Institute of Sport, State-based institutes and other programs have been developed. Successive Federal governments from both sides of politics have built on the original commitment. Today we have a comprehensive and complementary array of development programs that support young, talented athletes. Without that commitment and the hundreds of millions of dollars put in over the years, Australia would not have had the success it enjoyed at the Sydney 2000 Games. The Australian tally of 16 gold, 25 silver and 17 bronze—58 medals in total—would have been impossible without government and corporate support.

The Olympic celebrations in Sydney are far from over. Thousands of Paralympians will soon descend on Sydney to showcase their talents and years of dedication to their chosen sport to compete in the Paralympic Games. As a person who has had more than a decade of involvement with the Cerebral Palsy Boccia Association—and members may recall that the Minister for the Olympics referred to that sport today when he spoke about the gruesome twosome—I have been lucky enough to witness the passion and pride of many Paralympic athletes.

When we talk about the Paralympics people do not understand that our Paralympians are as dedicated, passionate and committed to their sport as the Olympians we have just seen. We need to ensure that we support the Paralympians in exactly the same way we have supported the Olympians. I am delighted to read reports that ticket sales for the Paralympics have been strong, but I urge everyone in the community to share in the amazing spirit and elite competition on offer at the Paralympics. We need to ensure that the goodwill and support that the Australian community demonstrated towards the Olympic Games is carried over into the Paralympic competition that will begin shortly.

In Atlanta there was some justifiable criticism of the level of support for the Paralympic Games. The way the Paralympians were treated was appalling. Their facilities were torn apart after the Olympic Games were over. In the swimming stadium there were holes along the walls where the cabling for the television had been ripped out. The Paralympians were given substandard accommodation. People in wheelchairs had to be lifted onto chairs into baths because there were no showers that were accessible to wheelchairs. That will not be the case in Sydney, and I know that our response to the Paralympics is much better than the response in Atlanta. Let us also make sure that we receive the Paralympians and take them into our hearts in a better way. We must remember that the Paralympic Games is the second-largest sporting celebration in the world. We need to ensure that in Sydney the community reaction to the Paralympic Games will be strong and that the Paralympians cement their own special place in our history books and in our hearts.

In conclusion, on behalf of the Coalition I once again congratulate everyone involved in staging the best ever Olympic Games. That is what everyone wanted. The Coalition, while not shying away from its responsibility to hold SOCOG and the Government accountable in the lead-up to the Games, constantly stated that we wanted Sydney to stage the best Olympic Games the world has ever seen. That has happened. The community spirit that was engendered during the Games, and the community spirit that we saw at the venues, at the live sites and in the streets of Sydney, was unprecedented and has provided memories that will stay with us all for a lifetime. It has provided memories of which all of us can be justifiably proud.

Dr REFSHAUGE (Marrickville—Deputy Premier, Minister for Urban Affairs and Planning, Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, and Minister for Housing) [4.04 p.m.]: I join with the Premier and the Leader of the Opposition in supporting this motion. For once there are not enough superlatives: stunning, amazing, dazzling—and something we did not need to be told: the best ever. These Olympic Games have been acclaimed around the world. We owe their success to the thousands of people who worked behind the scenes every day and night: the fabulous volunteers, the train drivers, the Roads and Traffic Authority workers, the police officers, the cleaners and the nurses—everybody involved in making it happen. Each and every one of these people deserves our thanks. So does the responsible Minister, Michael Knight, and all the people from SOCOG.

These Olympics brought the nation together in celebration. As Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, I am especially proud of the contribution played by indigenous people. From the start of the torch relay on Australian soil with Nova Peris-Kneebone to the lighting of the cauldron by Cathy Freeman and the performances of our indigenous athletes, Aboriginal people have played their part in our Olympic success with distinction and dignity. Through the beauty of the opening ceremony, I believe many Australians got the chance to view Aboriginal culture through fresh eyes. We could all be proud of the special story being told of the unique relationship Aboriginal people have with the land. Those images, beamed to billions of people around the world, were of a strong, proud people; a people who have endured much but who have survived; a people who rightly celebrate their heritage and culture with passion and pride.

Eleven indigenous athletes competed in the Olympics and one will compete in the Paralympics. That is the largest number ever to compete and it is an impressive achievement in itself. It is even more impressive when one realises some of the obstacles these athletes have had to overcome to pursue their chosen sport. Cathy Freeman is by far the best known of our indigenous athletes. Her victory was celebrated by the nation, but perhaps most importantly it fulfilled her dreams. Cathy's gold medal was the one-hundredth Olympic gold medal to be won by Australia. While I do not want to provide a free advertisement, I think Cathy's sponsor, Nike, captured the mood of the nation with its posters portraying Cathy Freeman as the official supplier of joy to the Sydney 2000 Games. Cathy is inspiring young people around the nation, especially young Aboriginal people. Her success lets them dare to dream. It tells them that with hard work, perseverance and dedication, dreams sometimes can come true.

Many other indigenous athletes also performed with distinction. Nova Peris-Kneebone is credited as our first indigenous Olympic gold medallist, being a member of the victorious women's hockey team in Atlanta. In Sydney, she performed admirably in athletics. There was also Matildas soccer player Bridgette Starr from Newcastle. Bridgette was named in the national squad at 16, and played her first game for her country at 18. Twenty-one-year-old weightlifter Anthony Martin from Western Australia competed in his first Olympics in the 105 kilogram plus division. In 1997 he was named National Junior Sportsman of the Year at the National Indigenous Sports Awards.

Australian record holder Kyle vander Kuyp competed in his second Olympics in the 110 metre hurdles. Boxer James Swan, who is based in Darwin, competed in the 57 kilogram division. Henry Collins, Bradley Hore and Daniel Geale are three more indigenous boxers who competed in these Games, along with sprinter Patrick Johnson and soccer player Kasey Wehrman. In two weeks Warren Lawton will represent Australia at the Paralympics in goalball. Many indigenous people also took part in the torch relay. They included torch bearers such as 71-year-old James Stirling. James was part of the stolen generations and spent most of his childhood on a mission in rural New South Wales. He was nominated by his daughters because of his involvement with community youth work for more than 50 years.

Fifty-nine-year-old Dean Mahomed was another indigenous torch bearer. He worked as a senior police aide for the South Australian Police Department, and since retiring works with Aboriginal inmates in the Port Augusta prison. In 1995 Dean was the first Aboriginal person to receive the Port Augusta Citizen Award. Behind the scenes, 100 Aboriginal people from western Sydney and Newcastle were employed as cleaners at Stadium Australia. It was a partnership between an Aboriginal cleaning company and one of the largest defence

and venue cleaners in Australia. It involved long nights, from midnight to 7.00 a.m., with many of the workers travelling two hours by train just to get to Olympic Park. But despite the late hours, there was a sense of pride and enthusiasm, not only in having employment but also in being part of the Olympic Games.

The Olympics, and sport in particular, are an extremely powerful tool. Sport has the ability to bring together all Australians. More people are realising how much Aboriginal people have to offer and what a vital part they play in the fascinating mosaic that is Australia. The importance of Aboriginal culture and Aboriginal achievement was highlighted throughout the Games, and I believe it is indicative of the popular sentiment in this country. There is now a willingness to be open, to examine what are sometimes painful but important issues—issues that we face as a nation. This is our journey towards reconciliation.

In New South Wales there is a growing understanding between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people, particularly in country areas. One of the greatest assets of Corroboree 2000 was the realisation that reconciliation had become the people's movement. Reconciliation will progress: it will grow stronger, regardless of the feelings of politicians and governments. The people of Australia will take that lead. They want to improve relations between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people. They want to increase the standing of Aboriginal people. They want to understand and accept our shared history and move towards building a shared future. The Olympics have helped us move closer to that goal.

[Debate interrupted.]

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

Private Members' Statements: Suspension of Standing and Sessional Orders

Motion by Mr Whelan agreed to:

That standing and sessional orders be suspended to postpone private members' statements until a later hour of the sitting or, in the event that the debate on the Sydney Olympic Games does not conclude at this sitting, until the next sitting day.

SYDNEY 2000 OLYMPIC GAMES

[Debate resumed.]

Mr HARTCHER (Gosford) [4.10 p.m.]: It was an honour for me to be involved in the organisation and planning of the Olympic Games. It was a wonderful event—a unique event in the history of New South Wales, and, I believe, the greatest peacetime event ever to be organised in Australia's history. It was a tribute to the spirit of Australia, it reflected the best of Australia as a multicultural society and it showed that the Australian people can respond to a challenge like no other people on earth. I felt the real impact of the Olympic Games last night, when I attended the Gosford State Electoral Conference of the Liberal Party. One of the members—a Hungarian immigrant who came to Australia in 1952—approached me after the meeting and said that he had always been proud to be an Australian but after having witnessed the Sydney Olympic Games he was doubly proud.

That sentiment is echoed across Australia by 19 million Australians, who believed that the Olympic Games were going to be an enormous challenge. Every Australian can feel proud of the Games. As the Leader of the Opposition said, this House acknowledges with pride the successful staging of the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games. It is not my intention to go over the many events of the Games, nor to express my views on many things that happened, but I do want to speak about a couple of aspects of personal significance.

First of all, I refer to the board members of the Sydney Organising Committee for the Olympic Games [SOCOG]. On one occasion I said, in relation to SOCOG members at SOCOG board meetings, that—with the exception of myself—the SOCOG board was a collection of the biggest egos in Sydney. Looking around the table, one saw Mr Gosper, Mr Greiner, Mr Sartor, Mr Coates, Graham Richardson and other distinguished people. I take nothing from them as distinguished people and I do not mean to be disparaging when I say that they have the biggest egos in Sydney. They are all people of great accomplishment. The board, once again with the exception of myself, comprised accomplished people. I acknowledge the work of Marjorie Jackson, John Valder, Brian Sherman, Craig McLatchey and Anna Booth, who all made a worthy and worthwhile contribution to the deliberations and planning of the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games. They were a pleasure to work with, and I enjoyed my involvement with the board, in particular the torch relay subcommittee.

I acknowledge also the first-class public servants who serviced the Games. They include Sandy Holloway, David Richmond, Bob Leece, Bob Elphinston, Mick O'Brien and all the other leaders of the teams that comprised SOCOG, the Olympic Roads and Transport Authority [ORTA] and the Olympic Co-ordination Authority [OCA]. Those dedicated men and women did a first-class job. They worried and they worked and they showed that, as always and as everybody knows, New South Wales has an excellent public service. Those highly qualified people give unstinting service to the people of New South Wales.

I acknowledge our athletes—those who won medals and those who did not. Australia's 650 athletes trained for years and gave up everything else in their lives to impose a regimen of self-discipline that is second to none so that they could represent their sport and their country in the Olympic Games. Whether they were successful in winning medals is totally irrelevant. They participated with zeal and enthusiasm which I am sure is unmatched outside the Olympic training movement. All Australians acknowledge our pride and thanks.

In the Central Coast, where my electorate is located, people are very proud of Brett Cash, a young 21-year-old who exhibited splendid dedication in Greco-Roman wrestling. He was not successful, but he gave his all. He participated in three bouts, and in each bout he showed great heart and courage. Nicole Hackett participated in the women's triathlon and came ninth in the final result. She is 21 years old, and shows great promise for the future. I have known her family for many years. Nicole trained hard, and over the last four or five years was totally dedicated to representing Australia in the Olympic Games. Ji Wallace, from Terrigal, was a surprise winner of the silver medal for trampolining. He never expected to win a medal, but regardless of his own expectation he knew that he had worked hard and was offering his best. He was delighted to win the medal. People who live on the Central Coast were just as proud of him because of his dedication and zeal. The whole Olympic athletes movement deserves our congratulations and our praise.

The 47,000 volunteers achieved a record reputation throughout the world for their friendly enthusiasm. One member of the American Olympic team asked how we trained volunteers to be so friendly. Of course, there is no training program that makes people friendly; it comes down to their nature and the fact that they give of themselves. All the volunteers dedicated their time and effort, but above all they gave their personal friendliness and warmth. There were volunteers right throughout Sydney including the Gosford railway station. People arriving at the railway station early in the morning were asked by the volunteers whether they were going to the Olympic Games. They would tell the people which train to catch, when to get off and where to walk when they got to Homebush. They would tell them the best routes to take. Those volunteers were available at Gosford railway station in the early hours of the morning and late in the evening. Volunteers were also stationed at bus depots throughout Sydney. They searched bags at security sites, showed spectators to their seats, operated technical support services and drove hundreds of ORTA cars around Sydney.

All of the volunteers gave of themselves and enjoyed the Olympic experience through service to sport and, above all, service to their country. All Australians who watched the Olympic Games on television or watched the events at live venues were proud of their country and supported their country and its teams, yet showed a spirit of sportsmanship by applauding every athlete and welcoming each success regardless of the nationality of the athlete involved. That showed Australians to be generous, warm-hearted people who offered friendship to all nations and who were proud of achievements of all who participated in the Games. Australians are pleased to recognise athletic enthusiasm and are pleased to knowledge athletic excellence. That says a great deal about Australia.

I was involved in the torch relay, and I had the honour to be in attendance at Olympia on 10 May, when the Olympic flame was lit. I accompanied the Olympic flame on its journey throughout Greece from 10 to 20 May and was present to receive the Olympic flame at the Panhellenic Stadium with the President of the Olympic committee on 20 May. I was also honoured to accompany the Olympic flame from Athens to Singapore, where my wife and I left the plane. It was a rare experience, and one of the most interesting and stimulating experiences of my life. I greatly enjoyed the warmth of the Greek people. I welcomed the friendship of the Hellenic Olympic Committee. I rejoiced in representing my country at 42 events on that convoy around Greece in the presence of the President of the Republic of the Hellenes to receive the Olympic flame on behalf of Australia. It is certainly something that could never be replicated. At that moment I felt uniquely honoured to represent 19 million Australians in the Panhellenic Stadium in Athens. I felt that Australia was in for an extraordinary experience with the Olympic flame as I saw the enthusiasm that welcomed it on its journey around Greece.

The enthusiasm with which the Olympic flame was received in Australia was extraordinary: The largest crowds in Australia's history welcomed the flame in every country town, in every city, and finally in

Sydney. In my own town of Gosford 20,000 people crowded into the NorthPower Stadium and another 10,000 lined the streets to the NorthPower Stadium—the largest crowds in Gosford's history. Country towns saw the largest crowds ever—bigger than any royal visit or town celebration. Sydney witnessed almost 600,000 people around the Sydney Town Hall, all in good humour, well-behaved, cheering and acknowledging the Olympic flame that was coming to illuminate the path to the 2000 Games starting on 15 September. That spirit of friendship, co-operation and good humour are the hallmarks of Australia.

Australia was the only country in the world to have a wholly volunteer army in the First World War—300,000 Australians who went to fight for the country from 1914 to 1918. Australia had a largely volunteer force in the Second World War. Conscription was not introduced until 1943. Australians have always responded magnificently to every challenge, every bushfire, every flood and every natural disaster in a spirit of co-operation, friendship and determination to unite to overcome adversity. Australians do not indulge in self-glorification. They tend to be, in some respects, fairly cynical about government and the political process but they will respond to a clear and identified challenge. Every time that has happened, whether in war or in peace, Australians have responded, and responded magnificently. The latest demonstration of that response was that of not only the volunteers, who were widely acknowledged, but of the whole community towards the Olympic Games. It is that community response which has made these Games such a great success.

As I have said, this event was the largest peacetime event in Australia's history. It was a one-off event, which allowed no margin for error. It did not allow for any dry runs. The focus of the whole world was upon it. It was an event which could not be marred by a single mistake. It could only succeed by a team with a captain who showed determination and leadership. I congratulate the President of SOCOG and Minister for the Olympics on his determination and dedication in difficult circumstances, which he successfully negotiated and cleared, to deliver the world's best ever Games. I am sure that every member of this House and every member of the community wishes him well in his future career after he leaves politics in mid-December.

These Games were unique. I am not sure whether they will ever be replicated by any other country. I am sure they will never be replicated in Australia during my lifetime. I believe that all honourable members and members of the community who had the opportunity to participate were honoured to have done so. I will always be proud to have been in Sydney for the Games, and I will always rejoice in the memory of them. The zeal of the athletes, the enthusiasm of the volunteers, the good humour of the community, and the encouragement of the Australian nation are all exemplified by the Sydney Olympics. The Prime Minister said it very well when he said at a business function that the Olympic Games showed the best of Australia, not only in its organisation but in the spirit of its people. After all, many countries can show good organisation and fine planning, but few countries can match ours in showing the good-humoured enthusiasm, friendship and respect for foreign nations that the Australian people showed during the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games. All honourable members will support this motion to congratulate the athletes, the volunteers, the people of Sydney and the people of Australia. They will have the fondest memories of the Sydney 2000 Games. I rejoice in the world's best ever Games.

Mr WHELAN (Strathfield—Minister for Police) [4.25 p.m.]: The Sydney Olympics were an enormous success only because they were held in an environment that was as secure as it was welcoming. The men and women of the New South Wales Police Service, under the leadership of Commissioner Ryan, made that security success possible. I would like to mention in particular the various venue commanders and others. Those officers, like all other members of the Police Service, worked extraordinarily long hours, often living away from their families. It must be remembered that security for the New South Wales Police Service was as much an issue in 1995 as it was in 1996, 1997, 1998, 1999 and 2000. In the words of the Olympic Security Commander, Paul McKinnon, security is about practice, practice and practice—and that is what the Police Service did. I would like to thank Commissioner Ryan, the man ultimately responsible for Olympic security.

I also praise the Greiner and Fahey governments for framing an Olympic bid contract that ensured that the single head of Olympic security was the New South Wales police commissioner. I also take this opportunity to thank the Minister for the Olympics for retaining that very important provision. I join the Premier in thanking the Minister for the Olympics for the wonderful job he did. To Michael I say: You did a fantastic job—a task that few others could have performed. The appointment of Commissioner Ryan as Olympic Security Commander ensured a simple chain of command and made international security communications simple and straightforward—a key plank of the security success. Special thanks must also go to Olympic Security Commander, Paul McKinnon; Commander of the Olympic Village, Superintendent Bob Myers; Commander of the Darling Harbour and Sydney East Precinct, Geoff Cavanagh; and Commander of Sydney Olympic Park and Sydney West Precinct, Superintendent Roland Tisdale.

I cannot name everyone because there were more than 13,500 officers involved in Olympic security, and I apologise for those I have omitted. To do justice I would have to name every officer and volunteer. The whole of the New South Wales Police Service was responsible for the enormous success of the Olympic security effort. I thank those officers and volunteers who joined them for their unparalleled commitment. My thanks today adds to the personal thanks I gave to the many officers on duty whom I encountered at the Olympic venues. Many people went out of their way to comment to me on the wonderful job being done by police, and that thanks is a reflection of those comments. The comments came from workers, industry leaders, athletes, organisers and countless members of the public who enjoyed the Games in security. I am sure that the entire community shares my gratitude.

As I spoke to people about the police and volunteer effort, there were many anecdotal stories of enormous goodwill. For example, there is the story of the Aussie rower who left her silver medal in a taxi cab. I am advised the taxi driver, a Mr David Bonko, in order to contact the successful silver medal winning Olympian, sent a hero fax to the athlete, coxless pairs rower Rachel Taylor, advising her of the safety of her well-deserved Olympic medal. I might add that the day after the matter was reported to police—in fact to the Police Assistance Line—Detective Sergeant McElwain drove Rachel Taylor to where the medal was located, and the silver medal was returned. This was a great story of co-operation between the taxi driver, the police officer and the usefulness and importance of the Police Assistance Line. It was typical of the co-operation across the entire Olympic Games.

Let me take the opportunity to congratulate Rachel and her partner, Kate Slater, who won silver for themselves and for us all. I felt great pride while watching Rachel and Kate, a feeling that existed each of the 16 days of the Games. I indicated earlier that recognition must go to Minister Knight, who had overall stewardship of the world's largest peacetime event. I draw the attention of the House to an article in the 20 September issue of *CNN Sports Illustrated*, which my daughter emailed to me at home. The article, which I commend to all honourable members, reads:

I know who should get the 2008 Games.

Sydney.

Also 2012. And 2016. And 2020 through 3000.

Sydney.

Let's make it official. Sydney is now the Olympics' permanent home.

The article goes on to talk about Sydney and its wonders and Australia and its wonders:

I give up. This is the single most beautiful city in the world. Paris looks like Lubbock, Texas, compared to this. San Francisco ought to just scrape off and start over. You can't go 20 feet without bumping into another living postcard. Clean as **Oprah's** fork. Stunning views. The most breathtakingly blue harbor in the world. White city beaches. Cliffs. Parks. Koalas on every corner.

There is a great line about the love of Sydney, with the author going on to say:

If I get pregnant, I'm naming my boy Sydney.
If it's a girl, Sydney.

CNN Sports Illustrated is probably the most widely read magazine in the world. I lay it on the table for the information of honourable members. It is an absolutely outstanding article and one of the best advertisements for Sydney, New South Wales, Australia and tourism in Australia. But I must repeat that the Games would not have been possible without the efforts of the police and the volunteers who assisted them. Commissioner Ryan has reported there were about 2,400 volunteers in policing, assisting police on Olympic security. Many of those were drawn from the ranks of the uniformed volunteer services, such as the Rural Fire Service, State Emergency Services and Surf Lifesaving Australia. The work of the volunteers went hand in glove with that of the police. While they did not exercise police powers, they assisted with bag searches and other basic crowd control duties.

At Sydney Olympic Park alone more than six million spectators walked through the magnetometers at the various access control points. At the Sydney Olympic Village almost one million personnel passed through the security access control points. I repeat: All of this was without a major security breach. These people deserve our thanks and praise. Their work was of great assistance to the police. The volunteers were welcoming, as were the police. And the police and the volunteers were courteous and helpful. The volunteers had confidence in the police to maintain the peace and keep a close eye on antisocial behaviour, and the police were greatly

assisted by the efforts of the volunteers and by the general community. Volunteers were able to handle many of the non-policing inquiries by tourists and visitors, leaving police to concentrate on Olympic and community safety.

There were two key parts to the security effort: preparation and execution. The Police Service has been preparing for this event for many years. The message to the world was clear: New South Wales has a world-class, well-resourced Police Service prepared for every possibility. I know that this was the message Commissioner Ryan also spread to the international community. I take this opportunity to thank also those law-enforcement agencies who were involved with the New South Wales Police Service. They too did a sterling job.

Thankfully, the Sydney Olympic Games were free of major security breaches. The second phase—implementing the security plan—was a greater success than most thought possible. I thank each and every officer for their co-operation in postponement of leave and undertaking training, their willingness to take time away from their home base and families, and for working overtime when required. One of the enduring images of the Olympic Games was a newspaper photograph of an athlete embracing a police officer during the Sydney parade of Olympians on Tuesday last week. It was a telling symbol of the warm manner in which police carried out their duties and the great appreciation felt by those who were able to compete and work in safety.

It is important that I make this point. I do not distinguish between those officers who were on specific Olympic duty and those officers who had the equally important role of maintaining local community safety across New South Wales. Together they achieved our dual goals of Olympic and local security, enhanced the image of the New South Wales Police Service and learnt much that will remain with them throughout their careers. New South Wales police, and the 47,000 plus volunteers, did themselves proud. I thank them and their families for the many sacrifices they made to bring us the best Olympics ever. I also wish them good luck in the final phase of the Olympic-Paralympic security.

As my colleague the Minister for the Olympics said earlier today, the job is not done until we have completed our work with similar efficiency for the Paralympic Games. Commissioner Ryan has already reported that security is in place, and the Olympic venues to be used for the Paralympics remain in security lockdown. Again I thank the police and volunteers in advance and join the community in looking forward to the Paralympic Games.

Mr SOURIS (Upper Hunter—Leader of the National Party) [4.36 p.m.]: I join with the Premier, the Leader of the Opposition and other honourable members in congratulating the Government on the outstanding success of the Games of the XXVII Olympiad. To receive the final accolade of "the best Games ever" from IOC President Juan Antonio Samaranch and, universally, the thumbs up from the international community was the crowning glory. We have set the benchmark for future Olympic Games organisation and, significantly, we have brought the Olympic Games back on course after a period of mediocrity, failure, the taint of drug assistance, political interference and self-indulgence by officialdom.

Where the future of the Games was openly being questioned by governments, the world's media and peak sporting organisations, the success of the Australian Games has restored the sporting festival to its pre-eminent position. This did not happen by accident. The fact that the Athens Games organisers were presented with more than 90 manuals explaining the organisation of the Sydney Games indicates the enormity of the task that had to be addressed to make our Games the success they were. Over the seven-year period from the time Sydney won the bid to the final closing ceremony, many thousands of people were involved in the organisation, not including the 47,000 volunteers.

In offering congratulations we should begin with the original bid team, headed by Mr Rod McGeoch, which went about its task with great skill and professionalism, with two Coalition Premiers, Nick Greiner and John Fahey, being involved. I especially pay credit to Bruce Baird, the Minister responsible for the Sydney 2000 bid, and Mr John Valder, who together with four Sunday race days staged by the Australian Jockey Club and the Sydney Turf Club, raised \$22 million to finance the bid. Scores of talented people from government and the private sector played a part in the bid and in the final delivery of the Games. Suppliers such as Ian Hunt from Coffs Harbour, who provided the native flower arrangements presented to athletes during medal ceremonies, were highly commendable.

I hasten to add that I am absolutely sure that had the Coalition retained government a spectacular Games would have ensued using the same contractors, volunteers, police and transport personnel, the same opening and closing ceremonies and the international sporting federations who officiated at and judged the

Games. Much has been made of the manner in which the President of SOCOG executed his duties and imposed his authority on the organisation of the Games. We can question his timing and we can question his motivation, but we cannot question his uncompromising dedication to the task of keeping his team moving forward. The Minister displayed exceptional administrative prowess, and for that he is to be congratulated.

John Coates deserves the highest praise for his cool head and sound advice in the same way that Sandy Hollway, David Richmond, Bob Elphinston and John Quayle, and before them Rod McGeoch, Gary Pemberton, John Illife and Mal Hemmerling, do for the exceptional talents they applied towards delivering the best Games ever. That goes also for the scores of personnel from government and the private sector who combined to make a most effective organisational team.

One of the most satisfying aspects of the two weeks of the Games was the way in which Councillor Frank Sartor and the Sydney City Council also presented this magnificent city to the world. As the television pictures beamed into the world's living rooms Sydney showed its best face, basking in wonderful spring sunshine beside the most beautiful harbour in the world. What a wonderful advertisement for Sydney and Australia and what a boost to our tourist industry! The wonder of it all was that the weather treated us so generously, with the exception of a few periods of rain and wind. Sydney took on a carnival atmosphere and Sydneysiders and the many thousands of visitors indulged in two weeks of celebrations.

At the initial stage of the Games ABC radio sent out seven tourist-looking operatives armed with a street map. They were asked to stop at random and time how long it took for someone to offer assistance. The average time taken for help to materialise was recorded as one minute 10 seconds. What praise could be adequate for our army of volunteers, a significant proportion of whom came from country areas? I particularly congratulate people from my electorate who participated in the stockmen and horses component, in other components of the opening and closing ceremonies and in the overall volunteer program. What a wonderful spirit they displayed and what a magnificent job they did. For example, a last minute call for 500 bus navigators was filled within the morning. They deserve our greatest praise.

Volunteering is not new to Australians, but our Games volunteers reawakened the spirit in Sydney, much to the delight and satisfaction of thousands of little people who found great pride in being part of the big picture. Mr Mike Harvey, General Manager of Rural Press, remarked on this when he opened the Singleton show last weekend. He observed that volunteering was a way of life in country areas and had been that way since the pioneering days. Volunteers come from the State Emergency Services, the rural bush fire brigades, the service organisations, the Red Cross, sporting organisations, and hosts of small groups dedicated to raising funds for community projects. It is commendable that such a spirit re-emerged in Sydney. May it last forever.

Whatever praise we heap on the Games and their organisation, the role played by our athletes can never be praised too highly. That they excelled to such an extent that we won 58 medals comprising 16 gold, 25 silver and 17 bronze did Australia proud and has since ignited a wave of interest in sports and fitness in our very young. Our athletes demonstrated commitment and determination and many of them performed at their personal best. Their performances were often just hundredths of a second or just a few millimetres from a gold medal. It was unimaginable that Australia, with 20 million people, could be placed fourth in the overall medal tally behind the United States of America, Russia and China, which together account for about half the world's population.

The torch relay united communities across the South Pacific and Australia in a way never imagined. The goodwill that it engendered will have lasting benefits. The flame generated a spirit across the nation rather like the Cooee and Kookaburra marches of the war years. Peoples in towns, villages and hamlets who watched the flame pass by felt that they were part of the Games—part of the most majestic carnival in our history. The police and security personnel, including up to one-third of the country police force, performed their duties in a quiet and unobtrusive manner and the huge, happy crowds kept incidents to a minimum. The people-moving exercise by rail and bus was an outstanding success also in organisation. The success of the operation was due in no small part to the tolerance and co-operation of the travelling public. The State's transport staff can be proud of their contribution to the success of the Games.

The ceremonies which opened and closed the Games were unrivalled in their creativity and their messages of goodwill and togetherness. Ric Birch delivered a world-class pageant of Australian spirit, heritage and history. The closing ceremony, created by David Atkins, was an hilarious and joyous mixture of Australian humour and international celebration. The ceremonies did not come cheaply. The opening ceremony cost some \$AUS50 million, while the overall cost of the Games has been assessed by David Richmond as somewhere

between \$7 billion and \$8 billion. Taking into account the three tiers of government and the expenditure and commitment of resources across many government departments away from the Homebush site, the event was perhaps the greatest commitment to a single event for Australia since the Vietnam War.

The total figure will represent somewhere in the vicinity of two years of the State's capital budget, concentrated in the metropolitan area. That being so it would not be unreasonable to expect that rural and regional people are looking for a capital expenditure boost for infrastructure for water conservation, road and rail, schools, TAFE colleges, health and other areas such as town water and sewerage works. The Government should be reminded that while the Olympic Games were such a tremendous success and will bring many benefits to Australia, they did come at a great cost. Country people are mindful that resources were diverted to make certain that the Games were well presented. They now expect the Government to honour its commitment to the regions and allocate at least half the intended post-Olympics \$24 billion capital expenditure package to non-metropolitan projects. We look forward to the Government's plans in this regard, with the expectation that country people will be satisfied that they, too, will share in the overall good to come out of the XXVII Olympic Games, the best Games ever.

Mr AQUILINA (Riverstone—Minister for Education and Training) [4.46 p.m.]: I have much pleasure in joining the Premier, the Leader of the Opposition and many other honourable members in extending my congratulations and thanks on a job well done to athletes, workers and volunteers and to the thousands of students, teachers and parents who made the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games such an outstanding success. Not only were the Games the best ever, the contribution in particular of our students, teachers and parents could not have been better. No group of people could have done more to make the Games the success that they were. I pay tribute to so many people who played such a magnificent role in making these Games such an outstanding success.

No doubt other Ministers and other honourable members will make reference to people they know, or those with whom they are associated. I want to concentrate on those who come from the teaching fraternity, the parents involved who have students at our schools and the kids from our schools who made an outstanding contribution to the Olympic Games and who will make an outstanding contribution to the Paralympic Games. Almost 9,000 students and teachers were involved in performances at the opening and closing ceremonies alone. It might not be understood or recognised by many people that the opening and closing ceremonies involved almost 9,000 of our school students and teachers. They played a dramatic role in ensuring that the opening and closing ceremonies were an outstanding cultural and artistic presentation.

They were involved in one million hours of rehearsals—the equivalent of 41,000 full days. To get to and from the rehearsals students racked up 10 million kilometres of travel, three times the distance from the earth to the moon. More than four billion people around the world watched our school students perform admirably. What a major showcase these young people were—this large number of schoolchildren—and the teachers who organised them. They showcased the performing capacity of genuine, average and everyday Australians. I single out for praise the expertise of the performing arts unit of the Department of Education and Training. I compliment the teachers who worked so hard and well outside normal school times during rehearsals in the lead-up to the opening and closing ceremonies.

As I said earlier, those rehearsals, which took several months and weeks of intensive work and dedication, often occasioning considerable travel all round the State, involved almost 9,000 students and teachers. I refer also to the welcoming ceremonies at the Olympic village. Six and a half thousand schoolchildren were involved at those welcoming ceremonies. Day after day, as various Olympic teams arrived from around the world, children assembled in school squads to provide a welcome. It was a very moving ceremony, and a special song called *G'day, G'day* was written for it. As the children sang that song and the national anthem, the flags were raised. Representatives of various national teams from around the world remarked to me how struck they were by the warmth of the children and the way in which they were greeted at the Olympic village. As I said, 6,500 school students from New South Wales public schools, and from a number of non-government schools as well, greeted Olympians from all around the world as they arrived at the village.

New South Wales government school students were also members of the Australian Olympic team, as were a number of students of non-government schools. I mention international tennis star Jelena Dokic, who studies through distance education; Kirrawee High School student Kirsten Thomson, who won a silver medal for Australia in the 4 x 200 metre freestyle relay; and Jana Pittman from Girraween High School, who ran in the 400 metre hurdles and the 4 x 400 metre relay semifinal, and whose place in the final was taken by Cathy Freeman. Even at this minute Jana Pittman is representing Australia in Chile while at the same time studying for

her Higher School Certificate. She will in fact be doing her Higher School Certificate under special arrangement in Chile as a representative of Australia. My congratulations go to those girls and to many others for their sporting achievements.

Teachers also were members of the Olympic team. Joining the students was Melissa Mendicott, a teacher at West Pymble Public School, who ran for Australia in the 4 x 100 metre relay. The Olympic Games simply would not have been possible without the dedication of school and TAFE teachers, as well as numerous school and TAFE students. Around 7,000 teachers worked as volunteers across the 42 Olympic venues. Thousands of primary and high school teachers were involved in performances at the Games. As I indicated already, they took part in the opening and closing ceremonies and in welcoming the teams to the Olympic Village. They taught songs and dances and performed, and marshalled and worked behind the scenes. I do not want to forget the clerical assistants at the schools. So many of them were involved as volunteers, in co-ordinating, organising, working side-by-side with the teachers and helping them with the work that needed to be done to get this great organisation under way.

As part of the Network of Friendship program, New South Wales schools built partnership relationships with teams from nations in the Olympic family. Their commitment was invaluable. Their effort and devotion exemplified the high quality of teaching in New South Wales public schools and the dedicated commitment of teachers in those schools. I could not let this opportunity pass without commenting on the marvellous support given by parents. Parents shuttled their children to and from rehearsals, often having to wait until the early hours of the morning. They chaperoned the children, supported them and helped them. They came vast distances. I see the honourable member for Wagga Wagga nodding his head. Many of them came from his electorate, as they did from the north, and from Bondi to Broken Hill, from Bega to Byron Bay—the length and breadth of this State.

The parents were alongside the teachers helping the organisation, making sure that everything worked like clockwork. The parents helped teach the children their performances. They chaperoned the students when they attended events. They provided support to their children and their schools so as to make it all come together. Come together it did, in wonderful style. They supported their children, their local schools and public education in New South Wales. The contribution of the parents was also crucial to the success of the Games. Perhaps they are not recognised in the same way as the formal volunteers are recognised, but they have made an outstanding contribution and it is only fitting that I acknowledge that today. I extend my thanks to them for their time, their patience, their considerable effort and the way in which they made it all work so beautifully.

Almost everyone has commented on the importance of TAFE New South Wales' training in the smooth running of the Games. President Juan Antonio Samaranch praised Sydney's Game's volunteers, especially singling out the excellence of the training they received. TAFE New South Wales provided training to all the volunteers who worked at the Games. TAFE managed all the orientation, the venue and job-specific training for the Olympic Games and now it is at it again for the Paralympic Games. One million hours of training were provided to 62,000 volunteers. TAFE New South Wales developed the training programs for each of the 28 Olympic sports across 160 venues, both competition and non-competition, and 1,200 different training manuals were organised and drawn up specifically for the Games, as well as nine training videos, and a web site was provided to support the volunteers in their work. The training covered everything from security and customer service to medal presentations and Olympic history. The manuals for all that beautiful work by the volunteers were written by TAFE New South Wales and the training was all conducted by TAFE teachers.

The results are clear. The volunteers' knowledge, friendliness and professionalism were valued by everyone who attended events. They were valued by everyone in Sydney during the Games. People walking the streets of Sydney were often stopped and asked whether they were all right. When they asked who was inquiring, it ended up being a volunteer making sure that people were being helped on their way. As has already been said, and will be said again, these people are a great credit not only to Sydney but to our nation and to the Australian way of life. As an Australian it makes me very proud to know the world has sat up and taken notice of these people who have achieved wonders by what they have done.

To each and every TAFE teacher involved in volunteer training, I extend my personal thanks and congratulations as Minister. TAFE teachers Margaret Heathcote, Lynn van der Wagen and Nerolli Cassidy from Northern Sydney Institute of TAFE described their involvement as demanding, exciting and rewarding. That spells out the enormous feeling of enthusiasm, commitment and satisfaction that all our TAFE teachers feel in the work they have carried out in training the volunteers for the Olympics and the Paralympics. Those sentiments sum up the commitment of our TAFE teachers. The TAFE New South Wales training program is now being sought by the 2004 Athens Olympic Games organisers. Even the Toronto 2008 Olympic bid committee has expressed interest in the TAFE New South Wales program if it is successful in winning the bid.

In addition to the TAFE volunteer training, the Government ran the Olympics training strategy for the Olympics support work force. Again, this is something that is not widely recognised and has not been lauded much. But 36,000 people were trained by TAFE New South Wales in building, construction, transport, tourism and hospitality, arts and broadcasting, security and sport and recreation, so as to support Olympic-related employment. These are the employed people who in addition to the volunteers made it all happen and made such a difference to the Olympic Games. TAFE played a crucial role there. Our TAFE students also played an important role. For example, the sport and recreation students from Meadowbank TAFE College made sure that the athletes had 24-hour access to the Olympic Village gymnasium.

The whole world was watching Sydney. The whole world was deeply impressed by the efforts of every student, teacher and parent who performed, volunteered, trained or supported the outstanding success of the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games. Their efforts are not over yet. Many more students will perform in the opening and closing ceremonies of the Paralympic Games. Again, teachers, TAFE New South Wales, students from the New South Wales education system and parents and volunteers will be there to play their role. Many more teachers will support those performances and many more will be performing as actors and volunteers. Again I extend my sincere congratulations to all those people.

In conclusion I take this opportunity to extend my congratulations and thanks to all those others who have been mentioned and will be mentioned by other members in this contribution. I particularly want to make mention of the Minister for the Olympics, Michael Knight, who single-handedly took on a most difficult role and carried it out with exemplary leadership. It was by no means an easy task. It was a task that required very hard decision-making, but he brought it all off and did it in grand style. I am pleased that the Minister is receiving the accolades he deserves for the Games, because he made a great contribution and a great commitment to the Games, often at the expense of his family. And he has succeeded. Finally, I shall be a little parochial and make special mention of the Australian softball and baseball teams. Obviously, I had a special connection with both of those teams, particularly because their ground is at a special location in western Sydney to which I have a great attraction.

Mr Scully: What is it called?

Mr AQUILINA: It is called the Blacktown Olympic Park and Aquilina Reserve. I extend my congratulations to the bronze medal winners, the softball team, particularly Fiona Hanes, Melanie Roche, the pitcher, and Natalie Titcume. They are local girls on the team and they played very well. Indeed, I have known Fiona since she was about 12 years old. As to the baseball team, I mention in particular Grant Balfour, who is a local boy. I had the pleasure of seeing him play in the game against Cuba. He is an outstanding pitcher and a great performer, and I am delighted to pass my accolades to him and to the other members of the team. Congratulations to all the athletes and to everyone involved with the Games, particularly our teachers, TAFE New South Wales, the parents and students who participated, and our great volunteers.

Mr SCULLY (Smithfield—Minister for Transport, and Minister for Roads) [5.01 p.m.]: I take this opportunity to put on the record my sincere appreciation and thanks to the many thousands of transport workers across all the agencies who delivered the transport task during the Olympic Games. About 1,000 Roads and Traffic Authority workers and hundreds of people from the Waterways Authority and the Sydney Ports Corporation were involved in the Games. There were thousands of people driving buses and trains, guards, train controllers, managers, depot yard people and emergency train maintenance people, all of whom were at the ready to deal with problems as they arose. It was an absolutely sensational performance. They all lifted themselves to the occasion.

A number of people raised eyebrows about the possibility of whether or not CityRail in particular could perform during this very challenging 2½ weeks, and I am delighted to say that it did. The CityRail workers lifted themselves to the occasion. It gives me much pleasure to see the accolades given to all those workers by journalists around the world. I visited railway stations and bus stations and talked to boating service officers and train controllers. I told them, "You can now rightly lift your heads with pride and take a bow on the world stage." That is not said with any flourish of rhetoric. It was a world stage. About 10,000 media people from around the world were in Sydney, and some of the clips from journalists in major cities around the world saying that our transport system worked very well show that the transport workers deserve all the credit they can get.

We have a big event coming up—the Paralympics—and I have encouraged the agencies not to take their eye off the ball, to keep that focus and to maximise the chance again of delivering a successful major transport event. I will certainly be endeavouring to ensure that that happens. In my electorate I took the

opportunity of seeing how the mountain bike, equestrian and shooting venues worked. I had the opportunity of seeing the shooting centre in operation. That provided me with an opportunity to see a south-western part of Sydney demonstrate to the world that we are able to stage big sporting events and enable intermodal change, with tens of thousands of people travelling by train, changing to bus and getting out with consummate ease. It was certainly a great pleasure for me to watch all those wonderful workers and volunteers contributing to a terrific Olympic Games. On behalf of the House, I appreciate the outstanding effort of those thousands of people who helped to deliver the Games.

Mr ARMSTRONG (Lachlan) [5.04 p.m.]: It gives me enormous pleasure to participate in debate on this motion of congratulations to Australians in general and everybody who participated in the Olympic Games. Before I turn to the structure of my response I shall refer to an item that the Minister for Transport mentioned. Many humorous anecdotes can be told about the Games, and the Minister mentioned the shooting venue. On the weekend I was told that at one stage during the trap shooting there was a slight lull for about 10 minutes and two wood ducks walked across the front of the traps. Then, not to be deterred from their challenge, they reversed and flew back over the top of the traps; they seemed to be saying, "Shoot me if you can." That was one of the many humorous incidents that occurred during the Games.

These Games succeeded for many reasons, not the least being the extraordinarily kind weather. Whether or not one believes that there is another being, and I certainly do, someone shone down on us during the Games with the weather, good fortune, good health, and the fact that the Games were accident and incident free and went off so successfully. I think there was someone looking after Australia. Another reason the Games were so successful was that Australians have proven time and time again that when the chips are down they always deliver. And we delivered in aces and spades for these Olympic Games. We have never failed to respond to the challenges of our own economies or of the cultural changes that have occurred over the years. We have never failed to respond to changes throughout the world.

We have led the world in the many changes that have occurred in our society in the past couple of hundred years of European settlement. The Games are a tribute to Australians and to Australia itself, a small nation in an enormous continent but a nation which has a wonderful record of success and is now the darling and the toast of the world. That is a wonderful accolade. I shall describe the nucleus of how these Games came about. There was a change of government in March 1988. About three months after that, when Wal Murray was the Deputy Premier and I was the Minister for Agriculture, I went to Wal Murray one night and said, "We have some problems with the Royal Agricultural Society in that the society finds that it is hidebound at Paddington. It has no room to expand, it is losing money dramatically because it cannot increase its revenues or its crowds to the Royal Easter Show. Nor can it increase the number of functions it puts on between each show, so we've got to do something with it."

Two days later Wal Murray came back to me and said, "Ian, how about we move the show out to Homebush?" At that time Homebush was a set of saleyards, an abattoir, a meatworks distribution centre and all those other well-known things. That was the beginning of it. About six weeks after that Cabinet decided that we would propose to the Royal Agricultural Society that it relocate from Paddington to Homebush. I was sent to deal with the Royal Agricultural Society. I addressed the society at one of its council meetings. That was the start of the process.

I have dwelt on the Royal Agricultural Society because it moved into the first facilities constructed by the Olympic Construction Authority at Homebush. The society was the guinea pig for the Olympic Games. It tested everything from rail transport, people movements, facilities, energy, noise problems, acoustics, car parking and catering facilities. The society ran two shows at Homebush as test events to see whether the Olympics would succeed. I pay an enormous tribute to the Royal Agricultural Society for the part it played in providing a strong foundation for the successful Olympics, and that should be recognised this afternoon.

Coupled with the Royal Agricultural Society, which, incidentally, is the oldest volunteer organisation in New South Wales, is country New South Wales. The contribution made by the one-third of the New South Wales population who live in the country has been significant and in many cases dramatic. Many honourable members have spoken about the volunteers and their contribution to the Games, and no doubt other honourable members will speak about the volunteers, the many bus drivers and buses that came down from the bush. The bus drivers were paid but no doubt they all did a bit more than they were paid to do. They all had many experiences too. There are many stories and they had a lot of fun.

The Games allowed country New South Wales to showcase itself in an unprecedented way. It is estimated that 4.5 billion people watched the Olympics. Those people saw a blue ribbon around the neck of

every athlete who won a gold, silver or bronze medal. The front of that ribbon was faced with 21.5 microns of pure Australian merino wool which was manufactured in Albury and sponsored by Woolmark. The nucleus of that idea came from the Superfine Woolgrowers Association under the chairmanship of Wally Merriman of Merryville Stud. Those woollen-faced ribbons have now been shown on television around the world.

The athletes in the Olympic village slept under woollen blankets. Some hundreds of thousands of woollen blankets were provided for that purpose. The official uniforms were made of wool. The suits worn by the Prime Minister, John Coates and the members of the Australian Olympic Committee were all made of Australian wool. It was a tremendous promotion. However, it is incumbent upon the wool industry, and particularly those who promote it, to gain value from that promotion. They have spent the first dollar. If they want to get the full value from it, they will now have to spend another \$2 or \$3 to publicise the fact that the Australian athletes and managers wore wool, and that the medals around the necks of the athletes who were successful were suspended by wool. That is the sort of promotion that is now needed to take advantage of the commercial and marketing opportunities presented by the Olympic Games.

My particular interest in horses and my involvement with the Australian stockhorse is well-known. I assure the House that on the opening night no-one was prouder than I to see the Australian stockhorses come into the stadium. The Man from Snowy River came in, the colt reared up and then the Olympics were on. It was superb. We have seen many wonderful photographs in the *Sydney Morning Herald*, the *Daily Telegraph* and the *Australian* of the opening ceremony with the Australian stockhorses. Accompanying the Australian stockhorses were the whip crackers. The whip crackers were headed by Australia's former champion whip cracker from Wagga Wagga. They had practised for many months over a period of about three years to get their act together. Many people were almost good enough but did not quite make it. I cannot praise enough the tenacity of the many people who trained and gave up their time and money to try to get into the whip cracking but at the end of the day did not quite make it. However, they were proud to have been part of the build-up to these successful Games.

Over about the past 50 years there has never been a better recognition of Australian horses, in particular Australian stockhorses. There has never been a better opportunity for us to remind not only Australians, who know very well about the input of the horse, but also the rest of the world that we are probably the leading country in the world today so far as horses are concerned. Members may be interested to know, for example, that there are more than 100,000 recreational and sporting horses in the county of Cumberland alone. During the bushfires in 1993-94 nearly 8,000 horses were evacuated from Sydney's north shore, which is staggering. The use of horses for recreational and stock purposes is a major industry. They are also synonymous with Australia. Drizabone coats, Akubra hats, Williams boots and stockhorses: it makes us proud. That is what Australia is all about.

Country New South Wales and the Australian image have been much enhanced by the highly successful 2000 Olympic Games. In the past few days I have read that there are already indications of an upturn in tourism. I note that some of the German tourist agencies have said they are receiving heavy bookings from some of their people to come out during our summer months. From day one it was always anticipated that, apart from the enormous sense of patriotism the Games would create and the opportunity they presented for our athletes to succeed and for us to be host to the world, the real opportunities will come probably two, three, four or five years down the track when we will be able to take advantage of the increase in tourism and business opportunities which both the Premier and the Prime Minister have spoken about so frequently over the past week or 10 days.

It is now incumbent upon all Australians, particularly politicians, to ensure that we do not miss the opportunities to market tourism and business development, and that we take advantage of the export potential, particularly for our primary products. We have demonstrated that we are able to feed the nations of the world, that Australia can provide any sort of food at all. We did this in the athletes village, day in and day out. I am told that we provided some of the athletes with as many as 20 Weet-Bix in a serving and as many as six eggs in a serving. We can provide hamburgers, foods for people of different religions and vegetarian foods.

Mr George: Steaks from Casino.

Mr ARMSTRONG: Steaks from Casino, which is near the home of the honourable member for Lismore.

Mr Maguire: Milk from Wagga.

Mr ARMSTRONG: And milk from Wagga Wagga. We have proved that we can do it. If we did it for the Olympic Games, we can supply the world. Globalisation has been referred to, but I will try to keep away from words of that sort. The bottom line is that we have demonstrated that we have the clean, green foods and that we are capable of producing whatever is wanted in the market of any nation in the world. The challenge for us now is to take advantage of the opportunity and ensure that we back up the advertising in the athletes village and in the hotels and restaurants in Sydney. I thank those who provided the services in the city during the Olympic Games. For example, the garbos did a great job at night, particularly after the opening and closing ceremonies. The morning after the closing ceremony the garbos faced a huge task around The Rocks and the Domain, but they did a tremendous job.

I also thank the many people who worked so hard for these Games but did not see an event. I refer to those in SOCOG who worked their butts off for up to five and six years to make the Games a success, but because their jobs were so imperative they did not get to see any of the events. Of course, in most cases their jobs will disappear at the end of this month after the Paralympics, and they will be out in the marketplace looking for work if they have not already made other arrangements. I pay tribute to the SOCOG backroom people—the legal people; those in promotions, art and design, administration and public relations; and the nightwatchmen and the maintenance people, to name only a few.

Many firms who supported the Olympic Games and made a considerable contribution to them have not been sufficiently acknowledged. I refer, for example, to the people who supplied the fuel. They were paid for the fuel, of course, but they gave more than what they were paid for. Advertising companies such as Patterson Bates also played a pivotal role in the presentation of the Games. Those Australian companies and the many individuals who played a role in providing the foundation that made the Games so successful will probably never be acknowledged after the Games, but their efforts are greatly appreciated.

I say with enormous pride that in my lifetime I have seen probably three or four events that have brought Australians together. The end of World War II was one such occasion; I was a little boy then. Winning the America's Cup was another. Winning the Games bid in September 1993 was another, and now there is the Games. I assure the House that the last three weeks have provided probably the most exciting time of my life, and my family and I appreciate the opportunity that we have had to take part in the Games. I pay particular tribute to Di Henry and her staff for organising the torch relay to visit every country electorate in New South Wales as it came down to Sydney. As another member said earlier, the carrying of the torch lit up country New South Wales. Ticket sales went up afterwards and country people flocked to Sydney in their thousands. I thank the House for the opportunity to speak to the motion.

Mr KNOWLES (Macquarie Fields—Minister for Health) [5.19 p.m.]: I am sure there are myriad stories about the success of the Olympic Games. From my point of view, it was a privilege to participate in this part of New South Wales' history, to serve and to be able to participate, perhaps a little more closely than many, both as a Minister of the Crown and as a member of the community, and to be thoroughly excited by what could only be described as one of the greatest shows ever staged. People have said great things about the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games, but the Games took off for me as I attended the lighting of my community's cauldron at Liverpool. A man I have known for years, Daniel Esposito, who was a pentathlete in 1984 Olympic Games, had the great privilege of lighting my community's cauldron. I saw Daniel run through crowds of thousands of Liverpool and south-western Sydney residents and through the local park to light the community cauldron. I saw his wife, Suzanne, his mother, Lorraine, and his brother, Brendan, right next to him with the rest of the Esposito clan just lighting up as their son, husband and brother—

Mr Tink: Point of order: It is now 5.20 p.m. and as I understand the normal business of the House, we are now in the time allocated for private members' statements. I inquire whether a postponement motion has been moved or whether the Clerk has a record of the business of the House at this point. Are we in private members' statements, should we be in private members' statements, or is there a motion that has suspended private members' statements? If so, can members of the Opposition see a copy of it?

Mr DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Order! I am advised that a motion to suspend standing and sessional orders has been moved. However, there is not a copy of the motion in the Chamber.

Mr Whelan: To the point of order: The motion was moved and accepted. The motion was to postpone private members' statements until a later hour or until tomorrow. It all depends upon the length of this debate.

Mr Tink: Further to the point of order: The Opposition did not know what was going on.

Mr Whelan: I apologise for that.

Mr KNOWLES: By consent, I ask that the clock be put back to 14 minutes.

Mr DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Order! By consent, I will ask the Clerk to reset the clock at 14 minutes.

Mr KNOWLES: As I said, the Games took off for me and for my family when I saw my mate who is a local fellow and a former Olympian run through thousands of his neighbours in the south-west of Sydney to light the community cauldron. Daniel Esposito, with genuine tears of pride in his eyes, attested to the fact that that was more exciting for him than competing in the 1984 Olympic Games. He was not able to march in the 1984 Olympic Games because he was competing on the first day of the Games, yet years later he was getting his own cheer from his own crowd for being an Olympian. It was one of those terrific events that one sees once in a lifetime, I suspect, when an entire community unites in a common purpose and common ideals.

It was especially good locally because, through the leadership of our local mayor, George Paciullo, we managed to house many of the Italian Olympic athletes in our city. We were fortunate in having the terrific support of Jim Masterton and Peter Warren, who provided houses and cars, and many members of the Italian community in the south-west of Sydney who provided personal levels of support and friendship to the visiting Italian team. From the local level I move to the city level, and I pay a particular tribute to Lord Mayor Frank Sartor, who has been one of the few people involved in the Olympic journey from the start to the finish. I saw what he had to go through over many years, the criticism for upgrading the city of Sydney, but the spectacular success of Sydney, which was beamed around the world as one of the most beautiful places on the planet, is very much to his credit.

In relation to health, the success of the Games is very much a story of things that did not go wrong. As Mr Samaranch said, the Sydney 2000 Games were the best Games ever and that statement factors in the terrific work of the people in New South Wales Health, the employees and the many health volunteers who lent a hand along the way. The hard work of the nurses, doctors, ambulance officers, physiotherapists, inspectors, administrators and other staff who were involved in simply keeping things running smoothly deserves the highest praise and our heartiest thanks. As a health industry leader, New South Wales Health has received praise from SOCOG and the Olympic Co-ordination Authority [OCA], but just as importantly New South Wales Health is being used as a model for the delivery of health and medical services for the Games that will take place in Salt Lake City and Athens.

During the Olympic Games Sydney and this State received a fantastic tribute when the World Health Organisation [WHO] and the International Olympic Committee [IOC], represented by Prince Albert of Monaco, awarded Sydney a gold medal for this State's initiatives in making the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games smoke-free and in acknowledgement of internationally recognised, world-leading, anti-tobacco legislation which was unanimously passed through this Parliament weeks before the commencement of the Olympic Games—and wasn't that a success that was commented upon by the media and by participants from all over the world!

People from all over the world came to Australia. In the athletes village, more than one million meals were served. There were more than 1,000 food outlets in Olympic venues and at Olympic live sites throughout Sydney. Despite that, there were no outbreaks of infectious disease. Of course, that was not merely good luck: It can be put down to years of detailed planning and excellent co-ordination that underscored the efforts of the health professionals. As I stated, New South Wales Health is now a model for formal debriefings for the 2002 Salt Lake City delegation and the 2004 Athens delegation. New South Wales Health also carried out more than 7,000 food safety inspections. No outbreaks of disease occurred as a result of food-borne illnesses.

In addition, 119 environmental health inspections were carried out. High priority was given to the prevention of legionnaire's disease. At the commencement of the Games, there was a bit of a scare from one of the ships from overseas. I can inform the House that health officials boarded boats in Sydney and went out to meet the ship many kilometres off shore to make sure that there was no risk should the ship be carrying legionnaire's disease and, of course, the ship was not. We minimised issues associated with cryptosporidium and took steps to ensure that we were able to address any public health matters that may have emerged. The attention to detail by health officials over the years resulted in success.

The cruise ships developed a special vessel inspection program. The 10 cruise ships that were berthed in Sydney Harbour housed thousands of people. The ships contained 6,000 beds and housed 32,000 people during the period of the Games and served as floating hotels. All those vessels were inspected and monitored by

health officials. The program reflects the skills of those particular health officials within the health framework. In relation to disaster planning and surveillance—thank goodness there were no attacks and no major disasters—I had the great privilege of meeting the disaster and surveillance teams who seamlessly go about their tasks. They undertook a range of exercises to make sure that in the event of a disaster or emergency they were ready to cope; they are very special people.

I pay tribute to the people who kept the records. I note that 73,000 computer records were generated every day for 35 days. They recorded everything from polyclinic treatment to issues related to disaster planning and everything in between. New South Wales Health had the most comprehensive health surveillance system that has ever been developed for any Olympic Games and that was analysed on a daily basis by experts at New South Wales Health. It may surprise honourable members to know that the Sydney Games were the first Olympic Games in history to use a specialist professional medical interpreter service. Interpreter services were provided to athletes, doctors, nurses, physiotherapists and other health professionals on a 24-hour basis with immediate access to 64 different languages. During the 32 days the athletes village was in operation the interpreter service dealt with 4,000 individual cases, most frequently involving Russian, Spanish, French and Arabic.

That underscores the silent but important work of so much of what made up the success of these Games: the planning, the prevention, the cruise ships, the disaster planning and surveillance, the interpreters and, of course, the volunteers. The 400 ambulance officers, 115 food and environmental health officers, 25 full-time medical interpreters, 38 members of the disaster medical teams, 50 data surveillance officers, 45 hospital liaison officers, eight public health trainees and 80-odd area health service and New South Wales Health staff did a major job by making sure that the Games went ahead smoothly without any problems or outbreaks of illness.

I pay particular tribute to the volunteers, not only those from outside the public sector but to the many public servants who volunteered their own time and skills. I had the great privilege of being taken through the Games village to inspect the polyclinic and food services. There were 4,500 seats, and thousands of meals a day and a range of services were provided. In the polyclinic there was everything from podiatry services to dentistry services: diagnostics, drug testing et cetera. A father and son team closed their shop in Warren to give up their time to operate the pharmacy. They stood shoulder to shoulder with public health pharmacists such as a woman from Blacktown hospital. Dentists from Mona Vale closed their surgeries and brought their dental assistants with them to provide dental services. They were terrific people who did a terrific job, and I have to say that they had an absolutely terrific time. I did not meet one of them who was not blown away by being there, and who felt their worthwhile and important efforts contributed to the success of the Games.

There are too many people to name, but it would be remiss of me not to acknowledge the major co-ordination effort of the head of the Games medical service, Dr Danny Stiel. He is a terrific bloke who, over the past couple of years, took time away from his normal day job at Royal North Shore Hospital to provide the best services for the Olympics. I mention the people at Concord, Westmead and Royal Prince Alfred hospitals—and, indeed, Sydney Hospital—which played a specialised Olympics hospital role and did an extraordinary job day in day out. There are people who will always be remembered for going that little extra distance. Of necessity they cannot be named individually, but each of them has a special place in the heart of the community and, indeed, in the hearts of the athletes for their work.

From New South Wales Health alone, 400 volunteers worked in health services and more generally. A nurse from Parkes worked as a volunteer horse carer. A senior consultant in paediatric dentistry at Westmead co-ordinated crews at the rowing venue. There are dozens of those sorts of stories. Their efforts will not stop, of course, because they will work again at the Paralympics with the same skill and attention to detail as they did in the lead-up to the Games. I wish to place on record our special wishes to Brett Roworth, who will compete in the Paralympics in the sit-down volleyball. He is a member of the health team who works in the Hunter Area Health Service and at Maitland Hospital. I know I speak for everyone when I wish him all the best in his efforts in the Paralympics.

The medical services at the Olympics were a great success as a result of the contributions of the professionals, the volunteers and the 11,000 members of the St John Ambulance. They were such a success that they received international recognition from WHO and the IOC and will be used as a model for Salt Lake City and Athens. That speaks volumes for the quality of our health service. No-one should be allowed to assert that Australia does not have a world-class system of health because the clinical care, prevention and management of people it provides has now been demonstrated to the people of the world. It is the same quality of service those

providers give to the community day in day out, 365 days of the year. As I said at the outset, it was an enormous privilege as the Minister for Health to see the skills and professionalism of those service providers. It was also a privilege to be part of something that fundamentally impacted on one's views about the quality of Australian life, our city, our nation and our ability to compete and demonstrate on the world stage that we are able to create something truly special for the rest of the world.

Mr DEBNAM (Vaucluse) [5.34 p.m.]: I join with other honourable members in acknowledging the success of the Sydney Olympics. As noted in the Premier's motion they were the best ever Games. It was acknowledged freely around the world that that was indeed the case. Today speaker after speaker in this House have given an avalanche of technical and detailed information about the various people who took part both behind the scenes and in front of the cameras to make the Olympics a success. I certainly want to make a few brief points. The IOC advertisements which appeared on television for a month described the Games as a celebration of humanity. There is no doubt about that at all. The Australian community was caught by the Olympic spirit months ago. That was especially so with the start of the Olympic torch relay, when the Olympic spirit became a celebration of humanity all over Australia, particularly in Sydney and New South Wales. That was seen day after day as the torch relay went through different towns and suburbs of Australia.

Paragraph (1) (a) of the motion acknowledges those responsible for Sydney's successful bid. It is important that this House acknowledges that the Greiner and Fahey governments contributed so much, not only to the successful bid but also to the preparations which the Carr Government then took to fruition. Many of us were very concerned when we realised Rod McGeoch was in hospital for the first half of the Games. I think I am correct when I say that he was out of hospital for the latter week. It was good that he finally left hospital, and I hope he enjoyed as much of the Games as possible. Bruce Baird must also be mentioned as having made a huge contribution to the success of the Sydney 2000 Games.

Paragraph (1) (b) of the motion refers to the hundreds of thousands of people who acted in both paid and volunteer roles. On behalf of my electorate I acknowledge the volunteers who played a magnificent role for so long—not only in the few weeks of the Olympics but in the lead-up to it. They obviously contributed a great deal and also received a great deal from the Games. They regarded it as a privilege to serve the community, and they gained a great deal from that contribution. We all owe them a great debt of gratitude. Obviously, we also owe a debt of gratitude to Sandy Hollway. He was the face of the Games as far as the community was concerned. I am sure he will receive just recognition in due course.

For the athletes—paragraph (1) (c) of the motion—"who produced the nation's best ever performance at an Olympic Games" it was a fantastic 16 days. I had the opportunity on Friday morning, the super Friday, to go out to Homebush with the other half million people and experience the organisation that led to events flowing so well and to experience day one of the track and field events in the stadium. Being in the top of the southern stand in the stadium and being somewhat embroiled in that very hot Friday was a just fantastic experience. There is no doubt that the 110,000 people there that day, and no doubt every other day, enjoyed it. Those watching on television experienced every event. Around Australia and around the world people became obsessed with watching as many events as possible.

Paragraph (1) (d) of the motion expresses thanks to the people of New South Wales who enthusiastically supported the athletes from around the world, warmly welcomed visitors to our State and accepted the inevitable inconveniences caused by this event. That is true. Wherever one went, whether to Homebush, the central business district, the suburbs or Bondi Beach, people were generally delighted to embrace any visitor. In fact, I think the Games caught the imagination of everybody, whether they were visitors from overseas or next-door neighbours. It was a street party. All around Sydney people were talking to people they had never met before. That was one aspect of the Olympics that I think everybody thoroughly enjoyed—taking the opportunity where they had a shared theme or common purpose to celebrate the Olympics.

I mentioned the torch relay. That went through many suburbs of Sydney and Australian towns. It certainly went through Bondi and Bondi Beach. I was able to join the crowd at Bondi Beach to watch the torch come ashore there, watch Phil Coles enjoy seeing the torch in front of his beloved club and watch it go through Bondi Junction. It was a great celebration for the community. I have mentioned Bondi Surf Club. I had the opportunity to attend the ninety-fourth annual general meeting of the club last Sunday. As I said to members of the club, "On behalf of the Australian community, thank you for everything that the club did for the Olympics." I am not sure many people realise that Bondi Surf Club had to close its clubhouse for the Olympics, to allow the beach volleyball to go ahead, and move to the North Bondi clubhouse. That worked fairly well for both clubs, which co-operated tremendously during the Olympic period.

Hopefully, in the next week Bondi Surf Club will move back to its clubhouse and will be able to start operating again from the middle of the beach. For those who have not been to Bondi Beach in the last few weeks, within hours of the volleyball final the stadium was being taken apart. It is now down to half its Olympics size. Hopefully, in the next few weeks it will be totally removed and the beach will be reinstated. Bondi Surf Club is still looking for some work to be done. I would hope that, with the assistance of SOCOG, restoration work and improvements take place very quickly. I congratulate the Bondi Surf Club on the co-operation it brought to the Olympics and for the work that the club continues to do on the beach.

It is important to mention the Paralympics. We are all looking forward to this event. It is tremendous to see the Australian community getting behind the Paralympics so quickly, with ticket sales reflecting the enthusiasm for the Paralympics. It will be another success. We will all thoroughly enjoy the sense of community that goes with that event. Paragraph (2) in the Premier's motion is:

That this House:

...

(2) recognises that New South Wales in particular, and Australia in general, has a tremendous opportunity to build upon the increased international reputation for Australia and Australians and is united in pursuing this potential legacy for the benefit of all citizens of New South Wales.

I would like to dwell on that point for a few minutes and talk about the potential legacy from this Olympics event. There is no doubt that the Games were fantastic. Anyone who looks back over the activities of the past few weeks will agree. The Premier and the Leader of the Opposition made this point this afternoon. The Sydney Olympics were a stunning success, delivering the most complex task on the planet for a fantastic fortnight. One has to ask, "How did we do that? Did the Government do that?"

It is important to note that success has many fathers. The Games were not simply delivered by the New South Wales Government, as some would make out. I think it has been acknowledged that several governments were involved. But it is more important to acknowledge that it was a hybrid organisation that successfully delivered the Olympics over the past month and for a number of years in the lead-up to the Games. Though the Carr Government is understandably positioning itself behind the success of the Olympics, the reality is that it alone was not responsible for that success. It had a major contribution to make, but the Government was not responsible for it in isolation. It is important to acknowledge that in New South Wales in recent years we have suffered failure after failure in government services. We in New South Wales must ask, "How did we get it so right with the Olympics? How did we get it so right during September 2000? Was it the Government that did that? Did the New South Wales Government deliver that success?" No, it did not. It goes back to the hybrid organisation.

If the Government had actually been responsible for this fantastic fortnight and it alone was responsible for the delivery of the very successful Sydney 2000 Olympics, we could all look forward to a dramatic improvement in everyday government services, a true Olympics legacy. But the reality is that that will not happen. It could happen, but unfortunately it probably will not happen. The Carr Government could still adopt the successful Olympics formula. But one has to ask whether it has the guts to do that, to reinvent itself. It is worth noting that five years ago it actually did have the courage to reinvent itself and focus on the right way to deliver services. At least it had that courage for a few months. In 1995 the newly elected Carr Government said:

"The challenge is to shift to a focus on serving customers", instead of the past "task oriented approach in the public sector".

The Government also increased expectations by adding:

The aim is to provide services of world class standard.

For those who would look for the source of that quotation, it is 1995-96 Budget Paper No. 2, page 1-8. But for five years the Carr administration did not deliver on government services. Then, in September 2000, everything magically worked. For the period of the Olympics, all government services and organisations seemed to work at or above world-class standards. We have to ask ourselves: What happened? The first answer is that in reality most of these were not New South Wales Government services.

In the case of trains and buses, public transport worked not only because we all wanted it to work well but also because we simplified the job. Public transport is ideal when the bulk of travellers go to and from fewer locations. For a fortnight, most of us went to and from Olympics events at relatively few locations, and non-

Olympics travellers were tolerant of the Olympics' priority. There is no doubt about that. But, back to reality. Especially in Sydney, goat-track roads and planning will continue to frustrate public transport until we commit to making those services world class. For the 2000 Olympics everyone got behind the dream and was committed to delivering the best ever Olympics. SOCOG and the Australian community drew on the best resources in the nation, supplemented by the best in the world. Why did we do that? Because we knew exactly what we wanted, and we desperately wanted to deliver that. What was that? It was a successful 2000 Olympics.

It is about time we looked at what services we want the State Government to provide and how it should do that. Why can we not apply that Olympics thinking, that same determination, to delivering everyday government services? We can. It just means that the Carr Cabinet has to review the objectives, structure and resources of government. It can do it if it wants to deliver "services of world-class standard"—their words of five years ago. The current New South Wales Government structure is a lethargic leftover from early last century and is in urgent need of overhaul. It really is time to move the objectives and structure of governments into the twenty-first century. We did it for the Olympics. We can do it for the community.

Governments are usually impotent because they are not structured to serve the modern needs of individuals or communities. There are too many gaps and overlaps between departments, especially in the outdated New South Wales structure. The Premier could restructure government to reduce departments and bureaucracy and focus on improving services, instead of relying on crisis management. It is interesting to note that the Minister for the Olympics, in a recent interview reported in the Clayton Utz corporate magazine, spoke about the challenge of the Olympics and said:

In order to do this properly, we had to alter the way a lot of things happen. We had to change the way government does business ...

Importantly, he added:

These areas of change are not just for the Olympics, there's a broader change that's been unleashed.

We wish! We can dream that the Premier may decide to tackle the bread and butter job of government with the same clear objectives and determination that SOCOG used to deliver the Olympics. During that particular corporate interview the Minister for the Olympics also said:

The way for government to go has to be smaller organisations—not building big entities but smaller organisations—that work smarter and outsource the appropriate things and get the skills piece by piece, rather than in-house, from the private sector.

The Minister for the Olympics spoke also about his future, saying that he wanted to be involved in "something that's challenging, that's building, that's growing, not administering the status quo". The Minister now wants to pursue a job outside politics but he ignores the reality that the biggest business in town is government itself. There is no greater challenge in New South Wales than updating the business of government to focus on improving services in the community. An optimist would hope that Michael Knight's sentiments were prophetic and that Bob Carr would belatedly tackle that 1995 government objective which still screams for attention. The words in the budget papers are as follows:

The challenge is to shift to a focus on serving customers instead of the task-oriented approach in the public sector and the aim is to provide services of world-class standard.

But a pessimist knows that Mr Knight is off to greener pastures, leaving the rest of us to cope with pre-Olympics government services.

Mr FACE (Charlestown—Minister for Gaming and Racing, and Minister Assisting the Premier on Hunter Development [5.49 p.m.]: I am pleased to have an opportunity to place on record this evening my congratulations to everyone involved in organising what has now become known as the best Olympic Games ever. It was a tremendous effort. My portfolio is one of regulation and compliance—ensuring that there is compliance in the sale of liquor and regulating other things such as gaming and wagering. I am sure that many people wonder what sort of role the Department of Gaming and Racing played in this tremendous achievement. I thank officers from within my portfolio of Gaming and Racing for the work undertaken in the planning and implementation of special liquor licensing arrangements during the Games period. It was a mammoth task. The average person in the street and many people in government would not realise the tremendous amount of work that was done in that area. I thank senior policy officer Anne Ratu, who worked tirelessly in this area to successfully implement the Government's Olympic licensing legislation.

I deal now with the implementation of that legislation and the challenges it presented—challenges which were met. Each of the competition venues and a number of other Games-related venues operated under

special temporary Governor's licences. Whilst we have had experience in the past with licensing large venues, such as Stadium Australia, the challenge was to ensure consistency in the sale and supply of liquor at all Games venues. We had to ensure that things did not get out of hand. We had the opportunity to test this new regulatory regime on the nearby showground—a matter which was alluded to by the honourable member for Lachlan. Last year special events were held during the millennium celebrations over the Christmas and New Year period.

A particular emphasis was placed on incorporating measures to ensure that alcohol was served responsibly and to promote responsible drinking. This was particularly important at a time when the eyes of the world were upon us. Imagine if something had come undone and it was beamed all over the world. We tried to give everyone an opportunity to enjoy themselves but we had to temper that with the cost if something had got out of hand. This approach assisted the police, licensees, and spectators in understanding the rules. Let me give an example of how complex some of these licences were. Honourable members would remember that during the Games many large ships sailed into the harbour. Existing legislation quite rightly does not allow for the serving of liquor while a vessel is berthed at the dockside. Legislation had to be amended to enable residents on board those ships to partake of liquor.

Under international maritime law the ship's master is the person responsible for a liquor licence. However, the masters of the ships that sailed into the harbour were not citizens of this country so we had to ensure that a nominee was present for licensing purposes whilst vessels were berthed and were being used as floating hotels. The legislation provided also for the consumption of alcohol by the guests of those domiciled on these vessels and the responsible supply of alcohol to those working on the vessels. At the outset many licensees thought that the legislation was a little harsh. If this State had not implemented legislation to ensure the responsible supply of alcohol 4½ years ago events might have been somewhat different. People in the community and licensees are now aware of the Government's policy.

The Department of Gaming and Racing formulated standard liquor licensing conditions in consultation with officers from the Olympic security command centre, SOCOG, the Olympic Co-ordination Authority and Sydney City Council. I pay tribute to Frank Sartor and to Greg Maddock, the city manager, who I understand is about to retire, for their tremendous effort. They consulted with my officers and we were able to obtain a satisfactory result. This consultation process assisted in achieving a better understanding about liquor licensing and it ensured a commitment to the responsible serving of alcohol. The success of the licensing arrangements at Games venues resulted in the occurrence of only a few alcohol-related problems. One complaint relating to noise was resolved through negotiation. The only matter that could have got out of hand occurred well away from the proclaimed Olympic area. Everything went well and not many arrests were made.

Obviously the Government's legislation freed up more police and security officers to deal with people management and other issues at these Games venues rather than become embroiled in liquor-related incidents such as those that occurred in 1988. Considering the number of people who passed through the city during the Olympics things did not get out of hand. We achieved a much better end result. Extended trading for Sydney and metropolitan areas was another innovation in the Olympics liquor legislation. Honourable members may recall the robust discussion that took place in this House in November last year when that legislation was being debated. Once again, harm minimisation and responsible serving measures were an integral part of the successful trading scheme.

The millennium trading provisions incorporated in that legislation were used as a vehicle to trial many of the things provided for in the special events legislation, which was adjusted during the early part of this year. It is my view—and I still hold this view after what has occurred—that the provision of liquor at licensed premises at live sites over extended hours had to occur within a proper regulatory regime. The Government wanted to prevent the transportation of alcohol in eskies to those sites and to Darling Harbour during the busiest periods. As a result we did not experience the difficulties that some people thought we might experience. The automatic blanket which extended trading hours in the city of Sydney, Kings Cross and Oxford Street helped licensees in those areas to deal with the influx of visitors into the city.

On the final night of the Olympics, that is to say, the night of the closing ceremony, it is estimated that about 1.2 million people were on the south side of the harbour, and that does not take into account the number of people on the north side of the harbour. The decision about extended trading in metropolitan and certain regional areas was left to each local council. It was not expected that all areas would want or need extended trading. The aim of the legislation was simply to provide flexibility for those organisations outside Sydney and the metropolitan areas that wanted to provide entertainment as part of the Olympics. Many people availed

themselves of these extended trading hours. It has been suggested that, as the spirit of the Olympics grew with the staging of the torch relay, many people wanted to hold functions within and outside licensed areas to enable people to share in the spirit of the Olympics.

It was not expected that everyone would want to be involved, but the aim of the legislation was simply to provide flexibility and allow local councils to decide what was required in their areas according to the needs of their communities. Some councils took a very narrow view. Unfortunately, towards the end many of them wished they had taken the opportunity to have more flexibility in light of the number of people wanting to enjoy themselves. The challenge was to get councils to consult with local licensees, and most importantly the residents and the police, to determine what the needs were at the local level. To their credit, most councils met the challenge. Some 20 councils agreed to give the scheme a go, and reports so far suggest that in some areas trade was brisk but in other areas trade was not as busy as expected. Nevertheless, that is understandable given that Sydney has never experienced anything like this and probably will never again—certainly not in my lifetime. Despite the concerns raised in the House last year, the extended trading scheme did not lead to widespread alcohol-related problems and noise. Indeed, as I said earlier, I believe that there were only a few noise problems.

Live sites were another success during the Games. In 1997 I looked at the special events criteria for New York's 4 July celebrations. I had some initial misgivings about selling alcohol at the sites, but we were able to define the areas and made certain that alcohol would be sold only in plastic cups and cans as part of the liquor licence for the open-air venues. The challenge was that the live sites could potentially get out of hand, but they were extremely successful and, in retrospect, we probably could have done with a couple more. I am pleased to report that some of the initial issues were ironed out. The sale of alcohol at the sites was well run, and a contributing factor to the success was, once again, the harm minimisation practices—insisting that a licensee was responsible for each specific site rather than a blanket cover, and that every person working on the sites had training in the responsible service of alcohol. As far as I am concerned, anyone in the industry who wants to hold a special event has to have that training or does not get a licence. We imposed on those live sites, as we did with the competition venues, conditions which ensured that alcohol was sold responsibly.

I particularly praise the assistance provided to my department by police officers of the security command centre and the contribution of SOCOG and the Olympic Co-ordination Authority to the liquor licensing consultation process. I pay tribute to the Australian Hotels Association and Clubs New South Wales, who had a special role in inviting many underprivileged and disabled children to a box at the Olympic site. They both entered into the spirit, as did the Restaurant and Caterers Association, by putting up bunting and by running special activities associated with the Olympics. I thank also the Liquor Stores Association and the accommodation industry generally. Likewise, they promoted responsible service practices, and honourable members will agree that the liquor industry more than met the demands of Olympic visitors.

Of course, our next tests will be the Paralympics, which will commence shortly; next year's millennium celebrations; the period over Christmas and New Year; and the Centenary of Federation. The liquor licensing arrangements that applied at competition venues during the Games will continue throughout the Paralympics. I am confident that the Paralympics will build on the success of the Olympics and will be an unforgettable experience for those taking part in the events and for spectators. We will learn from this experience. We have learned many things during the Games, especially things that we can implement in special event legislation. I thank my Director-General, Ken Brown, and all the staff of the Department of Gaming and Racing and my ministry. The director-general has a special role in the Paralympics. I thank the racing codes for their responsible attitude during the Olympics. Despite the prophets of doom predicting a 40 per cent to 50 per cent reduction in turnover, I understand it was more like 8 per cent to 10 per cent and, considering the amount of activity, the industry did not come out as badly as was first thought.

I had the opportunity, in my Hunter development portfolio, to meet many exciting people who could be of benefit to the development of this State. Like others, I had a marvellous time, I am happy to have been involved, I am happy to have lived in a period of such great excitement. What a wonderful experience it has been for everyone in New South Wales and Australia. It is something we will never forget. It is a great tribute to the people of New South Wales and to the people involved, whether they were volunteers or others such as the people in my department. I believe that every member of this House, regardless of where they sit in the political spectrum, will agree that it has been a marvellous job on everyone's part, including members of Parliament, who played a role in their various constituencies. I thank the House for the opportunity to make these remarks tonight.

Mr KERR (Cronulla) [6.04 p.m.]: One of the great attributes of sport is that it has the capacity to transform a personal triumph into a cause for communal or even universal joy. We saw that with the Olympics. It was able to transform the gold medal winning event of an athlete into a worldwide celebration. This occurred

at both ends of the spectrum. We saw Ian Thorpe at one end of the spectrum with world record times and we saw Eric the Eel with a world record time at the other end of the spectrum. Yet each of those athletes enjoyed bringing so much happiness to people all around the world. It really showed that the Olympics were not just about elite athletes; they were about human endeavour and human achievement. I have to say that the shire, once again, was able to contribute to that universal joy. Many Olympians came from the shire to take part in these Olympics.

Mr George: Which shire?

Mr KERR: The Sutherland shire.

Ms Nori: There is only one shire.

Mr KERR: There is only one shire, as even the Minister acknowledges.

Ms Nori: When they say the shire, they mean the Sutherland shire.

Mr KERR: That is exactly right. The Olympics showed a worldwide television audience that there are only two types of people in the whole world: those who live in the shire and those who want to live in the shire.

Ms Nori: That is Balmain.

Mr KERR: No, it is not Balmain, although during the Olympics many international visitors were introduced to Balmain bugs for the first time. So Balmain does have a place of affection in the hearts of a number of diners. As I said, the shire was well represented at the Olympics, but not only by athletes. The current Federal member for Cook, Mr Bruce Baird, played an instrumental part in the nomination of Sydney. Nick Greiner went against Treasury advice in order to stage the Olympics, and John Fahey will be forever remembered for that leap. At the opening of the Olympics Peter Kerr—no relation—took the oath on behalf of the officials in front of a television audience of millions. It was a great achievement.

The Leader of the National Party said only a couple of other events were commensurate with the Olympics. Those events were the end of World War II, the winning of the America's Cup—and everyone will remember that occasion—and the night we actually won the Olympic bid, and I am sure everyone remembers Sydney celebrating that occasion. It has been said that Juan Antonio Samaranch had trouble pronouncing Sydney because he had never seen Beijing written that way before. Nevertheless, we were the ones who got the Olympics, and that was a cause of great celebration.

It is somewhat unfortunate that the celebrations were marred when Sandy Hollway did not receive gold. It is interesting that the Minister for the Olympics said that he is a bit of a fan of Cortés. That hero worship may not sit well with our reconciliation of indigenous people. I commend to honourable members a book entitled *Conquest: Montezuma, Cortés, and the Fall of Old Mexico* by Hugh Thomas, which refers to the overthrow of the Aztec empire and Cortés' role in that. Cortés used systematic terror through mutilating and killing people. Fortunately for the members of SOCOG and its employees, that sort of behaviour is now illegal. However, the book contains a good assessment of the character of Cortés, and we see parallel lives here. The book states:

Cortés had conquered an empire. He had used well his talents for flattery, for courtesy, for eloquence, for swift decision, for improvisation, for deviousness, for sudden changes of plan. His will and courage in adversity had been decisive. He had used terror coldly and effectively. His ambition to achieve something astonishing should have been satisfied.

Cortés had also performed this task making use of men of his own choice.

We have seen a distinct parallel between fan and hero in the many characteristics that have been shown during the Games. As I said, all of us want to celebrate the Olympics, which have been a celebration of humanity. During question time we saw a most welcome outbreak of bipartisanship in the Government taking up the Leader of the Opposition's suggestion for striking a medallion for the volunteers.

Mr Maguire: It's a good idea.

Mr KERR: As the honourable member for Wagga Wagga says, it is a good idea. The volunteers performed superbly. It is not generally appreciated that many of the volunteers underwent a short TAFE course, and it is to the great credit of our TAFE system that it was able to provide training for the volunteers.

Mr George: It was recognised by the Minister for Education and Training.

Ms Nori: And the Premier.

Mr KERR: It was recognised by the Minister and the Premier. However, the contribution made by TAFE is not recognised sufficiently by the general public, and I think that must be said often and by quite a few speakers. Further, I suggest that the volunteers have earned the medallion. Provision of the medallion should not be entirely dependent on sponsorship. If sponsorship is not forthcoming that should not detract in any way from the work performed by the volunteers. If the volunteers deserve the medallion, they deserve it irrespective of commercial consideration. The obsession with materialism that we have seen is unfortunate. As I said, the volunteers deserve the medallion and it should be given irrespective of sponsorship. As the Minister for Small Business, and Minister for Tourism is eager to make a contribution to this debate I will not detain the House any longer.

Ms NORI (Port Jackson—Minister for Small Business, and Minister for Tourism) [6.13 p.m.]: First, it is one of the proudest moments of my life—indeed, it is fantastic—to be the Minister for Small Business, and Minister for Tourism at this important time. On subsequent occasions over the next couple of weeks I will inform the House about the benefits of the Olympic Games in investment in small business and tourism. At this stage it is too early to gauge the full extent of the benefits. We are still monitoring the level of overseas press coverage, which is not inconsiderable. We are putting the final touches on our campaigns for the post-Olympics tourism strategy. Over the next couple of weeks it will be my pleasure to update the House on those important matters.

Today primarily I thank a particular group of volunteers—the 100 or so volunteers, ranging in age from 16 to 79 years, who staffed the tourism information centres around town during the Olympic Games, at Circular Quay, Martin Place, Town Hall, the Rocks and Darling Harbour. During the Games I saw a number of those volunteers. Obviously, I did not get to see all of them but they were having a ball. They were loving it and, like all the other volunteers, they did an absolutely fantastic job.

There were moments of humour as they were asked such questions as: Why are there so many people in the city? Where can I buy a real koala to take home? Can you show me how to get to Sydney? Why do I not see any kangaroos in the streets? How long will it take me to walk to Gosford to see the reptile park? But we got across the message about regional tourism and the need to go outside Sydney. The volunteers were also asked the obvious questions: Where do I buy souvenirs? Where can I get a ferry? Where are the toilets? Where are the best places to eat? The volunteers did a fantastic job, and as Minister I place on the record my thanks to them.

I also thank my agency, Tourism New South Wales, for organising the volunteers. I will be recognising the volunteers at a morning tea at Parliament House in a little while, along with the meet-and-greets we have at the airport and others who worked in a voluntary capacity to make the tourism experience of our visitors such a good one. I point out that some of our ambassadors are studying tourism at TAFE. Most of them are retired or simply people who wanted to share their love and knowledge of Sydney with visitors to the Games. I am pleased to say that the 40 TAFE students who registered to work at the visitor information line began training with the service in late August, and TAFE has agreed to credit that work experience towards the tourism studies of all those students.

I also thank Visa, which was a major sponsor of the volunteer program, the city host kiosks and the Tourism New South Wales visitor information line during the Olympic Games period. I take this opportunity not only to thank my agency but also to thank the Chief Executive Officer of Tourism New South Wales, Mr Tony Thirlwell, for the way he managed the Sydney media centre. The idea for the media centre came from Tourism New South Wales, and clearly State and Regional Development was also significantly involved. The State Government contributed to staffing that important centre and the staff came from both of my departments, the Department of State and Regional Development and Tourism New South Wales. However, I make special mention of Mr Tony Thirlwell, whose brainchild was the media centre.

The ideas for both the Sydney media centre and the volunteers are being taken up by the Salt Lake City Organising Committee for the Winter Olympics, because it was so impressed with the way that both those functions were performed by those organisations. I remind the House that Sydney was the first Olympic host city ever to have a media centre simply for the non-accredited media. Honourable members will note that I intend to raise a matter of public importance relating to that point, and I will talk at some length on that on another occasion. I conclude by thanking everyone from State and Regional Development and, in particular,

Tourism New South Wales and all the wonderful volunteers who did such a fantastic job to ensure that when our neighbours came to Sydney they were made to feel fantastic, and it worked. It is a great pleasure to be the Minister at this historic moment.

Debate adjourned on motion by Mr Maguire.

[Mr Acting-Speaker (Mr Lynch) left the chair at 6.19 p.m. The House resumed at 7.30 p.m.]

DEATH OF ROGER BEDE NOTT, CBE, A FORMER MINISTER OF THE CROWN

Mr WHELAN (Strathfield—Minister for Police) [7.30 p.m.]: I move:

That this House extends to the family the deep sympathy of members of the Legislative Assembly in the loss sustained by the death on 28 September 2000 of the Hon. Roger Bede Nott, CBE, a former Minister of the Crown.

Mrs CHIKAROVSKI (Lane Cove—Leader of the Opposition) [7.31 p.m.]: On behalf of the Liberal Party, I note the motion of condolence marking the passing of Mr Roger Bede Nott, former member for Liverpool Plains and Minister for Agriculture in this House in the early 1960s. Roger Nott was born on 20 October 1908 in Gulgong, in central western New South Wales. He was raised and educated in Dundedoo and, like many other boys of his generation, left primary school at 14 to begin work as a shearer and share farmer. He was later to become a wheat farmer at Dundedoo. Roger Nott epitomised what it was to be a true representative of those who loved the land and lived and worked on it, and he took pride in being the local man representing Liverpool Plains in this Parliament.

Following his retirement from politics, Roger Nott served as Administrator of the Northern Territory during the period 1961 to 1964, and later as Administrator of Norfolk Island during the period 1964 to 1966. Previously Mr Nott also had been a representative on the Primary Producers Commonwealth Liquid Fuel Board between 1942 and 1944. Roger Nott was elected to this House representing Liverpool Plains in May 1941, and continued to serve as a member until his resignation 20 years later in 1961. He served four successive Labor Premiers, starting with Sir William McKell and continuing through the Cabinets of McGirr, Cahill and Heffron. During his time he served as Minister for Lands and Mines between March 1956 and November 1957. He was a long-serving Minister for Agriculture from November 1957 to March 1961 and Minister for Food Production from November 1957 to April 1959. He stated in his inaugural speech in Parliament:

I myself have always been on the land. I have worked my way from small beginnings to the position of being a successful wheat farmer. My father was a farmer before me and my grandmother was one of the earliest pioneers.

Roger Nott considered himself a true bushman, and as a result believed that he more effectively and sincerely represented the aspirations of the people of Liverpool Plains because of that knowledge and experience. In his inaugural speech he also spoke of his commitment to keeping families and farmers in the bush—an issue we continue to grapple with half a century later. On behalf of the Liberal Party I extend my deepest sympathies to Mr Nott's extended family and his large circle of friends.

Mr SOURIS (Upper Hunter—Leader of the National Party) [7.32 p.m.]: Roger Nott was elected as the Labor member for Liverpool Plains in May 1941 at the beginning of the Labor Party's unbroken 23-year period of government in this State. He served with Labor Premiers Bill McKell, Jim McGirr, Joe Cahill and Bob Heffron. During that time he served as Minister without portfolio, Secretary for Lands, Secretary for Mines, Minister for Agriculture and Minister for Food Production. Roger Nott's brother Leo, also deceased, held the Labor seat of Mudgee from 1953 to 1968 and then Burrendong from 1971 to 1973.

The seat of Liverpool Plains was redistributed out of existence in 1962 and most of it was absorbed by Upper Hunter. The prospect of the seat being abolished coincided with a decision by Roger Nott, then Minister for Agriculture, to accept an invitation to take up the position of Administrator of the Northern Territory. He resigned from Parliament on 3 March 1961. On 25 March of that year the Country Party's Frank O'Keefe won the Liverpool Plains seat and held it as Upper Hunter until September 1969 when he resigned. Frank O'Keefe was replaced by my predecessor, Colin Fisher, who held Upper Hunter for the Country Party, the National Country Party and then the National Party from 1970 until 1988. I enjoyed a friendly relationship with Roger Nott and enjoyed seeing his historic collection of official photographs, including those associated with the Glenbawn Dam. I exchanged Christmas cards with him for a number of years. On behalf of the National Party I extend sympathy to the relatives of the late Roger Bede Nott.

Members and officers of the House stood in their places.

Motion agreed to.

**DEATH OF PHILIP JOHN WHITE, A FORMER MEMBER
OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**

Mr MOSS (Canterbury—Parliamentary Secretary), on behalf of Mr Carr [7.35 p.m.]: I move:

That this House extends to the family the deep sympathy of members of the Legislative Assembly in the loss sustained by the death on 8 October 2000 of Philip John White, a former member of the Legislative Assembly.

I met Phil White only in 1988, just before he came to this Parliament, in the election campaign of that year. Over the next three years I got to know Phil very well, not only as a parliamentary colleague but also as a member representing a neighbouring electorate. As members of neighbouring electorates we used to attend local functions together and, I am proud to say, were involved together in issues that affected both of our electorates. For example, we both shared the problems with traffic on Canterbury Road, and we both argued the point over the problem of prostitutes in the area. Phil White had in his electorate Wolli Creek and Cup and Saucer Creek, both of which were tributaries of Cooks River, which was in my electorate, and we were constantly involved in issues concerning the river and its tributaries. A good portion of both Phil's electorate and my electorate were serviced by the same council, Canterbury City Council, and in those days all of Canterbury and all of the suburb of Earlwood were serviced by the Canterbury Hospital. We had a lot in common and we met up with each other on numerous occasions. I am pleased to say that not only were we together often but, of course, when it came to local issues more often than not we were on the same side.

I note that a curriculum vitae of Phil White states that he was involved in the Earlwood branch of the Liberal Party as far back as 1978. As we know, in 1978 the seat of Earlwood was won by Labor when Ken Gabb won the seat in a by-election. I note that Phil's curriculum vitae states that he contested preselection for the Liberal Party in 1978 to run for the seat of Earlwood, at that time against Alan Jones. Alan Jones was the successful candidate in that by-election. However, the curriculum vitae goes on to state that Phil White stayed on as the operations manager for that by-election. For that reason, in my opinion Phil White was quite a man. In the game of politics, when we get done over in by-elections or in preselections, usually the last thing we want to do is to hang around and support the successful candidate. However, Phil White, being the man of integrity that he was, stayed on and in fact acted as operations manager during that famous by-election campaign of 1978.

It is fair to say that circumstances defeated Phil White—certainly not his electorate and certainly not his party. He was only in this Parliament for three years when boundary changes took place. I was fortunate enough to pick up a good slice of what was then the Earlwood electorate, and I now hold the entire suburb of Earlwood. I was with Phil White on the day the boundary decision came down. I had a copy of the boundaries—I think it was an amended copy at that stage; I think we went through a couple of runs before the final boundaries were determined—and Phil rang me and asked, "Have you heard anything?" I said, "I have got a map." He said, "Can you bring it over to my office?", and I did.

I remember putting the map on his desk. He realised that his electorate had been abolished and he had a good look at the area generally. While I was with him, he received a phone call. He had no qualms about saying in front of me, "No, I'm done." I thought that was very forthright of the man. He was a realistic fellow who realised that it was the circumstances that had defeated him. He had no qualms whatsoever about admitting that he would not be contesting another election, and he said so in front of a political opponent. Tonight I extend my sympathy to Phil's family. He was a person whom I certainly regarded as a man of great principle. He was a very forthright person and probably one of the most liked members of the former Coalition Government as far as the then Labor Opposition was concerned.

Mrs CHIKAROVSKI (Lane Cove—Leader of the Opposition) [7.40 p.m.]: On behalf of the Coalition and particularly my colleagues in the Liberal Party, I express our deep regret and great sorrow at the passing of Mr Philip White. Phil was well known and regarded within this Parliament, as the honourable member for Canterbury has just stated. He was also well known and well loved within the various communities he served. He was a dedicated member of the Liberal Party for some 20 years and served in this House between 1988 and 1991. Phil White was a man who was dedicated to the safety and welfare of the people whom he represented and he understood the very specific needs of his electorate—a community with a large migrant and ageing population.

Phil was born in 1938 and gained his early education in the New England district, coming to Sydney at the age of 16 in search of an apprenticeship in the printing industry. He gained matriculation and began tertiary studies in various fields beginning with the New South Wales Institute of Technology. Phil completed his management certificate and later gained his sales and marketing diploma. He was part of the triumphant Greiner team that swept into government in 1988. His contribution to that victory was to win the seat of Earlwood with a 7.5 per cent swing against a sitting Labor member, the then Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Ken Gabb.

Before Phil's election to Parliament, he was a successful small businessman. He was involved in all aspects of the printing industry for more than 30 years, including the print room and the executive suite. He was chief executive of both public and private companies over an 18-year span before his election to Parliament. In his inaugural speech to Parliament, Phil spoke of his experience in small business and the priority of having to produce a product of supreme quality coupled with service and value. He said:

The desire to provide services or a product to a customer or citizen with the best of intentions of honesty, integrity, and reliability, and to derive a fair remuneration for that service given, must surely be a basis for not only good business, but also indeed for good government.

His vision for a State government was to see parliamentarians in New South Wales as effective managers—managers who would provide the best possible service for the people of New South Wales at the least cost. Phil White's business experience proved invaluable for this purpose. Phil White upheld the highest of Liberal principles during his time as a member of the Liberal Party and in his time as an elected member. He stated, "I see no inconsistency between the pursuit of individual freedom and economic rationality on one hand and a more compassionate society on the other."

Phil's service to the people of his electorate spanned much more than the three years he was a member of this House. He was a member of the Oatley Lions Club for 11 years and was its president in 1982. He was involved in local projects including the Oatley Caring Centre, service at the St George Hospital hydrotherapy pool, extended projects with senior citizens and the Lions drug awareness program. He was admired widely for his commitment and capacity to empathise with people throughout the community, particularly his understanding of the greater ethnic community that continues to inhabit the electorate of Earlwood. He believed that strength of the individual could be achieved and promoted through government policy. This ethos included protecting individuals and their right to freedom and choice.

Philip White represented the safety concerns of the Earlwood community. He spoke in Parliament of the drug problem still pervading our society and the need for bipartisan support if this issue was ever to be tackled. He was a strong supporter of the need to educate and protect young people from the dangers of drugs. He supported the establishment of a drug enforcement agency to help with the drug problem in his electorate. He described it as "an insidious cancer in our society". He supported the idea of a police service that would promote greater awareness and participation by the New South Wales community at large in confronting and facing the drug problem head on.

According to Philip White, drug addiction was something that robbed people of freedom and choice and its remedy required compassionate and stern government involvement. He was a member of the Coalition Government's committees on Police, Industrial Relations and Ethnic Affairs and served as a Government representative on the Southern Sydney Regional Organisation of Councils. His contribution will long be remembered. As members of this House, we would all like to be remembered for the improvement we effect or the commitment we show to improving the living standards of those whom we represent, and this is what Philip White did. He is a great loss to the Liberal Party and the community and particularly to his family.

On a personal note, let me add that while I never shared this Chamber with Phil because he did not contest the 1991 election when I was elected to Parliament, I remember that after I was preselected Phil was one of the first people to phone and congratulate me the next day. Over the years, Phil offered me the occasional piece of advice, gave me the odd tip and suggested ways in which I could improve my performance as a local parliamentary representative, later as a Minister and more recently as Leader of the Opposition. I valued that advice over the years. Phil was a very caring and compassionate man. He was a very good Liberal. He was a very good person. On behalf of the Coalition, I extend my deepest sympathies to his immediate and extended family.

Mr HARTCHER (Gosford) [7.46 p.m.]: I am one who came to this Parliament in 1988 with Philip White. That was the first time I met him after he had won the seat of Earlwood against a former Labor Minister—a Minister to whom Phil paid tribute in his inaugural speech. It is difficult in condolence motions to capture the spirit of the person about whom one is eulogising. It is often customary to recite a list of their speeches or the issues that concerned them, or to list the clubs with which they were involved or actions that they had undertaken in their electorates, but very little attempt is made to actually capture what sort of person the deceased was.

Philip was a wonderful person. He was always cheerful and always smiling. He was a natty dresser and he was the sort of person to whom everybody warmed. While he was not destined to be successful in a

parliamentary or political sense, in a personal sense he was the type of person who left his mark on all who met him. I will always remember that he occupied a seat on the back row of the Chamber with the then honourable member for Georges River, Terry Griffiths, the honourable member for Albury and the honourable member for Cronulla. They sat up on the back row giggled their way through question time. They loved question time and always enjoyed it. They were among the loudest laughers and Philip's laugh could be heard throughout the Chamber. He was not a malicious person and certainly was not the type of person who would laugh at the discomfiture of the then Labor Opposition: He was someone who actually enjoyed the whole theatre of Parliament. He enjoyed what was happening around him and was always a very well-intentioned and well-meaning person.

His background was in the printing trade. He did not have a long career in politics. He had been a member of the Liberal Party for only 10 years when he entered Parliament. He came into Parliament when he was 50, having joined the Liberal Party at the age of 40. Most of his life had been spent in performing community service through the Lions movement and drug prevention programs. It was the drug problem that he addressed in his inaugural speech and it was the prevention of drug abuse in which he took an ongoing interest

He was a small man and was quite athletic. He was a pilot and he loved to talk about his experiences of flying his plane around New South Wales. He was a strong family man but above all—something that is probably not well known among those of us who remember him—he was a deeply devout Christian. He came to his belief in Christianity later in life, as he did in relation to his involvement in politics. His religious conviction was not something that he wore on his sleeve or about which he preached, but he always sought to find his own relationship with God. He did so in a personal but very profound way. He was a person who lived by his own beliefs.

As I said earlier he was never malicious; he always took a kind view. He was political but not as political perhaps as many other honourable members of this House. His view of politics was that it was an extension of community service. He never regarded himself as a political animal in the sense of worrying about preselection, branch memberships or all the other involvements of the political process. He regarded being elected to Parliament as an extension of the service he sought to render to the community through the Lions movement and as a wider opportunity to deal with issues such as family relationships and the use of drugs in his electorate of Earlwood.

Phil took a great deal of time researching and carefully preparing his speeches. He was always a person who shared. He never lacked generosity in his personal life and was generous in his praise and beliefs. In his last years he was involved in life in Camden. He thought of a political comeback and was interested in standing for Liberal Party preselection in the Camden and Campbelltown areas, which are not areas that offer great opportunities for Liberal party candidates. He was interested in standing for Federal preselection in Macarthur but deferred to John Fahey. Of course, as everybody is aware in 1999 Phil White was elected to local government.

Phil White fought his illness with great courage. Last month I had a cup of coffee with him in Camden. He said, "I know I'm crook, mate, but I'm going to win. I'm going to fight this, I'm going to beat it". When he looked me he said, "You're looking at me thinking that I can't do it." I have to say I felt that he had an enormous challenge. He said, "I'm right and you're wrong, I'm going to do it." His last words to me showed his generosity. He clearly remembered that he was in debt to me for a cup of coffee and said, "I won't forget that I owe you a cup of coffee." He knew that he had an overwhelming challenge in the medical condition that faced him, yet he was determined to face it always in good spirits.

Phil had no self-pity, he was not maudlin. He did not have the attitude of: Gee, it's been great, I would have liked a further opportunity. He was going to fight to the end and that is what he did, with courage and with his great nobility of character. Everybody who came in contact with him will have fond and happy memories of him. That is the way I, my colleagues and his family would like to remember him: always happy, smiling, generous. He was always the sort of person with whom one would be happy to be associated. I regret commemorating his passing. I know that he is in heaven. I know that he accepted the fate that must befall us all. I will remember Phil White with fondness. I am sure that he has left his mark on all of those who had the honour and joy to meet him.

Mr COLLINS (Willoughby) [7.53 p.m.]: I join earlier speakers in paying tribute to Philip White, the former member for Earlwood, who was elected to this Parliament in 1988. He served only briefly as a good hard-working local member, a loyal member of the Liberal Party of which I was then Deputy Leader. I was also

a Minister in the Greiner Government. Phil was one of those fortunate members who came in on the tide. Honourable members on both sides of politics knows what I mean by that. We won the 1988 election and Phil was very much a part of the great wave of enthusiasm experienced by anyone coming into Government for the first time. As earlier speakers have said, particularly the honourable member for Gosford, Phil did not involve himself greatly with machinations or any sort of factionalism within the Liberal Party. He was determined to be an outstanding local member who served his community.

Indeed, he formed an especially strong bond with the Greek community, as anyone who represents Earlwood must establish early and sustain all the way through. Phil did so. We all recognise that the tide comes in and the tide goes out. Philip was not to survive the tide going out. He served this Parliament and the party with distinction. He served his electorate extremely well. Indeed, as Minister for Health in the Greiner Government I know that the rebuilding of St George hospital was of particular interest and concern to him. I had many meetings with Phil White about the redevelopment of St George Hospital into the great hospital that it is today and making it a teaching hospital in more than just name. Phil White should be remembered for what he achieved for health services in his electorate. The reconstruction of St George Hospital was one of my highest priorities as Minister for Health in the Greiner Government.

Phil White and I shared an interest in the defence force, as the honourable member for Gosford has mentioned. I think he was a pilot officer in the air force reserve and, as such, we shared that interest as part-time members of the Australian Defence Force. Many honourable members, especially on this side of the House but on the other side as well, will remember Phil fondly and with great affection as the quietly spoken and hard-working local member for Earlwood.

Mr KERR (Cronulla) [7.57 p.m.]: I was saddened to hear of the illness of Phil White and his subsequent death. The honourable member for Canterbury perhaps gave the most authentic testimony to Phil's integrity when he mentioned his relationship with Phil White, the former member for Earlwood. He spoke of Phil's loyalty to his party when he missed out on preselection and, in fact, when his seat was abolished. He spoke also of his integrity and his willingness to work with the honourable member for Canterbury on local issues despite coming from different sides of politics. I got to know Phil White before his election in 1988 and subsequent to it. As the honourable member for Willoughby said, Phil was a local member of distinction. He involved himself in his community. He had a very close relationship with the Greek community to the extent of learning Greek. I know the Archbishop of the Greek Orthodox Church—perhaps the honourable member for Swansea might know the Greek term for "white"—gave the former member for Earlwood a nickname.

Mr Orkopoulos: Aspro.

Mr KERR: Aspro was the nickname of the former member for Earlwood. Phil was a very good friend and, as the honourable member for Gosford has said, he was a very generous man. He gave himself unstintingly to the community. His Christian faith was a great comfort to him when he became so painfully ill. The Liberal Party has certainly lost a very good member, as Parliament did when Phil's seat was abolished. His passing means the community has lost a very good man.

Mr GLACHAN (Albury) [7.58 p.m.]: I first met Phil White before his election when he and I were both candidates for our respective seats and came to functions at Parliament House. I also met him at other meetings organised by the Liberal Party for candidates and prospective members. I liked him from the time I first met him. He was a likeable fellow, very easy to get along with and the more one got to know him the more one liked him. He had an engaging and generous personality. He began his working life as an apprentice in the printing industry and from that start and by hard work, study and dedication to that industry he rose to the top of that profession and made a great success of his professional life. He was interested in flying. He had a great passion for aircraft and flying and, of course, he served part-time in the military forces, determined to do the best he could in the service of his country.

Phil White worked very hard in his community. He was a member of the Lions organisation, for which he did a great deal of community service. He was a committed Christian, with a quiet but strong Christian faith. I am certain that sustained him during the worst period of his illness. Interestingly, he manfully accepted the loss of the seat of Earlwood through redistribution. He did not complain about the fact that a redistribution of boundaries had abolished the seat he represented. He had won the Earlwood with a very strong swing to him against a popular Sydney Labor Minister. But, when the redistribution came, Phil accepted it and got on with his life.

Phil retained his strong interest in the Liberal Party. He worked hard for and within the Liberal Party, even after he left this Parliament. It was a great privilege for me to sit with Phil on these benches when we were first elected to this House. I have very fond memories of him. He was a real gentleman in every sense of the word. I will always hold those very fond memories of Phil White. I join with other of my colleagues and honourable members of this House in extending my deep condolences to the members of his family.

Mr MERTON (Baulkham Hills) [8.01 p.m.]: I am very pleased to have the privilege to speak in the condolence motion on the death of Philip White. Philip White, like myself, the honourable member for Gosford and the honourable member for Albury, arrived in this place in 1988, a time of great elation, stimulation and happiness, with a compelling vision for the future. This was at the time of the election of the Greiner Government. It was indeed a time of euphoria. It was like boys and girls assembling together on their first school day. I can clearly recalled walking around and seeing Phil White here.

Phil White was reasonably quiet compared to some other honourable members. Though one of the quieter achievers of the class of 1988, he came to this place after achieving an excellent reputation and distinguished position in the commercial world, having commenced his own printing business. He was managing director of that business for some years before it was sold to another company. Phil served some 18 years at chief executive level in private and public companies, owning his own business for the last six years. He was an active community member. He was president of the Lions Club in his electorate.

Phil White was always a down-to-earth, honest and forthright person who always had a smile, with a joke and a yarn to tell his colleagues when we passed by in the corridors of this place or sat in our rooms at night in the days when this Parliament had particularly lengthy debates that went through the night. Earlier today I did a little bit of research and came up with an interview that was reported in the *Daily Mirror* of 23 March 1988. It said:

Company director Philip White won the seat of Earlwood with a 7.5 per cent swing against former Aboriginal Affairs Minister Ken Gabb.

Ken Gabb also was a very fine person. The newspaper article went on to say:

Mr White, 49, has a wife Anne and three children and has been a Liberal Party member for 10 years.

It is interesting to refer to some of the issues that concerned Phil at that time. He said then:

Constituents can now be assured the F5 Freeway will not be built in the Wolli Creek Valley. I'm also looking at ways to make our roads safer. Almost every night there is a car accident on Permanent Avenue and I'm pushing to get funds to fix it up.

Later in the interview he said:

I think it's very important for me to be accessible to local residents in my role as the local member. I'm planning on relocating my office to a ground floor building in Earlwood...

I want to be the equivalent of the old fashioned GP except I'll be the old fashioned MP. I've been very involved with the Lions Club over the years so I want to reach out and help people where I can.

Phil was very active in his pursuit of everything that he mentioned in that statement he made to the newspaper. In his maiden speech on 23 August 1998 Phil said:

I am very conscious that the former Liberal member for Earlwood and former Premier, Sir Eric Willis, held the seat of Earlwood with distinction for 27 years. I may not be able to emulate the timeframe but I assure my constituents that I will give of my utmost to ensure the highest quality of representation, accessibility, and communication, irrespective of political leanings.

I guess that summed up the Phil White philosophy. He was a great communicator and a person with a solid commitment to his electorate. As has been said earlier, Phil had a great affinity and liking—which I understand was mutually shared—for the Greek community. I can recall in our rooms late at night Phil practising to deliver a speech of a few lines in Greek one Friday night. He was pretty good. Obviously, I could not understand it, but it sounded pretty good. The following week, when you asked him, "How did you go, Phil?" he would say, "Pretty good. They cheered and they clapped, so they must have thought it was good."

The point I make is that Phil went the extra mile. There was no real need for him to do that. He was the local member in an Australian electorate, but he went out of his way to show the Greek community that he respected their culture and traditions and as a mark of that respect delivered a speech in their language. I think the Greek community embraced Phil as a very good local member. History shows that politics is a very cruel

and often very sad game. In 1991, with the redistribution, the seat of Earlwood effectively had been abolished. Phil, never one to shirk a challenge, ran as the Liberal candidate for the new seat of Hurstville. Though he did very well, it is a matter of history that he did not win. But he scored very good polling results, actually winning at a number of polling booths. Hurstville was not at that time regarded as a seat that the Liberals would hope to win, but Phil took up the challenge nonetheless.

Phil belonged to and was associated with a whole list of community clubs, schools and organisations. They included the Royal Australian Air Force Association, Bankstown Golf Club, Hellenic Club, Sylvania Heights Community Youth Centre, Bexley North Primary School Parents and Citizens Association, the Canterbury/Earlwood Caring Association, Clempton Park Parents and Citizens Association, Earlwood/Bardwell Park RSL Sub-branch, Earlwood Saints Rugby League Football Club, Kingsgrove North High School Parents and Citizens Association, Kingsgrove High School Parents and Citizens Association and many scouting organisations. So Phil White, although he was a member of this place for only three years, obviously displayed to his colleagues and certainly to me that he was a person of concern, conviction and commitment. He stood as a parliamentary representative who was proud to say that he had been elected by the people of Earlwood. He realised he had been given a very important charge, and he fulfilled that charge. He represented his constituents in an excellent manner.

Phil was a fellow who was, as I said, always willing to share a joke. Phil and I often used to discuss different Australians, one of whom was an Australian wrestler of many years ago called Roy Heffernan, who wore a slouch hat. Roy Heffernan used to use the famous expression, "Often imitated but never duplicated." Phil used to say to me, "Merton, out there in Earlwood they say that I am often imitated but never duplicated." I would say to him, "Phil, I have heard that expression somewhere before." After a bit of a discussion he would say, "Roy Heffernan, the wrestler, used to use that expression." That is the sort of bloke he was.

Phil left politics when he lost the seat of Earlwood at the 1991 election but he made a comeback and did an excellent job working for the Minister for Health, who I think at the time was Ron Phillips. The service Phil extended to all honourable members, which was second to none, was part of his commitment and dedication. Later in life he married Cathy, a lovely girl, and became closely associated with the church. He used to speak proudly and openly about his religious commitment, his commitment to being a Christian, and proclaimed his faith to his former colleagues. Phil was elected as a councillor to Camden council at the last council election. He was a serving councillor on Camden council at the time of his sad and tragic demise, which occurred at the early age of 61.

Time keeps moving on. We are all transient creatures. Twelve years ago many young and enthusiastic people were elected to this place. I think the honourable member for Wollongong was elected in 1988. When we became members of Parliament we all hoped that we would be able to conquer the world. We all had dreams, aspirations and ideals. The ideals of the honourable member for Wollongong might have been slightly different from ours, but we were all committed and dedicated to serving the community.

A hymn writer wrote the words, "None of self and all of thee", which is a fair description of the late Philip White: a man of commitment, concern and conviction. Throughout the whole of his term as a member of Parliament he went the second mile to serve people of the Earlwood electorate. Phil had a great philosophical attachment to mankind, the community and the Liberal Party. It can truly be said that the words "None of self and all of thee" aptly describe Phil White and his religious commitment. Well done, Phil, on a great effort. We will miss you.

Mr SOURIS (Upper Hunter—Leader of the National Party) [8.13 p.m.]: I join other honourable members in extending sympathy to the family of Philip White, who represented the seat of Earlwood for the Liberal Party. Philip, who, sadly, died yesterday of cancer, was 61. He was elected to the New South Wales Parliament at the time of the Greiner landslide in 1988. Earlwood was a marginal seat and Philip responded accordingly. He worked it like a demon. He was greatly admired by the ethnic community, in particular the Greek community. Despite all his hard work Philip became a victim of that quirk of politics that determines that marginal seats won in landslides often revert to normalcy at the next election. Philip lost the seat of Earlwood at the 1991 election.

During his term in State Parliament Philip was active on government committees which were established to examine police, industrial relations and ethnic affairs issues. Politics also ran in the White family, with one of Philip's daughters, Fiona Snodgrass, being employed by former Liberal Minister Chris Downy, by upper House member Duncan Gay, and by the National Party head office. I was fond of Philip White, as were many of his National Party colleagues. On behalf of the National Party I extend our sympathy to the members of Philip's family.

Mr FRASER (Coffs Harbour) [8.15 p.m.]: I join my colleagues in extending condolences to the family of Philip White. I first met Philip in 1990, when I became a member of Parliament. He made me feel most welcome. As a member of the backbench industrial relations committee I got to know Philip reasonably well. Earlier in debate the honourable member for Gosford and others said that Philip was a man with a great sense of humour, a friendly smile and an open attitude who welcomed everyone in this place. The Leader of the National Party, who spoke before me, said that Philip's daughter, Fiona Snodgrass, was employed as the Coalition Whip's secretary and that later she was employed by Duncan Gay and by the National Party head office. Fiona developed the same great sense of humour that her father had. She had a great regard for her father. She remained in this place after her father left.

I often saw Phil in Parliament House, not only in his role as an employee of the Minister for Health but also when he visited his daughter Fiona. I had a great regard for Phil. He was a great family man and, as has been said, he was a great Christian. In my early days here, Phil was always to be seen attending the breakfasts that were provided in the President's dining room. He will be fondly remembered by all those who served with him in this place. It was a great pity that he lost his seat in 1991. However, as a former member he appreciated the need for liaison between members and Ministers. In his role as a ministerial staffer for Ron Phillips he made sure that members obtained the information that they needed promptly, something that all honourable members greatly appreciated. Phil did not forget his role as a member. He knew how hard it was for backbenchers to be kept up to date. I extend sincere condolences to Fiona and to Philip's family. I know that Phil will be remembered fondly by all members of Parliament.

Dr KERNOHAN (Camden) [8.17 p.m.]: Although Phil White was a good friend, I got to know him only when he became a constituent of mine two years after his term as member for Earlwood. I elected to speak after his former colleagues so that I could talk about his more recent life since he left Parliament. After Phil's seat was abolished in 1991 he was appointed senior adviser to the Minister for Health and was responsible until 1993 for policy advice and analysis of issues relating to the provision, operation and management of health services in New South Wales. In 1993 Phil and his wife, Catherine, moved from the St George district to Camden, where initially they were caretaking a local agistment centre before ultimately purchasing a residence in Elderslie. Phil then worked for various companies while he was looking for an appropriate business to buy.

In 1997 Phil bought a medium-size printing business. Honourable members have already heard that printing was his original trade. Currently the business has a staff of 30, and they will greatly miss him. I understand that his business will continue with Catherine as managing director. It will come as no surprise to honourable members that I first met Phil and Catherine White at a meeting of the Camden branch of the Liberal Party. I was a little surprised to be told that this quiet, pleasant man had been a member of Parliament. As I got to know him better I found out the strength and depth of his character. I was not really surprised to discover in a council election pamphlet that he had done national service, non-commissioned officer and officer training courses, served in the Citizen Military Forces artillery and trained as both a private and commercial pilot.

Although a chief executive in both private and public companies for 22 years, Phil was a very private man, rarely mentioning his many achievements in life. One discovered them almost by chance in conversation with him. His quiet nature was a complete foil to his exuberant, outgoing wife, Catherine, who shared with him a love of politics and a deep religious faith. Phil and Catherine White were leaders in their church, the Christian Life Centre at Mount Annan, and I understand their mutually shared faith sustained them over the months of Phil's illness, particularly during those last few weeks.

On 16 July 1996 Phil was elected president of the Liberal Party's Camden branch, and president of the State electoral conference from September 1999—positions he held until his death. Phil was one of the big three members of my campaign team in the 1999 election and I will be forever indebted to him for his wise advice, both political and professional. Phil continued in the campaign mode in 1999 and was himself elected as a councillor for Central Ward on Camden Council. He loved serving his community and was just getting into councillor mode and council activities when his illness was diagnosed. Phil had four children, was stepfather to four and was extremely proud of his three grandchildren. I can pay no higher tribute to Phil White than to say he was a nice man, a kind man and a true Christian gentleman. He will be sorely missed.

Members and officers of the House stood in their places.

Motion agreed to.

SYDNEY 2000 OLYMPIC GAMES**Debate resumed from an earlier hour.**

Mr WATKINS (Ryde—Minister for Fair Trading, and Minister for Sport and Recreation) [8.22 p.m.]: It gives me great pleasure to take part in this debate and to recall the wonderful experience that the Olympic Games were for Sydney. All of us who took part and saw the Games will look back later in life with great pleasure that we were actually there—that we lived through it and were part of it. I also support the Premier's remarks today about the delivery of the Games, what a success that was, and that this was very much a public sector success. The different components of our society should be thanked, but it was very much a public sector success. As the Premier said, the whole Games experience showed us a lot about ourselves as Sydneysiders and Australians.

In particular, I want to add my congratulations to the volunteers, who helped to deliver the unforgettable 16 days of the Games. They were friendly, supportive and helpful. It is their faces that will be remembered by the many thousands of visitors that we hosted in Sydney during that time. I also take the opportunity to mention the contribution by officers of my two departments. The Department of Fair Trading was involved in the Olympic preparation for many months prior to the Games, with teams out checking tourist places around town, advising businesses about what to expect and what to avoid. We also had a traveller's consumer helpline that worked 24 hours a day during the Games. That helpline received 701 telephone inquiries. The majority of those calls related to transport and Olympic venue matters and were dealt with through the helpline's Olympic database or handled by the Sydney 2000 organisation. Fewer than 60 complaints relating to goods and services were received and, of those, accommodation issues were the most numerous. Intervention by our officers was able to satisfactorily resolve the majority of the problems.

Our Olympic compliance team and our departmental inspectors also responded to any problems in the marketplace and undertook normal surveillance activity. A few marketplace problems were detected during the Games period. Where those matters were identified the department's Olympic preparations ensured that swift action was taken. I thank all those who were involved, from the director-general to the inspectors in the field, for the sterling service they gave during the Games and before. I congratulate and thank the 41 Department of Fair Trading staff and 43 Department of Sport and Recreation staff who acted as volunteers or were seconded to other agencies during the Olympics. They can be assured that their efforts contributed in no small way to the overall success of the Games.

Certainly officers from the Department of Sport and Recreation were involved in Games preparation for many months and years prior to the Games being staged. In particular, I draw attention to the work of Brendan O'Reilly, Director-General of the Department of Sport and Recreation, who at the last minute put in many hours of great work assisting the organisation of the buses. That was in the first crucial few days of the Olympic Games, and he spent many hours away from his family and his normal workplace ensuring that part of the Games organisation was running smoothly.

Closer to home, the Olympics certainly touched my electorate of Ryde. No-one will forget the effect the torch relay had on their area. That was true in my electorate. It was an event that provided a perfect prelude to the Games, with scenes of streets flanked by thousands of people who were prepared to wait for hours to catch a glimpse of the Olympic flame as it made its way to Stadium Australia. Of course, Ryde was the site for the water polo, which ended with the historic win by the women's water polo team. The final was not held at Ryde, it was held at Homebush, but a local girl, Yvette Higgins, scored the match-winning goal with 1.3 seconds left in the gold medal game. Another local, one of Australia's greatest athletes, Paralympian Louise Sauvage, gave us a taste of what is to come at the Paralympics when she won an exhibition race in front of a packed Stadium Australia. Congratulations to those two Ryde golden girls.

I should also mention the way the people of Ryde have accepted the Olympic mode. It did impact on the local community of Ryde because the Ryde swimming centre was being used as an Olympic venue and Victoria Road, the main artery through Ryde, was a main Olympic thoroughfare. During that period the lives and daily routines of many in my local community were affected. I was delighted and proud of the patience, tolerance and good humour that was obvious wherever I went in the local community. There was a true Olympic spirit in the community—smiling faces, friendly welcomes from nearly everyone, and the wish for a happy Olympics. There was a great feeling of warmth about that experience in the community of Ryde. The Canadian support team based itself at Macquarie University in Ryde, and they were welcome visitors to my area.

To get back to my portfolio, I also want to mention the efforts of the athletes from the New South Wales Institute of Sport [NSWIS]. The institute board, chaired by Phil Coles, and the staff led by the director,

Michael Scott, have worked tirelessly for four years, with these Games as their primary focus. They delivered magnificently. The New South Wales Institute of Sport is probably the leading institute in this country. I should tell the House that 42 New South Wales Institute of Sport athletes were part of 22 medal-winning performances across nine individual and team sports. Altogether NSWIS athletes broke a handful of national records and boasted some stirring personal best performances. One in five athletes in the Olympic team is from the New South Wales Institute of Sport. In fact, had the athletes from the institute been grouped as a nation they would have been placed fourteenth on the overall medal tally. So the New South Wales Institute of Sport is home to great sporting talent.

Let me add some other statistics which should interest honourable members. Fourteen New South Wales Institute of Sport athletes won eight gold medals across six sports, 12 athletes won six silver medals across three sports, and 18 athletes won eight bronze medals across six sports, with 40 institute athletes contesting 32 finals across 11 sports. New South Wales Institute of Sport athletes contributed to eight of Australia's 16 gold medals, six of Australia's 25 silver medals and eight of Australia's 17 bronze medals. Overall, New South Wales Institute of Sport athletes contributed to 22 of Australia's total of 58 Olympic medals. Institute athletes won medals in diving, swimming, water polo, sailing, cycling, equestrian, rowing, softball and men's and women's hockey.

I take this opportunity to congratulate all the staff at the New South Wales Institute of Sport and the Department of Sport and Recreation on their time and efforts during the Olympics. We need to hold on as much as possible to the mood the Games created throughout our community. That will be hard, but there are certain things we can still hold and continue. The Games have shown us the benefits that sport can bring to individuals and to communities as a whole. The message arising from the Games is clear: an active lifestyle is ideal, and it is not too difficult, no matter who we are, where we live or how old or young we are.

The Government, through my Department of Sport and Recreation, provides opportunities across the State for people to enjoy a huge variety of sporting and recreational activities. These programs are designed to encourage more of us to become more active in sport, community recreation, fitness, outdoor recreation and other physical activities. If that can be one legacy of the Sydney Olympics, it will have a long lasting and beneficial impact on the physical and social health of our citizens.

In conclusion, we now look forward to the Paralympic Games. We are all looking forward to them with great excitement. To see the enthusiasm and the great skill of the Paralympic athletes will be mind blowing for those who have yet to experience it. I am pleased to be involved with the Australian Paralympic team and I look forward to the two-week period with great affection and expectation. Like other speakers in this debate, I have great memories of the Games, including Cathy Freeman's win. Watching Gary Neiwand win a silver medal in the cycling and then pick up his infant daughter and do a victory lap was simply delightful. The men's triathlon with Farm Cove on one side and Circular Quay on the other side was simply a brilliant day showcasing Sydney.

Towards the end of the Games I was coming home late one night with my wife after a session had finished. We were moving towards the bus, queuing with tens of thousands of people in the dark. There must have been 15 to 20 people across the footpath and thousands of people in the queue. There was no movement and we stood silently for up to five to 10 minutes. There was no hint of complaint, no negative feeling, no tension in the crowd of thousands snaking their way towards the buses. That feeling of tolerance, goodwill and open-heartedness is only one memory that I will take from the Games. It was a great time to be in Sydney, and I feel especially privileged to be the Minister for Sport and Recreation during this time.

Mr OAKESHOTT (Port Macquarie) [8.33 p.m.]: I support this motion, particularly paragraph (2), which states:

That this House:

...

- (2) recognises that New South Wales in particular, and Australia in general, has a tremendous opportunity to build upon the increased international reputation for Australia and Australians and is united in pursuing this potential legacy for the benefit of all citizens of New South Wales.

While the Minister for Sport and Recreation is in the Chamber I shall make some points about that paragraph. Today while we are all participating in a post-Olympics, post-coital glow, which is a fantastic reflection on what a great couple of weeks we all had, there is still a job to do for the future. Even today there are many issues

before the House and before the community that will have a significant impact on the future of this State, depending on how they are dealt with. Running through the points in the motion, I agree that the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games were the best Games ever conducted. I agree also that all those responsible for Sydney's successful bid to host the Olympic Games, including the previous Coalition Government, deserve a warm round of applause for their work.

I think we all remember where we were on the night that Sydney won the right to host the Olympic Games. I enjoyed the conversation with backstroke Matt Welsh, who, seven years ago, was not even doing backstroke. At that time he thought he would simply attend a couple of events which would be good for Sydney. Seven years later he has a silver medal around his neck. There are many of these stories floating around Sydney at the moment. The volunteers in particular deserve warm congratulations. If there is a strong message from the Olympic Games it is the re-establishment of volunteerism in Australia. I heartily endorse what has been said by the Government in regard to taking the opportunity and trying to re-enhance volunteerism in New South Wales and in Australia. I shall return later to the volunteer movement and some of the opportunities that can be grabbed by the Government.

As well, the athletes deserve to be congratulated on their performances. I note the Minister's comments in relation to the New South Wales Institute of Sport and the work it has done. In relation to another portfolio area for which I am responsible, I congratulate Clubs New South Wales on providing funding to the New South Wales Institute of Sport and the opportunities that provides to many athletes. Over the two weeks of the Olympics it was certainly shown to be a successful program. Locally, I congratulate Lisa-Marie Vizaniari and her parents, who run the Greek tavern in Port Macquarie, as well as the Towers sisters, who won gold in the women's hockey. Julie Towers participated in the team; her sister, Kristen, just missed out but was sharing her sister's gold medal. Paragraph (4) of the motion refers to the people of New South Wales enthusiastically supporting the athletes from around the world. The torch relay brought people together and started the momentum. Without doubt, that momentum built up, rather than subsided, throughout the two weeks of the Olympic Games. It certainly was an event we all remember and will remember for the rest of our lives.

I turn now to some of the opportunities that are before this House. Since the Olympic Games finished many words have been spoken. I suppose it is my responsibility and the responsibility of this House to ensure that they are more than simply words, that there is action associated with them. I picked up some of the points made by the Minister for Sport and Recreation, and I heard some of the comments made by the Premier in relation to getting more people involved in a healthy lifestyle, for a start. I fully endorse the comment that our community can do a lot more to work towards promoting a healthy lifestyle. I fully endorse trying to get more young people involved in sporting activities and outdoor activities. I am pleased to hear that those words have been used.

I fully endorse also a government that backs up words with action. That would include, particularly on the North Coast, simple action such as not introducing entry fees for national parks and not increasing camping fees as we lead into summer. If those two simple initiatives are undertaken, that, rather than any speeches in this place, would do an enormous amount to promote a healthy lifestyle in New South Wales. I encourage the Minister and the Government to take those words on board if we are planning for a united future that will benefit us all.

I also encourage the Minister to keep a close and vigilant watch on what is happening with regard to Healthlands fitness centres, having regard to events that have occurred over the last three days. Potentially 20,000 to 30,000 members of fitness centres in Sydney are about to lose their memberships as Healthlands Australia has gone into voluntary administration. The matter has now been debated in this House for more than 12 months. I can inform the Minister that people have rung me saying that Healthlands is still selling memberships of more than 12 months, a matter that this House was supposed to have dealt with, and it is still selling memberships to gymnasiums that are yet to be built, another matter that this House was supposed to have dealt with. If we are to promote a healthy lifestyle in New South Wales, we do not want people taking out membership in good faith, only to find that their two-year, five-year or 10-year memberships have fallen in a heap one or two months later due to a gymnasium closing, or in fact an entire chain of gymnasiums closing, as we potentially face in Sydney as we speak.

I also encourage the Minister to look at the good faith and goodwill gesture of the capital assistance program [CAP] grants that are currently before us all. If this Government is serious about promoting a healthy lifestyle, I encourage the Minister to consider more substantial funding than the CAP grants that we have seen over the last few years. I know that the Minister is about to receive a letter from one member of the Opposition

who argues the case that all CAP grants should be funded this year as a gesture of goodwill. The applications have already been made, and therefore, as a gesture of goodwill, there is no reason why the Government and the Minister cannot accept that.

I also note the creative opportunity which the honourable member for Coffs Harbour has referred to on other occasions with regard to the donation to regional and rural New South Wales of any infrastructure equipment that was on lease or loan during the Olympic Games. That would be a tremendous gesture of goodwill. Whether it be excess seating or some of the equipment that was used during the Olympic Games, donating that material to regional communities would be a very positive step towards promoting a healthy lifestyle, and it would also amount to action rather than words.

We have all heard about the promotion of volunteers. Indeed, during question time today the Premier spoke about the promotion of volunteers. As we approach summer once again, there is a great opportunity for this House to do something about the promotion of volunteer surf lifesaving in New South Wales, that is, to do something to support service clubs in limiting the liability they are faced with on an ever-increasing basis. There is currently a case before the court, without being sub judice, involving the Elouera surf club, which is placing a huge burden on the entire surf lifesaving movement. If there were opportunities for a separate surf lifesaving Act, or opportunities for any sort of promotion of surf lifesaving and the limiting of public liability to surf lifesaving volunteers, that again would be an example of the actions of both the Premier and the Minister speaking louder than words.

With regard to major events, we are facing an interesting situation in Sydney with the so-called stadium wars, an issue which this city and the Government will have to deal with. Major event planning over the next 12 months to two years will be a significant problem that this Government will face. In December last year the Auditor-General wrote down the assets of the Sydney Cricket Ground and Sydney Football Stadium Trust by more than \$100 million. I am not sure whether that write-down has been included in the cost of the Olympics; I hope that it has been. However, that write-down is a significant concern when one compares it with the financial statement for Stadium Australia released two days before the opening ceremony, which indicated that Stadium Australia's operating loss before tax over the last year has been \$11.2 million.

The statement also makes the point that Stadium Australia has commenced legal action against the Australian Football League [AFL] regarding an event disagreement. The significance of this is that it was the AFL which, a couple of years ago, bailed out Stadium Australia through a \$1 million unconditional loan. The involvement of the AFL in a legal dispute with Stadium Australia has major implications for event management in Sydney and sports events management in New South Wales. It also raises many questions. First, it raises the question why this financial statement was issued two days before the opening ceremony. If one ever wants to bury a report, the best time to do so is to release it two days before a major event.

With regard to the Canterbury Bulldogs, the question to be asked is whether the Canterbury Bulldogs have re-signed with Stadium Australia. The Canterbury Bulldogs agreement terminated at the end of the 2000 NRL season, and their match attendance figures were declining. A further question to be asked concerns the reconfiguration and the impacts of the reconfiguration if the size of the Stadium is to be reduced to 80,000. The financial statement says that the reconfiguration program is yet to be finalised and its effect, if any, on scheduling of other events during the construction phase is yet to be determined. The question needs to be asked: What impact will that reconfiguration have on Stadium Australia's budget and on the taxpayers of New South Wales?

A further question to be asked is: Why is Stadium Australia management taking on the Australian Football League? Is it because the Swans have now walked away and are again playing at the Sydney Cricket Ground? Is it because there is no longer a North Melbourne club? Is it because the AFL grand final has fallen through? If we are to work in the spirit of bipartisanship these questions deserve open answers. What are the further impacts of the legal actions and the other issues raised in the financial statement?

This will be the significant planning issue and concern for the immediate future of this Government. It is a real problem that the Government faces, in that potentially we have one or the other in this State and this city—that is, either the Sydney Cricket Ground and Sydney Football Stadium Trust or Stadium Australia coming out a winner over the other. I hope that we are able to steer some middle ground. I hope it will not be a case of one having to fall over at the expense of the other. I think we are about to enter an era in which there will be, to some degree, some stadium wars. If we are to work on the promotion of sport, the Government will have to manage that issue deftly.

There is no question that we all support the spirit of this motion. The Olympics were fantastic. Without doubt, we have re-established volunteerism in New South Wales and Australia. I hope we will see some ripple-on effects into the entire volunteer movement. My sister was a volunteer. She enjoyed it immensely and found it to be one of the most rewarding experiences of her life. It is certainly a memory that we all hold and will retain fondly. However, there is a job to do for the future, and I think the post-Olympics, post-coital glow must be tested some time very soon, because we are looking for a future direction; we are now looking for action rather than words. Some very significant issues need to be dealt with today and in the immediate future to shape the future not only of the broader community of New South Wales but also of the sporting community of New South Wales. I urge the Government to get on with the job.

Mr SPEAKER: I welcome to the Chamber members of the Mortdale branch of the Australian Labor Party, who are guests of the honourable member for Georges River.

Mr W. D. SMITH (South Coast) [8.48 p.m.]: It is certainly with some pleasure and pride that I participate in the debate on the motion moved by the Premier in relation to the Sydney 2000 Olympics. When the plans for the Sydney Olympics began to unfold before the public eye, the realisation of the magnitude of the event started to sink in. I am sure there were many people who were saying, "What have we got ourselves in for here?" Well, as is the Aussie way, she'll be right, mate, attitude stirred quietly as an undercurrent beneath the growing and often frenzied attention in the months leading up to 15 September—an undercurrent of confidence in our ability to achieve the goal, despite what the doom and gloom merchants were saying. Never in recent Australian history have Australians felt more proud, more exuberant about she'll be right, mate, than during the Sydney 2000 Olympics because, of course, it was right, mate, in every possible way—with even the weather doing us proud.

The Olympic Games are about sports—dozens of sports. The athletes and competitors are the stars and the spectators pushed them on to win from the sporting venues, from home or from down at the local club. The Sydney Games brought the people of New South Wales and Australia together in a passionate display of unity and good spirits. I had the pleasure of sharing in that unity when I worked as a volunteer during the Games; it was a wonderful, wonderful experience. I met people of all ages and from all walks of life from all over Australia and from overseas—people who wanted to do their bit for Sydney and for the Olympic Games. I would not, and could not, have missed it for the world.

I met people from everywhere. The first volunteer to whom I spoke was in fact a volunteer who came from Switzerland. She decided to incorporate in her Australian holiday a two-week period as a volunteer for the Olympic Games. I met people from Darwin, Western Australia, Melbourne, Queensland and the United States of America—and what a delight that was, too! They were smiling, cheerful people who gave their time to help make the Games such a great success. One young person with whom I worked on one particular day came from Albion Park Rail, near Wollongong. She travelled by train every single day during the Games. When there was a 7.00 a.m. start, she would be up at 3.00 a.m. and her Dad drove her to the station. Another woman I met travelled from Newcastle every single day. What a fantastic effort!

A South Australian couple with whom I worked closed their motor mechanic business for two weeks so that they could work as volunteers at the Games. A middle-aged woman from out of town camped in a tent in her elderly mother's backyard in Sydney, such was the commitment to the work that was involved in volunteering. I worked at a part of Olympic Park known as the dome and pavilions which was approximately the size of 13 football fields. The sports in my particular area were basketball, handball, volleyball, badminton, modern pentathlon and rhythmic gymnastics. There were so many volunteers working in the small area in which I worked that the organisers produced a newsletter to convey information about what was going on in other parts of the world. Usually 100 or 200 volunteers arrived for a shift and were split into groups to be deployed to carry out various jobs. We did not know beforehand where we were going to be deployed or what we were going to do.

After a few days I think a few volunteers had particular jobs which we hoped we would get. In particular, I liked the ushering service because it meant that after people were seated, the volunteer got to watch the game in the venue. I got to see a basketball game and a volleyball game, but I must admit that I was somewhat perturbed at the volleyball game when the Chinese women were playing because 200 people from China turned up. I thought that half of the Chinese republic had arrived! I do not speak Mandarin, so it was a bit difficult for me to plonk them in the right seats, but somehow we managed.

I chose to be a volunteer because I wanted to be one of the crowd doing their bit and helping to make the Games as pleasant as I possibly could for visitors and to ensure that the friendly spirit of Sydney was

exemplified to the fullest. I did not see a heck of a lot of the Games. Together with the other volunteers, I was doing a job by helping spectators with directions, ushering people to seats at the venues and checking accreditation passes at certain points. The days were physically tiring because I was standing on the one spot for hour after hour and at times some of the jobs were a bit mundane.

The *Sun Herald* referred to the volunteers as the 47,000 heroes. Every commentator praised the volunteers for their enthusiasm and patience. A Canadian newspaper described the volunteers as "colourful to an extreme, polite to a fault and helpful as can be". For me personally, this praise is humbling but one cannot help feeling that being a part of that huge effort is deeply satisfying. It was a tremendous privilege, as an ordinary citizen, to be part of such a thrilling experience and it is something that I will certainly remember for the rest of my life.

The transport services for the Games were a major focus and I believe it is fair to say that the entire State of New South Wales held its breath. Yet, once again she'll be right, mate, attitude glowed brightly, much to the credit of transport workers, organisers and volunteers. I travelled by train from my parents' home at Lidcombe to Homebush. The journey is approximately three kilometres and I walked to the station each day and took a train to the venue. The services ran immaculately with hundreds of helpers ensuring that the crowds flowed smoothly and the spectators moved with ease between venues, seats and transport.

The enormity of the Games dawned on me when I first went to pick up my uniform. The uniforms were issued from a large disused railway shed in Redfern and when I walked into that shed I was amazed at the number of computers and people who were working there simply to issue uniforms. Volunteers had to follow a particular colour of line as we went from place to place to pick up various pieces of clothing. I was very pleased that the second person to whom I spoke on that day was a volunteer who came from the South Coast electorate. She had been travelling to Sydney for three months to participate in the distribution of those uniforms.

During all the years that I have travelled on trains in Sydney—some 40 years—I have never seen such friendliness and high spirits as I saw during the Olympics. Travellers—strangers—spoke to each other and there was none of the usual reading of the newspaper or staring out the window. Of course there was the ubiquitous "Aussie! Aussie! Aussie!" cheer. It was terrific to turn up at the Olympic Park railway station platform late at night and notice that the CityRail staff, who were still extremely enthusiastic in going about their tasks, would often start the "Aussie! Aussie! Aussie!" chant, with thousands of railway commuters in a unified voice responding "Oi! Oi! Oi!". What an experience!

The Minister for the Olympics did a sterling job. He and his teams should be complimented and congratulated on their astonishing skills in making this global event such a phenomenal success. Sydney impressed the world in the most admirable way, and all that is true blue about Australia's young and extraordinarily diverse culture was portrayed to the world. The skill behind the staging of the event demonstrates to the world that Australia delivers on its products and commitments, no matter how big they are. Sydney has given the world investment confidence. Millions of dollars in capital contracts have quite likely placed New South Wales businesses and industries in the spotlight for new prospects. I am pleased to say that contracts for glass, pipes and steel worth several million dollars were given to South Coast businesses during the Olympic Games.

On my first day at the Games, a chap from the village of Sussex Inlet, which is in my electorate, introduced himself to me. I asked him what he was doing in the particular venue in which I was working and I discovered that he was a carpet layer. His firm had won the contract to carpet the large venues in which I was working. There were at least five different overseas teams at the South Coast for pre-Games training. I am aware that overseas and interstate tourists visited the region during the two-week period. One particular example of technological advancement is the *Solar Sailor*—a solar and wind powered vessel—which was used as a hospitality vessel on the Sydney Harbour during the whole event.

I am also informed that the South Korean marathoners who had their Olympic training in my electorate will more than likely be back on a yearly basis to train on the South Coast. Certainly the people of Sydney and of New South Wales can be proud of the part they played in the success of the Olympic Games. The fresh, smiling faces and that hint of facetiousness showed the world that we do not take everything too seriously. I saw for myself that our visitors were fondly welcomed and put at ease. The spectators appreciated the attention and help at every turn. Our sense of humour and our ability to laugh at ourselves made the task of a volunteer that much easier. Who would have thought that the Games could have been impacted upon so much by two comedians and a fat-arse wombat? I will never look at Greco-Roman wrestling in the same light ever again, nor

gymnastics, diving or tae kwon do for that matter. To have international visitors going home with indelible images of a happy generous people with a wry sense of humour and an affable manner is something of which we can all be deeply proud. Certainly we can bathe in the afterglow.

I would like to compliment the unionised work force on its efforts. Venues were completed ahead of schedule. I compliment also the cleaners at the Games. The toilets and venues were spotless, and between sessions after 10,000 people left a venue the cleaners would comb the place and make it neat, tidy and clean for the next 10,000 spectators to come in about an hour later. Certainly that was an amazing achievement. It was also sheer pleasure to see the people of Australia brought together as a nation to show the world that we can achieve at an extremely high level. I am sure people will keep coming back for years. In my electorate the impact of the torch relay on the South Coast dawned upon me fairly early when hundreds of people lined the streets. On the day of the actual torch relay thousands of people lined the streets of the Shoalhaven. In fact, there were something like 25,000 people at the Nowra showground to witness the torch arrive.

The timing of the cauldron being lit as four naval helicopters flew overhead reflected the timing of the whole Games, the events, the transport and so forth. The timing was a reflection on a larger scale of what I saw in the torch relay in my electorate. I was certainly confident that this event would act as a glue or a unifying agent to bring my local community, the New South Wales community and the Australian community together. With many issues and debates dividing and polarising public opinion, the Olympics brought us together to work and feel an enormous sense of pride and satisfaction in being Australian. It was and still is an extremely proud moment for me to be involved in part of the Olympics. I am sure that the Paralympics will be just as successful and certainly a rewarding experience for all of us.

Ms MOORE (Bligh) [9.03 p.m.]: I support the motion. I congratulate all those involved in organising and staging the Sydney 2000 Games. I congratulate the Government, the public service, the private sector and the volunteers. I pay tribute to the inspiring athletes and the Australian community who supported all the competitors. I also pay tribute to Leo Schofield and the brilliant Olympic Arts Festival. I make these comments even though I was the one member of this House who, from the outset, had real reservations about the Games. When the Greiner Government bid for the Games I did not give my support until the former Government undertook a social impact study because of my fears about the loss of low-income housing and because of what had happened in the lead-up to and during the bicentenary.

Also in the lead-up to these Games I was concerned about the impact on my electorate of the invasion, as we have had such bad experiences of drunken antisocial violent behaviour at King's Cross, drunken antisocial violent homophobic behaviour in Oxford Street, drunken violent antisocial behaviour of football crowds leaving the sporting stadia, congested and gridlocked streets during events and the loss of our parkland for active sport and passive recreation, given up to car parking for sporting stadia patrons at Moore Park.

But my worst fears were unfounded and it was a magic two weeks. The live sites worked and gave people somewhere to go, to be involved and to celebrate in a civilised and sociable way. The live sites were a stroke of genius. The drunken antisocial incidents were minimised. The free events—the triathlon, the marathon and the cycling—enabled us all to stand on the side of our roads and cheer on athletes from all nations. Sydney indeed was magic. People travelled on public transport which worked, people walked in our city, our streets were free of polluting gridlock, and it seemed as though everyone was either at an event or a live site or glued to Channel 7 or 2BL, and we all got addicted. Indeed, for the very first time in my life I admit to listening to the 2BL sporting coverage and to watching the coverage on Channel 7, as did everyone else.

Indeed, most of the time the weather was brilliant. The Bligh electorate was quieter during the Olympics, with dramatically fewer cars on the roads, decreased congestion, reduced traffic noise and improved air quality. Despite reduced on-street parking due to special event clearways, conflict about limited parking space was generally reduced. Residential amenity on many inner-city streets improved during the Games. It was the very opposite of what I feared. I have nothing but praise for the public transport to Homebush, the management of crowds, the welcoming volunteers and the friendly State Rail staff. The architecture of the sports complex is exciting and it worked well. Like the thousands of others who attended the fantastic Olympic soccer matches at the Sydney Football Stadium or Moore Park, I walked to the venue.

The night we went to *Troilus and Cressida* was balmy and our citizens and visitors were promenading around Circular Quay and the Opera House. The Navy band played as the medals for sailing were awarded. The harbour glistened. The commencement of *Troilus and Cressida* was postponed so we could watch the Cathy Freeman race on screens located around a corpulent naked Achilles who was drinking from a beer can. It was

pure Sydney 2000. It was two weeks of Utopia and I feel sorry for all those people who left Sydney to escape the invasion—they will never know what they missed. No wonder we did not want it to end. In the *Sydney Morning Herald* Adele Horin put it well when she stated:

We have tasted a city that works, buzzes with energy, and overflows with civility. We can't let the feeling evaporate when the sports gods and goddesses, the officials and the tourists, depart.

What worked and what didn't needs to be the focus of a Games post-mortem. For the sake of the team left behind, four million Sydneysiders, we need to preserve the best of what the Olympics taught us, and of what we learnt about ourselves. And we also need to be apprised of the Olympic's true costs.

Indeed, I believe the best congratulations that we can give to the people who made the Olympics work is to make sure that the benefits last for more than two weeks. Public transport worked because of a public transport only policy that ensured that parking was not available at venues, that public transport costs were included in ticketing, and that all necessary resources were provided to ensure its smooth operation. The Olympics spectators responded to the public transport only message and discovered that they could get to and from Olympic venues in a remarkably efficient, safe and pleasant way. The Olympics have given us a vision that we can end private car use for special events that are accessible by public transport or by walking. We can reclaim our suburbs and our parklands from cars. We must end the decades of underfunding public transport services and overfunding road building and private vehicle use.

The Sydney Olympics were to be the Green Olympics. One of the enduring legacies should be a shift to public transport which provides a long-term benefit to Sydney's environment and its amenity for Sydney's residents. I was therefore amazed and alarmed by recent media reports that the Government is considering cutting train services and extending travel times to improve rail reliability. Sydney needs additional public transport funding to maintain, upgrade and extend Sydney's rail system. We also need an ongoing public transport only policy for special events in the Moore Park area and the infrastructure to make it work. We need ongoing advertising and public promotion to keep spectators out of their cars and on public transport. We need to continue the special events parking scheme and introduce high parking fines which can effectively discourage spectators from parking on local residential streets and destroying inner-city parkland.

Light rail should be extended to service high traffic-generating venues along the route to Moore Park and Kensington, including Oxford Street entertainment venues, the sporting stadia, the race course and the University of New South Wales, as well as providing the densely populated residential suburbs along the route with efficient, reliable public transport. Light rail should replace, rather than compete with, buses; it is less polluting, uses narrower lanes, and has a greater passenger capacity and faster loading times.

If the Government is to achieve a new transport vision for Sydney, we need a radical reorganisation of the roads and traffic portfolios. New South Wales needs an ongoing transport planning authority that is responsible for the overall planning of our public and private transport infrastructure. We need a body that will ensure that public transport opportunities are considered in all new road projects, particularly when a modal shift to public transport can prevent the need for new road infrastructure.

We need to end the dominance of the Roads and Traffic Authority in building more and bigger roads. We need to make it more open and accountable and ensure that it consults road users, including pedestrians and cyclists, and residents. We need to end the dispute between providers of bus, train and ferry services, all looking for the most profitable routes, and to choose the best form of public transport. We need a co-ordinated body that can achieve integrated bus-train-ferry ticketing and timetabling, so that passengers are not disadvantaged by having to change transport modes.

I now look at the issue of homelessness. Shelter New South Wales co-ordinated a count of homeless people living in the inner city during September in order to establish a reliable estimate of people sleeping rough on Sydney streets. The count was also intended to record the experiences of homeless people before and during the Olympics. Initial results suggest that the numbers are up by between 500 and 1,000. I call upon the Government to take the necessary action to ensure that homeless people are able to access appropriate services and to consider retaining the emergency accommodation booked by the Department of Housing during the Games in anticipation of an increase in homelessness, which traditionally accompanies hallmark events.

Policing during the Games period showed the overwhelming success of community policing strategies. Both the general public and police officers have said that crime, violence and antisocial behaviour were far less problematic than had been anticipated. I hope that the Olympic policing experience will put paid to any plans to close local police stations and amalgamate them into super local area commands—the opposite of community policing. What the community and the majority of police officers want is policing at a local level, which means more uniformed beat police.

In his recent comment in the *Sydney Morning Herald* Hugh Mackay cautioned against expecting too much from the huge success of the 2000 Olympic Games. He maintains that expenditure in the vicinity of \$8 billion buys a highly successful sporting event, but perhaps not much else. However, I believe that if we are to capitalise on the tremendously positive energy that emerged from these Games, we need to harness it in ways that will give the city, the State and the nation a long-lasting legacy. I support the proposal by Council of Social Service of New South Wales for a post-Olympics inquiry, to be carried out by SOCOG, that extends beyond the evaluation of the event itself.

A comprehensive assessment of the Games' aftermath and impact on the city and the State is essential if we are to benefit as far as possible from lessons learned in staging hallmark events, and if Sydney's legacy is to have maximum value. I would welcome the establishment of a parliamentary committee to conduct such an inquiry, and I have suggested that the Olympics Social Impact Advisory Committee could conclude its brief by establishing this committee.

Mr MARTIN (Bathurst) [9.13 p.m.]: I support the motion moved by the Premier, which has been embraced with bipartisan support. I would like to speak from the perspective of a member representing a country electorate because in the lead-up to the Games there was some discussion about the Sydney Games being a city-centric event, with country New South Wales being left out. There is no doubt that the Olympic Games were embraced by country New South Wales. People in country New South Wales really took to and supported the Olympic torch relay. As was mentioned by the honourable member for Lachlan, the torch was carried through every country electorate in this State. Wherever it went, there were literally thousands of people. That started the emotional rollercoaster that got people very much involved in the Olympics.

There would be no more typical example of the involvement of country New South Wales than that of the electorate of Bathurst. The city of Bathurst played a very prominent role as the home for the marching bands. Initially, the involvement of those bands in the Olympic events was surrounded by some controversy but the bands finished in a blaze of glory. Bathurst won its bid, in competition to those of many other New South Wales cities, to host the bands. It is of great credit to the Mayor of Bathurst, Ian McIntosh, and the council that they took the lead in putting that bid together. They were joined by Charles Sturt University. Many Bathurst schools, especially boarding schools and the university, took an extra week's holiday so that their dormitory and accommodation facilities could be available to host the 2,000 band members who were in Bathurst for the two weeks leading up to the Games.

For a city with a population of just over 30,000 to accommodate 2,000 band people plus some of their families and officials is a major effort. Some of the young people were from overseas, with the balance being from other parts of Australia. Some 600 of them who were home hosted got to savour real Australian hospitality by being hosted in a country town with a country family. Many enduring friendships were formed among the young people and their families. Already tributes are flowing in from overseas families thanking the people of Bathurst for their contribution. Recently the *Western Advocate* carried a full-page advertisement inserted by the organisers of the Sydney 2000 Olympic Band. I take this opportunity to read that into *Hansard*. Under the heading "Thank You Bathurst!" the advertisement stated:

The Sydney 2000 Olympic Band and World Projects Corporation would like to say a huge **Thank You** to the people of Bathurst for your warm hospitality and support of the Sydney 2000 Olympic Band. This was an enormous project, and many of you provided services, entertainment and accommodation, while others provided general welcome and assistance.

We had some difficulties to overcome, including at times the weather. We tried to convince our overseas visitors that it could be cold in Australia, but some were unprepared. The staff and the band members were overwhelmed by the generous donations of warm clothing from Bathurst residents. During our preparatory visits to Bathurst, World Projects Corporation Staff always received friendliness and support, and this made our work so much easier.

You are champions, and we could not have done it without you.

The advertisement was signed by Ric Birch, Director of Ceremonies; Bill Lutt, Producer; Barry Spanier, Artistic Director; and other executives. This gave Bathurst the opportunity to put itself on the international map. The city of Bathurst and its people will reap the benefit of this for many years to come. Of course, having the bands in Bathurst was a financial windfall for the community. Much has been said about there being not many financial benefits from the Olympics for regional and country New South Wales, but it is estimated that the band members, over the two weeks that they were practising in Bathurst in the lead-up to the opening ceremony, injected close on \$3 million into the local economy.

It was rather fitting that, on the day before the bands people left for the opening ceremony, they put on an impromptu concert at the Charles Sturt University. That was attended by thousands of people from the

region. That contributed markedly to the goodwill that was engendered, inspiring many people from the city of Bathurst and surrounding region to make a belated effort to get to Sydney to be part of the Games. It is interesting that the initial controversy surrounding the marching bands which was led by some prominent members of the Sydney media was shown to be the fallacy that I always argued it was. I am delighted that we were able to stave off those efforts by the Lawses, Philip Clarks and Alan Joneses to have the decision regarding the international marching bands overturned, because they were always going to have a seven- or eight-minute part in the four-hour opening ceremony.

Anyone who witnessed that event would attest that the bands added an appropriate international flavour to the opening ceremony. The Olympic torch event, of course, was the first opportunity that the bands had to perform. On Saturday 2 September, when the flame stayed overnight in Bathurst, the band was just arriving. I was in Russell Street, outside the council chamber, in the forecourt of the historic Bathurst courthouse, when a thousand of the band members who had arrived put on an impromptu concert, conducted from the top of a cherry picker. From that moment it was obvious that they would have a fantastic impact during the opening ceremony, given that another thousand of them were still to arrive.

The Olympic torch relay galvanised people in country New South Wales. The torch moved to my home city of Lithgow after spending the night in Bathurst. Marjorie Jackson participated in the torch relay. Marjorie, a member of the SOCOG board who is well-known as the Lithgow Flash, is a dual gold medallist from Helsinki. She was the first Australian woman to win a gold medal on the track. When Marjorie was an Olympic athlete 48 years ago she broke eight or nine world records. If we take into account the times that she was running then, we realise that she would have made the Australian track and field team for the 2000 Olympics. Honourable members can see the calibre of athlete that she was.

Marjorie came back from Helsinki as a 22-year-old. In those days women athletes had short careers. They retired from sport and married. Honourable members can imagine the impact that Marjorie would have had if she had been given the resources that athletes have today. Marjorie carried the torch in Lithgow on the same cinders track that the people of Lithgow built for her in the late 1940s and early 1950s. Marjorie used to train at night using car headlights for illumination. It was an emotional experience to see her carrying the torch at 8.30 on a chilly Sunday morning in Lithgow, an event witnessed by the 3,000 or 4,000 people who were crowded around the track.

Later in the day the community witnessed the unveiling of a life-size statue of Marjorie Jackson in Queen Elizabeth Park, Lithgow. It is estimated that 6,000 to 7,000 people attended that event. Members of the Polish canoeing team were also present as they had been training in Lithgow in the weeks leading up to the Olympics. So the people of Bathurst and Lithgow experienced the spirit of the Olympics in the lead-up to the Games. Lithgow made another contribution to the Games. Since World War II 11 Olympians have come from Lithgow, which is a fairly unique record. If we include in that number Roy Slaven it could be said that there were 12.

Mr SPEAKER: An icon.

Mr MARTIN: Indeed. Roy and I were schoolmates at St Patricks Primary School in Lithgow. The day that Marjorie Jackson was in Lithgow we unveiled the statue. We hosted a dinner that night and Roy chaired the night's proceedings. The people in Lithgow got a dress rehearsal of what was to come, so *The Dream* was no surprise to anyone. Other contributions were made by people from my electorate. Robyn Bannerman, manager of umpires at the Olympic Games, came from Lithgow. Young Kert Fearnley from Blayney participated in the Games. I am sure that many people would have seen him finish fourth in the 1,500 metres exhibition race; he was just short of a medal. Country New South Wales has made a major contribution to the Games. That speaks volumes for the goodwill, spirit and co-operation to be found in country New South Wales. People in the country thought that they would be left out of the Games but that did not happen.

The spirit and co-operation were wonderful. I and many people from the country used the transport system and attended as many Olympic events as we could. It was a wonderful experience. I met an amazing number of country people who said that they got caught up in the spirit of the torch relay and felt that they had to be part of the Games. For most of us it was a once in a lifetime opportunity. In the words of the Minister for Transport, the people of country New South Wales give Sydney a big tick for its performance. Sydney was the focus of the Games, and deservedly so. It was recognised by the President of SOCOG, the Minister for the Olympics, the Hon. Michael Knight, and the Premier that whilst Sydney was a jewel in the crown many diamonds surrounded it and many of those diamonds were to be found in country New South Wales.

The Olympics were a wonderful success. Praise should go to those in the former Coalition Government who won the bid, as well as the current Government, which did a magnificent job in delivering first-class Games. As the President of the International Olympic Committee said, they were the best Games ever. We should all reflect on that. I take the point made by the honourable member for Heathcote that we should learn from and build on the lessons provided by the Games. Unfortunately, that wonderful two-week period had to come to an end but we have a legacy on which to build. We look forward to saying in the years to come that whilst it was a wonderful sporting festival, and Australia did very well, much better on a per capita basis than was expected, we have learned lessons about co-operation and the operation of public facilities. We must build on that legacy, the real legacy of the 2000 Games. I commend the motion to the House.

Mr STONER (Oxley) [9.26 p.m.]: I support the motion moved by the Premier. By any measure the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games were an outstanding success. When International Olympic Committee President Juan Antonio Samaranch proclaimed the Sydney Games as the best ever it came as no surprise to the residents of New South Wales, particularly those who attended the Games in the preceding two weeks. We witnessed Sydney at its very best. The spirit and atmosphere in Sydney were electric. I am sure that all those who participated in the Games in any way, shape or form, acknowledge the sterling job done by everyone who had a hand in the preparation, planning and implementation of the Games, including, obviously, the Minister for the Olympics and SOCOG President, the board of SOCOG, the workers of SOCOG and the volunteers. We must acknowledge their contribution to the best ever Olympic Games held in Sydney in 2000.

I want to speak particularly about the contribution of country areas of New South Wales to the Games. Sydney certainly had the starring role, but it was well and truly supported by a large cast, including every region of country New South Wales. I will comment on the contribution of the mid North Coast and, in particular, the Oxley electorate. In my view the mid North Coast and the Oxley electorate deserve a gold medal for their enormous contribution to the success of the Sydney Olympics. Every member who has spoken tonight commented on the spirit, the feeling and the success of the torch relay as it wound its way through New South Wales. It came through the mid North Coast, beginning in the Coffs Harbour area and moving on to Urunga, where a magnificent reception organised by Bellingen Shire Council was held. It was hosted by the Anchors Wharf Restaurant on the Kalang River at Urunga, which I commend to all honourable members.

That was the first glimpse that I caught of the torch relay. Every resident of Urunga lined up along the Pacific Highway, something that I have never seen before. That, for me, was my first taste of the Games. The spirit was unbelievable. The pride of every Australian in Urunga in the northern part of the Oxley electorate was on show on that day. The torch moved down to Nambucca Heads, where former Olympians John Monckton and his wife, Maureen, who competed in the Melbourne Olympics in 1956, were part of the relay. The torch moved on to Kempsey, where there was an afternoon tea reception and the lighting of a cauldron. The torch then moved on to Port Macquarie, where the flame stayed overnight and a major cauldron was lit. I congratulate all the runners involved. They did the country proud. Their supporters were out in force and it was a magnificent start to the Olympics.

Many of the volunteers came from the Oxley electorate, including members of the Rural Fire Service. As honourable members are no doubt aware, the North Coast and the mid North Coast have had a difficult time in recent weeks with the number of bushfires, many of which, unfortunately, were deliberately lit. Nevertheless, Rural Fire Service volunteers were out in force at the Games. I mention Tony Galati from Johns River. Anyone who has ever stopped at the service station at Johns River will know Tony. He is a very pleasant and friendly fellow. Tony spent three weeks in Sydney. He was stationed at Olympic Park and was one of the volunteers who greeted people getting off the train and coming into the Olympic precinct. He did a sterling job, as did all volunteers who presented the face of the Games, the face of Australia: friendly, helpful and polite. I have never seen anything like it, and certainly the volunteers, including those from the Oxley electorate, played an enormous part in the success of the Games.

The electorate of Oxley also contributed many officials for the Games. Karen Liddell from the Nambucca district was the chief softball scorer. Australia went very well in softball and Karen did a magnificent job. The venues and the village had a major input from the mid North Coast, not only from the tradesmen who travelled to Sydney and lived here for a time while they contributed to the work force, but also from Port Macquarie Slipways, which did some work on the aquatic venues; Lahey Constructions from Kempsey, which constructed the Clydesdale pavilion; and ASF Horner from Wauchope, which constructed the basketball flooring in the SuperDome and built three sports floors for the Olympics. The mid North Coast made a significant contribution in the construction of venues and the village. Most of the native flowers that were mentioned earlier were grown on the mid North Coast, including the waratahs.

Mr Markham: Kangaroo paws.

Mr STONER: Don't forget the kangaroo paws!

Mr Markham: Kempsey.

Mr STONER: Absolutely.

Mr Markham: And the CDEP program involved.

Mr STONER: That is right. Akubra Hats contributed some 300 hats to the Games. Although the company was not involved in the Olympic uniform, unlike previous years, nevertheless it contributed 300 Snowy River hats for the medal presenters. There was a unique Aussie theme to the Games to which Akubra Hats contributed. The honourable member for Wollongong will also be interested in a band from Kempsey, Colourblind, which features young Aboriginal artists and which performed in Darling Harbour on several nights throughout the Games. That band was excellent.

Syd Howard Fireworks from Kempsey contributed to the closing ceremony and arranged for fireworks for all the regional venues at the end of the closing ceremony. Once again, Syd Howard Fireworks played a very important role in the showcasing of Australian talent to the world. Fresh food came from the Oxley electorate as well: beef, dairy products and fruit and vegetables. All of that went towards feeding the huge contingent at the Olympic Village and other venues associated with the Games. Schoolchildren from schools on the mid North Coast, from the Nambucca, Kempsey and Hastings districts, were involved in the choir in the opening and closing ceremonies. In addition, bus drivers and buses came from the electorate, as well as police. The women's basketball and hockey uniforms were made in Port Macquarie. Oars for the rowing were made on Oxley Island, near Taree. One would have to agree the mid North Coast, particularly the Oxley electorate, made a significant contribution to the Games.

Many spectators travelled from the mid North Coast to the Olympics, thus contributing to the financial returns of the Games. They cheered on the Australian teams, which was a major factor in the great success of Australian athletes. People from country New South Wales, particularly the mid North Coast, contributed towards the infrastructure for the Games: the venues, the roads, the trains, the staffing. They contributed by foregoing some of the funding they would normally expect for maintenance and infrastructure improvements in country areas. I mention particularly roads, schools, hospitals, and police numbers. Sydney has certainly received enormous investment as a result of the Games, and I would like to think that in a post-Olympics infrastructure program some focus would turn to country New South Wales. I mention in particular local roads such as the Maria River Road, the Comboyne to Wingham Road, and the bypasses at Kew, Kempsey and Macksville. The upgrading of those roads are much-needed roadworks. I hope some capital moneys will be freed up and invested in the Oxley electorate to improve roads and other infrastructure.

Four Paralympians from the Kempsey shire will participate in the upcoming Games. These Games will be Terry Giddy's sixth Paralympics. He will compete in the shot-put and discus events. Ted Bray is the captain of the Australian sitting volleyball team and Amy Winters is the current world record holder in the 200 metres women's sprint and a gold medallist at the Atlanta Paralympics. Mark Altmann is in the Australian Paralympic swimming team. The Kempsey shire has the highest representation of athletes in the Paralympic Games of any locality in Australia. The residents of Kempsey and Macleay are justifiably proud of that. At present the members of the Canadian goalball team is training in Kempsey, and we are very proud to have them there. I conclude by congratulating New South Wales on the success of the best ever Olympic Games. I look forward to the best ever Paralympic Games. I acknowledge the enormous contribution of country areas such as the Oxley electorate to those Games.

Mr MARKHAM (Wollongong—Parliamentary Secretary) [9.38 p.m.]: What a great opportunity this debate presents to be part of the Olympic movement. I congratulate the Premier on moving this motion and I congratulate both sides of the House on the bipartisan approach they have taken in acknowledging so many people: volunteers, police and transport workers. It has all been said in this debate. Let me add another perspective to Parliament's celebrations of the Olympic Games. I did not get the opportunity to attend any events, but a couple of weeks ago I had dinner with the South African sports Minister and the sports Minister from Malawi. They indicated surprise that what Sydney, New South Wales and Australia had put on was absolutely incredible. That was during the early part of the Olympic Games.

I was in South Africa some weeks ago. Every time I was in a major city where I was able to watch a television news program, the promotion for the program showed a panning out from the heads of Sydney

Harbour, past the Opera House, under the harbour bridge and up to Homebush Bay. How much better international publicity could one get than something like that? Then the news program went on perhaps to talk about athletes from South Africa and what they hoped to achieve. Honourable members will remember the opening night when 13-year-old Nikki Webster and the Aboriginal dancer from the Bangarra Dance Company, Djakapurra, showcased Australia's indigenous culture to the whole world. I believe the whole world will never forget that or the closing ceremony, which showed the world what indigenous culture and the icons of Australian culture are all about.

Let us look at some of the sports people from the many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, apart from Cathy Freeman, who participated in the Games. We all love and applauded Cathy Freeman: there are no two ways about it. Her involvement in the opening ceremony and then winning the women's 400 metre sprint and participating in the women's 200 metre sprint and the 4 x 400 relay gave Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture a real boost in this country. We had people like Nova Peris-Kneebone, Patrick Johnson, Kyle vander Kuyp, James Swan, Henry Collins, Daniel Geale, Bradley Hore, Anthony Martin, Bridgette Star and Kasey Wehrmann. At the Paralympics we will be watching Warren Lawton, a Paralympian representing Australia in goalball.

This afternoon the Premier, in his contribution to this debate, said that goalball was one of the hardest Olympic sports to understand. The crowd must be absolutely quiet because the visually impaired athletes must be able to hear the tinkle of the ball to know where it is. Warren Lawton, who was born in Murri and bred in Augathella near Charleville in Queensland, has been selected in the Australian Paralympics team for the first time. Warren will be competing in goalball, which is played by athletes who are visually impaired or blind. In this game there are two teams of three players who throw a ball containing bells along the ground at great speed towards the opponents' goal. Each team must defend their goal, just as they do in soccer. Warren is one of the fastest throwers in the world. I put on the record a comment made by Warren:

Have confidence in yourself and don't give up on what you want to achieve. Don't let our colour or disability stop us from achieving our goals and our dreams.

That epitomises what the Sydney Olympic Games have been about. We should all take note of what this young Aboriginal guy said. The tough life he has led has not deterred him from following his sport to the highest level within the Olympic movement and within the international sports arena. Let us consider people who were disappointed for one reason or another, not the losers of events but people who did not quite get there. I refer to Bradley Hore. In 1999 Bradley won the gold medal in the 48 kilogram division of the Oceania boxing championships. Bradley was the unluckiest fighter in the 48 kilogram weight group in the Australian camp at the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games. Why? Bradley was to compete but when he stepped on the scales at the weigh-in the day before the opening ceremony he weighed 49 kilograms—one kilogram heavier than his weight division.

With only 10 minutes to lose that extra kilogram, Hore and the team manager decided to withdraw him from the competition. Hore could have stepped up to the 51 kilogram division but Australia had already entered Perth's Erle Wiltshire in that division. This young Aboriginal man stayed on as a non-fighting member of the Australian team to help his team mates. Bradley was born at Blacktown in Sydney's west and now lives at Girraween. He is a true all-rounder. He also enjoys rugby league, soccer, touch football, cricket and golf. That is the sort of thing we do not hear so much of in the media. Some of the issues raised and some of the comments made this afternoon show us what the Olympics period is all about. More importantly, they show us what sporting achievements are all about and how that encourages people, whether they are migrants or indigenous people from the Torres Strait Islands or the other States and Territories of this great country, to participate.

I refer briefly to the delivery of the Olympic flame throughout Australia. I remember being in Lang Park in Wollongong on 11 September when the Wollongong community gathered to see the incredible event of the cauldron being lit. The cauldron in Wollongong was lit by the Olympic basketballer Michele Timms, who was accompanied by a young woman from St Mary Star of the Sea College, Alison Burgess. The community was able to embrace the lighting of the cauldron as part of the Olympic dream. In the Illawarra and in my home town of Wollongong there are Olympians such as Louise Curry in the javelin; Andrew Curry in the javelin; Kerryn McCann, a marathon runner; Adrian Hatcher in the javelin; Brian Morton in the K2 1000 kayaking; Megan Warthold in the women's 58 kilogram weightlifting class; and Danielle Woodward in the women's K1 kayaking. Danielle retired after the great event and her great effort in the Olympic Games at Penrith Park.

Some time ago the Australian Olympic Games Team Fund Wollongong Corporate Committee was established under the chairmanship of David Morgan Williams. The committee wanted to build a tribute wall,

and the only tribute wall in Australia was built in Wollongong with the approval of the Olympic Games committee. The wall is made out of polished granite with the names of past and present Olympians inscribed on it, and provides for the names of future Illawarra Olympians to be inscribed on it. The wall was designed by Ian Brammer, D. M. Taylor and Martin Vaughan. The idea for the wall came from Ted Tobin as a way of raising \$250,000 in the Illawarra community for Olympic athletes.

All materials, goods and services were donated by local businesses: Carmarda and Cantrill, TAFE civil engineering students and Wollongong City Council. They worked on the wall and put it together. The wall is a great way of recognising the great contribution of the Wollongong community to the Olympic team and it will link the region to the Games. About 200 individuals—and that number is increasing—donated \$250 to have their names engraved on the tribute wall, and other larger contributions have been made by businesses and corporations. That shows how it has all come together. It has not been them and us; it has been us working together to deliver the best Olympic Games this planet has ever seen.

Last week I visited Brewarrina and Bourke over a period of three days to talk with Aboriginal communities, Aboriginal leaders and Aboriginal elders. Everywhere I went, our discussions revolved around Cathy Freeman, the great opening ceremony, the great closing ceremony, and Aboriginal culture and history as depicted at the opening ceremony by the dreaming story of sea, land and fire. Cathy's great event of lighting the flame which burned for 17 days was something that really raised the hopes of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders in this country.

Society as a whole must ensure that the expectations of this country's indigenous peoples are delivered in the areas of health, education and housing. As they have said to the world, Australia has the oldest culture in the world. The world has seen the mix of what we offer and what has happened since Europeans came to this country 213 years ago. Let us get together and show the world in 10 years time that what we have done in this country to deliver the best Olympic Games ever has transferred into delivering the best service possible for Aboriginal people in this country.

Mr TINK (Epping) [9.51 p.m.]: I would like to add my congratulations to everyone involved in the extremely successful delivery of the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games. In doing so, it is also important to acknowledge the role played in particular by Nick Greiner, John Fahey, Bruce Baird and Rod McGeoch in getting the Games here in the first place. It is worth recalling also that the vote of the International Olympic Committee [IOC] at the time was as close as it could be. I personally think that one of the ingredients that went into a successful campaign to secure the Games in the first place was the extremely broad-based multicultural society that we have in this country, in particular in Sydney. I believe it was a distinct asset in impressing the IOC delegates who voted in 1993 to give Sydney the Games and in giving them in their many diverse cultures, languages and lands the message about what Sydney had to offer. It is obvious, as has been recognised by the president of the IOC, that consequential upon that close vote the city and all those who have been involved in delivery of the Games have not let their confidence down.

One thing that intrigued me about the Games as they were played out was the strong role of this multicultural community in delivering the Games successfully to a very wide and diverse group of guests who came here as athletes, supporters and visitors over the last few weeks. One unfortunate incident that stuck in my mind involved a gaol escape. When the volunteers who were unfortunately caught up with the escapees for a short time were interviewed, it was discovered that they were in fact Korean volunteers. They were people from the Korean community in Australia who were providing support as volunteers to the Korean team and supporting that Korean team through their local cultural contacts and their background as Korean speakers. As I have a very significant Korean community in my electorate, as does the honourable member for Ryde, it was outstanding to see the volunteer program extended to such communities in such an effective fashion.

I congratulate the frontline police who played a key role in the Games, and also the armed forces from around the country who supported them. I understand that about 4,000 people from the armed forces supported the police. As I travelled around the place I spoke to various police officers I met, and a couple of incidents stick in my mind. One incident in particular occurred at the Homebush Bay precinct itself. It was one of the few nights during the Games when the weather turned quite cold. A police officer was standing there in his short-sleeve shirt. I went up to him, we had some idle conversation, I remarked that he looked pretty cold, and I asked where was his coat. He said to me, "Mate, I'm from Armidale. In Armidale this would be a heatwave at this time of the year." That sort of spirit was exhibited by the police officers and all those who were involved with the Games.

Another incident that I recall occurred here at Parliament House very late on the night of the closing ceremony. The mother of all parties was had out the back, in the Domain. Things were pretty lively and the

police were using the Parliament House cafeteria as a base. It was interesting to go into the cafeteria, have a bit of a chat with the police officers, and find out how things were going. Those police did a great job. As someone mentioned earlier in this debate, it was really a case of exercising commonsense and simply calming down people who were getting a bit exuberant, throwing things and so on, and really having effective control over the situation with a minimum of arrests.

I should also like to place on record my appreciation to the police of my electorate. The torch relay came through the Epping electorate on 13 September. A major community celebration took place when the community cauldron was lit at lunchtime on 13 September at Pennant Hills Park, which is a park at the bottom of a road that has just one entry in and out from Pennant Hills Road. It was a fairly narrow and constricted area that was chosen by SOCOG, I believe, and the police basically had to make the best of it. There were various estimations about the possible crowd, but no-one really had any idea how many people would attend. In any event, it transpired that somewhere between 40,000 and 60,000 people turned up. This all landed in the lap of the Eastwood command. I pay particular tribute and thank Superintendent Williams, Inspectors Frank Mennilli, Eddie Kain and all the people whom they led on that day, which was quite a significant group. There were times when they had their work cut out for them, with the crowd coming across Pennant Hills Road, and I believe they did a fabulous job in the circumstances.

It was an extremely successful day. I was privileged to work with a group from Hornsby council who worked on the format for the day. I place on record my thanks to Gabrielle Last and Joanne Lester, and all the other employees of Hornsby council, who helped to organise the day. I also pay tribute to the many volunteers from the Epping electorate, along with the volunteers from all electorates around New South Wales. Every day I was struck by the range and colour of all the uniforms that seemed to converge on all the stations in my electorate. Throughout the day and the evening, people were coming and going at all hours, always, it seemed, in good humour and with smiles on their faces—even after putting in 12-hour days at Homebush, having spent an hour or so getting there and an hour or so getting back. I will long remember that. Obviously, for them that involvement was a real highlight in their lives, and it was one of the truly successful elements of the Games.

I also acknowledge the involvement of the Canadian administrative support group for the Canadian team, which was headquartered at Macquarie University in my electorate. The Canadian Paralympic support team will also be headquartered at Macquarie University over the coming couple of weeks for the Paralympic Games. It is important to acknowledge the initiative taken by Ryde City Council, through the leadership of successive mayors, to implement a program whereby schoolchildren from virtually every public school in the city of Ryde wrote to children in schools right across Canada and to a number of Canadian athletes who were competing, and provided them with friendly support during their time here.

It is always a battle to figure out whether people are supporting the Canadians or the Australians. I heard quite an amusing story from the general manager of The Hills Motorway, who was prevailed upon to hoist the Canadian flag on the only flagstaff on the motorway. That was met with a fair bit of resistance by a number of motorists, who promptly phoned the manager on their mobile phones demanding to know why The Hills Motorway was backing Canada. The local council had a few more flagpoles at its disposal and managed to have the Australian flag and the Canadian flag hoisted at the same time.

Those general hiccups occurred, but generally the goodwill towards the Canadians and the goodwill reciprocated by the Canadians was something very special. That impression will remain with children who have been lucky enough to attend public schools in Ryde during the Olympics and be involved in what I think is a very special partnership. I look forward to that partnership emerging again over the next couple of weeks during the Paralympics. I add my congratulations to all involved. The Olympic Games have been very special. I hope that some of the spirit that has been generated will remain for the longer term.

Ms ALLAN (Wentworthville) [10.00 p.m.]: During this debate, I will make a few personal and political comments about the Olympic Games. First of all I express my appreciation of my partner, Philip Marjason, who took the initiative 12 months ago to actually organise tickets in the first round of the allocation and who did the hard work of perusing the booklet, which was fairly complex. He was very successful in managing to get 80 per cent of the tickets that he ordered. We missed out on the opportunity to participate in the opening ceremony but, nevertheless, we were able to attend a series of events. Had the organisation been left to me, we probably would not have got to the Games. I must say that those events were very enjoyable.

I emphasise my enjoyment of them because I also carted a four-year-old child to most of the events. Although I saw many elderly people and families attending many of the events, people who decide to take

toddlers to anything like the Olympic Games deserve a gold medal for their participation. The stand-out event was the beach volleyball because of the atmosphere, organisation, smoothness and overall pleasure of involvement, not only in relation to the beach itself but also in relation to the actual facilities that were provided for the event. We also attended the women's hockey at Olympic Park and the softball at Blacktown. My husband and other members of the family attended the soccer matches as well. Generally speaking, we thoroughly enjoyed every event that we attended and we certainly found something that other honourable members have already referred during this debate, and in which the Minister has taken due delight—the transport system worked well.

The public transport system has certainly created such a high standard of operation that I think many commuters around Sydney and in other parts of New South Wales will be seeking to measure future performance by it. Heaven help any government that fails to reach the high standard that has been set. In common with previous participants in this debate, I thank the volunteers, a considerable number of whom were from my electorate and enjoyed the experience. It was mentioned during question time that many teachers participated as volunteers. Many councillors also participated. I have four local government areas in my electorate and local councillors from each local government area offered themselves as volunteers, as did other members of the community.

There were not a large number of successful athletes from my electorate, but I particularly mention Brad McGee, who was a bronze medallist in the cycling events. Brad is a Toongabbie boy, born and bred, and over many years has been an active participant in the sporting community of Toongabbie. He won his medal despite having a broken collarbone, and he showed not only enormous skill on the day but enormous fortitude to even participate in the event. The torch was also carried through my electorate at a time when it would not have been expected to be of great public interest, namely approximately 5.00 a.m. or 6.00 a.m. Nevertheless, it was an amazing experience. Many hundreds of local people actually got out of bed that morning specifically to go to the Cumberland Highway and other parts of the electorate to see the torch go through the electorate of Wentworthville.

Of the many people who participated in the event, I particularly mention Cissy Hancock, who, at approximately 90 years of age, ran in the Wentworthville section. Cissy is the reason I am such a graceful member of Parliament: she taught me ballet when I was a small child. Yet there she was, more than 90 years of age, running in the torch relay. It was a wonderful achievement for her and for the people in the community who came out to see her that morning. I pay a particular tribute to all the people who were responsible for organising the Games. It has already been emphasised throughout this debate that there is a long list of people, organisations and groups who have been involved and committed for many years to attain the particularly successful outcome that has been achieved.

Reference has been made to political leaders and people involved in bureaucracies. I must say that for a very brief time when I was the Minister for the Environment I had a small involvement in speaking to members of the conservation movement. At the time of the Sydney bid for the Olympic Games they were instrumental in providing support to ensure that Sydney succeeded internationally as the Olympic venue and to ensure that success would be delivered after the eventual choice. I emphasise that point because although in more recent times the edge has been taken off the green Olympics, at the time when Sydney was successful in its bid under a previous Coalition Government, the conservation movement was very supportive; it certainly participated in the process of achieving the successful bid, and has continued to be supportive since that time.

Their involvement stretched to the point where I attended an event during the Olympic Arts Festival in the week before the sporting events took place and I found myself sitting next to some representatives of Greenpeace who were in Sydney particularly to be part of Greenpeace's commitment to a green Sydney Olympics. Greenpeace was not the only organisation involved: the Total Environment Centre, the Nature Conservation Council and myriad conservation groups were involved, as well as a team of people who worked out of Homebush Bay to ensure that that site was environmentally sound. The environmental aspect of the Olympic Games certainly did not receive attention in the Australian media but I think it received greater attention from the international media because of the efforts that were invested in making Sydney 2000 the green Olympics. But certainly at the time of the original bid, the environmental aspect was significant and I think it should still be commented upon.

I refer particularly to the Minister for the Olympics, Michael Knight, whom I have known personally since I was approximately 19 years old. He is a person about whom many words have been written, especially in the last week. He should be congratulated on leading a team very successfully and on delivering these Olympics.

If people need reminders of his intelligence, one has only to look to the fact that, according to the newspapers—or at least my reading of them, because that is where I get most of my information these days—it was Michael Knight and John Coates who made the decision to have Cathy Freeman light the Olympic flame.

As honourable members know, many people in the community were talking about placing bets rather than actually placing bets on who might light the Olympic flame. I must admit that I was one of those who hoped that it would be Cathy Freeman because she represents so much that is important in Australia now. I was very pleased that John Coates and Michael Knight made the decision to ensure that she got that opportunity, and I believe that decision was received very warmly by the Australian community, as well as by the international community. Michael Knight has announced his retirement from politics. I believe that he can look back on the Olympic Games as his most outstanding achievement in New South Wales politics. I am sure that it will stand him in good stead in the future.

The Olympic Games occupied our focus as a Government and as a Parliament for many, many years. As I looked around the Chamber during question time today, I thought there was a bit of post-Olympics blues settling on this House because honourable members were very quiet—not as frisky as they usually are. I know that people enjoyed the Olympic Games and that the community—Sydney and New South Wales as a whole—got a tremendous amount out of the Games. I suppose I echo the words of some other participants in the debate when I express the hope that we do not lose all the value in social and community involvement that has occurred as a result of the Sydney Olympics.

It would be great if our feelings—as members of the community, as politicians, as human beings—during the Olympic Games could be bottled. It was a tremendous success. The organisers and participants deserve congratulations. Like all honourable members, I am happy for us to pat each other on the back because it was an outstanding achievement. It will be great if we have an opportunity some time in the future to replicate the feelings that the Olympic Games created in some shape or form. Whatever the form, I hope that we do not lose it forever and that we can develop the same ambience and rapport with our fellow human beings. It will be a challenge for us.

One of the reasons the public transport system was so successful was because the people who rode the system talked and interacted with each other. There was a great feeling on the vehicles that were taking us away from events. Unfortunately, there are not the crowds on trains now, other than in peak hours, and we are not necessarily going to talk to one another and interact as we might be looked oddly at if we do. There are many challenges ahead, and I hope that we can continue to feel very positive about the outcome of the Olympics and its future implications.

Mr WEBB (Monaro) [10.11 p.m.]: I have pleasure in supporting the Premier's motion. The 2000 Olympics was a wonderful event for Sydney, Australia and New South Wales. The history of the 2000 Olympics goes back a long way, and there are many people over many years to congratulate and thank. At the outset it took a lot of planning, endeavour and scrutiny, because to fail to plan is to plan to fail. The logistics, contingencies and all that needed to be done was done. There was much public scrutiny of the plans prior to the event. Because of such introspection the Games were successful. The torch relay was exciting. Australians came out in droves, making it the biggest attendance that has ever been seen in this country. In Queanbeyan more than 15,000 people lined the streets to see the Olympic torch. The Olympic torchbearers were the Mayor of Queanbeyan, Frank Pangello; Neil Donoghoe, who carried the torch in the last Olympics; Dorothy Jamieson; Ron Fowlie; Corel McMurray; Ron Thorpe in his scooter; Catherine Wright, a schoolgirl; Philip Garvin; John Flaxman; and Robert Morgan, who carried the torch through Queanbeyan.

I followed the torch through Queanbeyan to Bredbo, Cooma, Berridale and Thredbo with 400 to 800 skiers. The torch was carried by Kim Clifford and Stuart Diver, together with many other people, down the mountain in a fantastic display. Queensland's sporting hero, Heather McKay, was the first person to run with the Olympic torch in Canberra. Bishop Pat Power from Canberra—a Cooma boy—also ran with the torch. Queanbeyan's Olympic gold medallist in the previous Olympics, Megan Still, rowed the torch across Lake Burley Griffin. It was a wonderful display of human spirit and togetherness. I have to acknowledge that Queanbeyan has become known as the city of champions. At these Olympics was Suzy Balogh, in the clay target shooting, and Matt Beckenham, in the 400-metre hurdles. In the Paralympics Mick Dowling will participate in the discus and javelin, Angie Ballard in wheelchair athletics and Wayne Bell in the pentathlon. That will demonstrate the power of Queanbeyan and the power of regional Australia. When the torch ceremony finished, the opening ceremony took place and the Olympic Games began.

The act of reconciliation was a wonderful way to begin the Olympic Games. The horses and the men from the Snowy River acknowledged the wonderful role that horses have played in Australia's past. It was

fantastic to see. I congratulate Ric Birch for the wonderful display. We saw the outback and fire, and the way that they are intrinsically linked with our past. I congratulate all those people involved over the years in the many aspects of getting the Games together. I congratulate the 50,000 volunteers—many from the Rural Fire Service—who became the friendly face of Australia. They gave people directions and helped them out to resolve a lot of problems. They were the ambassadors for the Olympic Games in the two weeks and their role will continue with 15,000 ambassadors also making a major contribution to the Paralympics next week. I also congratulate the people of regional New South Wales, who have forgone much over the past many years to contribute partly to the \$7 billion or \$8 billion of expenditure by local, State and Federal governments in making the Olympics a success.

I attended the opening match of the soccer in Canberra a couple of days before the Olympics began in Sydney. I watched the Australian Matildas play Germany and the United States of America play the Czech Republic. I congratulate Queanbeyan Business Promotions for the Queanbeyan Football Fiesta, which promoted Olympic soccer. I congratulate Brian Rooney, Neil Donoghue, Jenni Norwood, George Lemon, Anthony Nicoletti, John Banlaro and Rod Studholme. I thank the Monaro Soccer Club, Marco Polo Club, Queanbeyan Junior Soccer Club, Capital City Suns Soccer Club, the Cosmos and the Matildas for their support in making Olympic soccer a wonderful part of the Olympic Games for the capital region.

The Paralympics will be the second biggest sporting event in the world, and will be a wonderful display. The day that all these people come together will be a unification of the Olympic spirit. It is important that Australians acknowledge the Paralympics and support the contestants. The Olympics were a fantastic opportunity for Australians to promote Australia, New South Wales and our electorates across the world. We certainly did that. We were seen daily for two weeks by hundreds of millions of people across the world. It was an opportunity for the State Government, the Federal Government, the Premier, the Ministers, members on both sides of the House, members of the public, volunteers and sportspeople to promote their regions and their country.

I also acknowledge the role played by suppliers. People from Queanbeyan built parts of the Olympic Stadium and manufactured products that were used throughout the Olympic Games. I acknowledge the wool industry for its major commitment to the Olympic uniform, the ribbons for the medals and other facets throughout the display at the Olympic centre. I acknowledge the role played by the Australian Institute of Sport, particularly in Canberra but also in Thredbo, and the Federal Government's funding of sport which enabled many of our sportspeople to compete to their full extent. I also comment on the success of Business Club Australia—Incat in Sydney. I acknowledge the contribution of Mark Vaile, the Federal Minister for Trade, and many others who met with people from all across the world; the Premier of New South Wales; and Austrade, AusIndustry, other organisations and the State regional development. I believe that the Incat initiative will be adopted by the IOC at future Olympics. It is another example of Australia's innovation now leading the world.

Another matter I would comment on is a wonderful experience in Cooma just prior to the Olympics called "Cooma 2000—the Snow Olympic Experience". I congratulate Pacific Lodge and Don Kinscher for organising the event for 91 children from across regional New South Wales. They came from Campbelltown, western Sydney, the Central Highlands and the Central West to the Snowy Mountains to go skiing and snowboarding and watch Olympic events. The Olympic Village, the cauldron and the torch were actually a part of the experience for these disadvantaged children. I saw them one afternoon enjoying that in fantastic spirit. Their parents wholeheartedly thanked the people who organised that event.

The children went horseriding in the Snowy Mountains courtesy of Cochran Family Horse Treks. The bonding of some of the children with horses on that day demonstrated the togetherness that can come from some of these activities. The children went canoeing and skiing, courtesy of Cooma Ski Rentals and Perisher Blue. This was a \$60,000 effort to give the children the Snow Olympic Experience. I thank the Premier of New South Wales, to whom I wrote asking for funds towards this experience. The New South Wales Government gratefully put \$22,000 towards the costs of the Snow Olympic Experience at the Pacific Lodge in Cooma. That is an experience that I am sure those children will always remember.

The highlight of the experience was that the children were able to attend an actual Olympics event. They went to the Olympic soccer in Canberra one evening, courtesy of Kate Carnell, the ACT Chief Minister, and the ACT Government. The Olympic soccer in Canberra was a real success due to the wonderful effort put in by Steve Doszpot, Alan Lee and Robert Bennett, the SOCOG team in Canberra and the army of volunteers. All in all, that Olympic experience touched the hearts of a lot of people across Australia.

As an acknowledgement of and tribute to the commitment of Australians generally and the contribution that the people of New South Wales, particularly in rural parts of the State, have made to making the Olympics a

success by helping to provide transport and other infrastructure in Sydney for the various events, I have written to the Premier and asked him to consider donating the podiums on which Australian athletes and athletes from all parts of the world stood to receive their bronze, silver and gold medals and accolades back to regional towns and cities in this State. These could then be put into halls of fame, like that in Queanbeyan, so that places like Cooma and Eden may have a set of Olympic podiums and keep alive the memory of the Olympic spirit by using the podiums in future celebrations. This would acknowledge the contribution made by New South Wales people to make the Olympics the wonderful success that they were.

There is, really, almost too much to say about the costs and benefits of the Olympics needing to be acknowledged. Unfortunately, the expected tourism spin-offs in the immediate period have not been realised in the Monaro and other areas far from Sydney. It is important for businesses in regional New South Wales to draw upon the exposure that Australia and New South Wales have had from the Olympics, to galvanise themselves and capitalise on the promotion that the Sydney Olympics have achieved for us throughout the world. I am sure the benefits of that promotion will be realised into the future, particularly where we put to best use the experience that we have gained.

To watch Australians winning gold was just fantastic. Some events were won with just seconds to go, 1.3 seconds in the case of the women's water polo final. The Hockeyroos and others such as shooter Michael Diamond were a wonderful sight to see. We won gold in the swimming pool and in many other events. This was a demonstration of Australia's multicultural unity, which put our face to the world. We had names from across the world, with Cathy Freeman prominent among our Aboriginal Australians as well as Torres Strait Islanders competing and winning medals for Australia. That was wonderful. We had very young and old people, all sorts of people, performing and competing for Australia.

We have to ask ourselves: Was it all worth it? We will get the rewards in the future if we work towards that goal. Of course, we will have the memories of the Games in our hearts and the smiles on our faces as we continue to tell the stories of the Sydney 2000 Olympics. Memories of the 1956 Melbourne Games still live on, so I am sure the Sydney Games also will live on. It is important that the New South Wales Government continues spending on infrastructure in regional areas so that New South Wales can continue to be the leading State in the Commonwealth. We might ask: What is next? Just around the corner we have the Centenary of Federation—another opportunity for Australia to showcase itself to the world as a very successful democracy. It is another opportunity for New South Wales to put on the bright, friendly, smiling face that we have shown to the world during the Sydney Olympics and once more celebrate together our wonderful communities, as we did in the Olympics, during the Centenary of Federation.

Mr ASHTON (East Hills) [10.26 p.m.]: It is a privilege to be able to speak on the Premier's motion to congratulate all those involved in the outstanding success of the Games of the XXVII Olympiad of the modern era, held in Sydney from 15 September to 1 October 2000. Indeed, no other State members of the New South Wales Parliament have ever been able to speak in this Chamber about the success of Olympics held in New South Wales—until today. We are the first to be able to do that, and that is an honour and a privilege. Hopefully, we may not be the last to do so.

The Sydney Olympics were the greatest sporting event ever organised. By the end of this month we will have held, I have no doubt, the greatest ever Paralympics. Given that the Paralympians are already saying that we have had the practice run, I am sure we will be able to do that. When Juan Antonio Samaranch announced in 1993 that Sydney had been the successful bidder for the 2000 Olympic Games—remember, it was by one vote—I guess we were all euphoric about the idea that this would be such a great success. But it has been seven long years of hard planning that has brought about the success that we had in that 2½-week period.

Like many members before they were elected to Parliament and ordinary people of New South Wales, at times we wondered whether we could put on as successful a Games event as we did. In hindsight, we should not have had any doubts. But an event like the Sydney Olympics does not just happen. I want to acknowledge the role played by the Greiner and Fahey governments in initiating the Sydney bid, with the full support of the city council and the then Carr Labor Opposition. They say that defeat is an orphan and a victory has many parents. This is clearly the case in respect of the Sydney Games. Remember, these were very largely public Games: the public owns the infrastructure, it is paid for, and the venues will be there for future generations.

Credit, of course, must go to the Minister for the Olympics, Michael Knight, for his supervision of virtually all facets of the Games. I congratulate SOCOG and its members, and the members of the Olympic Roads and Transport Authority and the Olympic Co-ordination Authority, who of course did their duties so

well. Yes, many of the people who played roles in those organisations, as we would expect, were paid for what they did. But they were not necessarily paid to do their duties well or badly. They were paid to do their job, and they did it brilliantly. The volunteers have been given credit by many honourable members who have spoken in this debate, but it would be foolish of me not to mention some of them in my speech. Indeed, it is an Australian tradition to volunteer. Remember, more than 300,000 Australians put their hands up to fight in World War I. The 47,000 people who volunteered to give up two or three weeks of their time to work—and it was work—without pay to make the Olympics such a success will always be remembered.

I am glad to be able to acknowledge that the Leader of the Opposition and the Premier are talking about awarding medallions to volunteers and giving true credit to those who played such an important part in the Olympic Games. In Atlanta thousands of volunteers walked off the job in the first day or two, either because they could not get to venues or because it is not an American tradition to volunteer. Their idea was that they should be paid to do something. Australians just decided to get in and have a go—people from State Emergency Services, those conducting lamington drives to raise school funds and so on. It is an Australian tradition for people to volunteer. Those who volunteered to assist with the Olympic Games stuck with it.

I was amazed at the goodwill of volunteers. They seemed to be everywhere at railway stations and ensured that people got to their destinations. At times they looked like tennis umpires directing the traffic. At many Olympics venues their sense of humour was incredible. I will never forget the surprised look on the faces of some volunteers after the closing ceremony. One young lady decided that she had to kiss every volunteer between row 14 and the train going back into the city. There were quite a few pleased volunteers that night. It was so positive. Many people in my electorate volunteered. They came to my electorate office to show me what they looked like in their uniforms. I could see their pride because they were going to deliver a service.

My family and I, like most honourable members, saw various Olympic events. I was able to see most of the cycling and I saw some volleyball, athletics, water polo, hockey and soccer. I went to the closing ceremony. Like millions of travellers my family and I caught the trains. There were no problems whatsoever. One is supposed to be careful of what one says in Parliament, but there were no problems. It was amazing. I guess that in the remaining 49 or 50 weeks of the year the Government is hoping to get the trains and our public transport to work as well as they did in that 2½ week period. I am sure that the public, having seen how well the Government can do the job, will expect it to deliver in that area. Public transport was outstandingly successful.

My electorate hosted the cycling at the Dunc Gray Velodrome. Ian Thorpe was a Milperra resident and Simone Hankin, a vital member of our water polo team, attended my old school at Picnic Point High. I am sure that all honourable members have stories about an athlete involved in the Olympics who came from their area or region. I am sure that they will give those people the credit that they deserve. Bankstown council town hall was the headquarters for United States Olympic officials, which was great for Bankstown. United States athletes trained at our facilities. They were happy to show off what they were doing in their training to many local kids who turned up to watch them. We had a civic reception at Revesby Workers Club for the United States women's softball team. My daughters were able to obtain signatures from all members of the team on softballs that we purchased.

The United States team went on to win the gold medal, even though Australia beat it on one occasion. The United States team lost three games in a row but it went on to win the gold medal, which it had won previously at Atlanta. The members of that team, who were great ambassadors for their country, were willing to have their photographs taken dozens of times. They were willing to sign things and to stick around. I asked them whether or not they had some sort of curfew and they said, "Not really." They were just taken by the welcome that they were receiving from people in the Bankstown area. The opening ceremony was the most incredible entertainment that I have seen. I was not able to see it live but I saw it on a big screen. It effectively showed the history of our past, told the story of our indigenous history and showed the link to today's Australia. It was creatively done.

The future of Australia as a unified nation was reassured by the success of the opening and closing ceremonies. Every aspect of Australia's culture was represented. The honourable member for Epping said earlier that the multicultural sense of Australia was also revealed. Our past and present and our links to the future were covered. Ric Birch, David Atkins and everyone involved surpassed themselves. By themselves, sporting events and entertainment ceremonies would not normally seem to be such a unifying thing, but these Olympic Games were the greatest event ever put on in peacetime in this country. The Snowy Mountain scheme might have been the biggest event on a geographical and engineering level, but to stage something like this when the world was coming to Australia defied belief.

Australia is not a big country but we came fourth in the medal tally. By nature the Olympics are competitive. The effort put in by those who competed but who did not win medals was incredible. To come fourth after America, China and Russia is an outstanding achievement. Australia won more medals than Germany, France, Italy and many countries that are major players on the world stage. It exemplified again that Australians of all political persuasions see sport as something that can bring us together. The police should be commended. They were omnipresent—they were everywhere—but they were in the background. Those volunteers who checked bags were polite and did not assume that people were terrorists. They assumed that people were honest, trustworthy and sports loving, and they were correct. I congratulate the State's employees, a unionised work force that also delivered the Games.

There are some events that I will never forget—the way in which Jane Saville responded when the 20-kilometre walk gold medal was snatched from her 200 metres from the finish line. There were no tantrums, just genuine passion at being disqualified and there was no belittling of officials. She gets a gold medal for sportsmanship. Cathy Freeman's win was critical. No other Australian athlete has ever had such pressure on him or her. She is a legend. The choice for her to light the Olympic cauldron was a masterstroke. I will never forget the water polo girls winning the gold medal 1.3 seconds from the end of the game, especially as I taught one of the young ladies who played in the game.

Mr R. H. L. Smith: The Americans will not forget it either.

Mr ASHTON: They were a little displeased. It was fantastic. I will never forget the effort of the Opals winning the silver medal, or the women's beach volleyball team. In a sense it typified what was said at the opening ceremony. In the end it was a tribute to women who participated in the Olympic Games. Once again the women produced the results. Looking at results, sometimes the men's results were a little disappointing. The women who competed did well. I remember the Cambodian marathon runner coming second last, nearly an hour after the Ethiopian winner of the marathon event. He collapsed and was taken off the track on a stretcher. This man received a rapturous applause. Australians love those who rise above everything.

Given the history of Cambodia, that young man will be able to go back to Cambodia and say that he competed in a marathon at the Sydney Olympics—a great example to everyone. The Leader of the Opposition referred also to Eric the Eel. Australians embrace people like that. Some countries might say, "He was very slow. Forget him." We think he was a hero. He was. I praise those astute commentators Rampaging Roy Slaven and H. G. Nelson, whose program *The Dream* explained the intricacies of Greco-Roman wrestling and gymnastics to their audience. Their irreverent humour was addictive not only to Australians but also to fans and athletes from overseas. They added a lot to the success of the Games.

For me the mascot of the Games was Fatso, the Fat-arsed Wombat, who won gold in the pool in the final 10-metre bomb event. We embraced Fatso because he was the Battler's Prince. He was such an example of our irreverence and our true passion for something different. When the athletes were told not to carry Fatso around we embraced him even more. American athletes who appeared on the show were rapt that they were getting their photograph taken with Fatso and that they were getting a little medallion. In many ways that irreverence shows what Australians are about. We put on the greatest Games ever and we were able to laugh at some of the events, the competitors and some of the funny things that happened.

The Games were a wonderful unifying event not to be missed. I hope that we get them again one day. I want to congratulate our sporting tragic, Premier Bob Carr, whose well-known passion for athletics, football, swimming, beach volleyball, crowd surfing, hockey, and all other sports has been vindicated by his production of the world's greatest ever sporting event—the Olympic Games in Sydney 2000. I am pleased to be able to endorse the Premier's motion. I say to anyone who was cynical about the Games—and there would have been some cynics over the past seven years—that the Olympic Games will live in the memory of everyone who had a chance to go to any events and everyone who saw the events on television. There will be ongoing benefits for this city, this State, Australia and the world.

Debate adjourned on motion by Mr O'Doherty.

SPECIAL ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Mr Whelan agreed to:

That the House at its rising this day do adjourn until Wednesday 11 October 2000 at 10.00 a.m.

House adjourned at 10.42 p.m.
