



# **HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

**STANDING COMMITTEE ON LEGAL AND CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS**

**Reference: Treatment of census forms**

**HOBART**

**Tuesday, 14 October 1997**

**OFFICIAL HANSARD REPORT**

**CANBERRA**

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
STANDING COMMITTEE ON LEGAL AND CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

Members

Mr Andrews (Chair)

Mr Barresi	Mr Mutch
Mrs Elizabeth Grace	Mr Randall
Mr Hatton	Mr Sinclair
Mr Kerr	Dr Southcott
Mr McClelland	Mr Tony Smith
Mr Melham	Mr Kelvin Thomson
	Mrs Vale

Matter referred to the committee for inquiry into and report on:

The treatment of forms from future population censuses.

The inquiry will examine the issues surrounding the destruction or retention of census forms. It will focus on whether the current practice of destroying census forms after processing should continue or whether they should be retained for medical, social and genealogical research.

**WITNESSES**

<b>BARTLETT, Mrs Anne Margaret, President, Genealogical Society of Tasmania Inc., PO Box 60, Prospect, Tasmania 7250</b> .....	<b>430</b>
<b>FARRELL, Mr David John, Chair, Australian Joint Roll Council, Level 22, Casselden Place, 2 Lonsdale Street, Melbourne, Victoria 3000 and Chief Electoral Officer, Tasmania</b> .....	<b>420</b>
<b>HARRIS, Mr David Lowe Llewellyn, Vice-President, Genealogical Society of Tasmania Inc., PO Box 60, Prospect, Tasmania 7250</b> .....	<b>430</b>
<b>ROE, Professor Owen Michael, 34 View Street, Hobart, Tasmania 7005</b> .....	<b>438</b>
<b>WARD, Mr Chester Bryce, Hobart Branch President, Genealogical Society of Tasmania Inc., PO Box 60, Prospect, Tasmania 7250</b> .....	<b>430</b>

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
STANDING COMMITTEE ON LEGAL AND CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS  
(Subcommittee)

*Treatment of census forms*

HOBART

Tuesday, 14 October 1997

Present

Mr Andrews (Chair)

Mr McClelland

Mr Mutch

The subcommittee met at 9.19 a.m.

Mr Andrews took the chair.

**FARRELL, Mr David John, Chair, Australian Joint Roll Council, Level 22, Casselden Place, 2 Lonsdale Street, Melbourne, Victoria 3000 and Chief Electoral Officer, Tasmania**

**CHAIR**—Welcome. The subject matter of this inquiry is whether the current practice of destroying name identified forms after the data is collected from them should continue. We have taken evidence so far in Canberra, Perth, Adelaide, Brisbane, Sydney, Melbourne and Wollongong, and we look forward to hearing from witnesses in Hobart today.

Although the committee does not require you to give evidence under oath, I should advise you that the hearings are legal proceedings of the parliament and warrant the same respect as proceedings of the House itself. The giving of false or misleading evidence is a serious matter and may be regarded as a contempt of the parliament. We are in receipt of your submission of 17 July 1997. Would you care to make some opening comments?

**Mr Farrell**—Yes. I am privileged to be able to appear before you in Hobart. I speak with the endorsement of all the other members of the AJRC, who are the electoral commissioners of Australia of each state and territory and for the Commonwealth. As a body, we have an interest in the integrity, accuracy and currency of electoral rolls for all three levels of government: federal, state and local government. The criticality of their integrity, currency and accuracy is becoming more important as we approach 2000 and beyond. Indeed, we are more and more accountable.

The task of having an electoral roll which matches the census estimates of the population of 18-year-olds who are Australian citizens or British subjects at 1984 is a task which we have not quite achieved. Having an accurate census figure with full compliance certainly gives us a goal to aim for. By virtue of the electoral roll being a document open for inspection and use for mailing, et cetera, by other bodies and agencies, including members of parliament, there is a disincentive to people complying and enrolling, which is compulsory. We would fear, I think I am confident in saying, that if name identified census data was not destroyed this could be a disincentive to full compliance and, indeed, would give us a less accurate benchmark for the electoral roll itself. Those comments are extra to what I have said in my submission, but I think they are worth laying on the table at this point.

I would endorse the views of the Australian Electoral Commission. I understand they have given you a submission on the need to have accurate population estimates when redistributions are done and, indeed, when the numbers of members to represent each state and territory in the federal government are determined. In the ACT, as you would be aware, this came down to point-zero-something. It was a very small number that made a difference between two seats and three seats. Certainly any inaccuracy in census population data which may creep in through any disincentive to compliance would have an effect on our representation in governance. This would apply, and does apply, to different degrees at the other levels of government who are joint roll partners in the maintenance of a common electoral roll for Australia.

If the committee would give me indulgence, I would like to speak to a related matter. I would like to pass around, if I may, page 4 of the Census Collector's Record Book.

**CHAIR**—We have copies of those, Mr Farrell.

**Mr Farrell**—I have a speaking aide-memoire but, with your indulgence, I will give you that after I have spoken.

**Mr McCLELLAND**—I think it's too late after you have spoken.

**Mr Farrell**—Okay. There is another name identified document related to the census: that is, the Census Collector's Record Book. Both the AEC and the AJRC members are interested in obtaining only the address data from that record book: that is, the data contained in column 3 only, not the name identified data or any other information. There may be a comment in the last column, which would be column 12, which could be of interest if it was a new house, a new flat or that sort of thing. But we are not interested in the name identified data at all.

We have made a number of approaches to the ABS over the years seeking the address data only and have basically been told that this was not to be released even though there was some acceptance of it being non-sensitive in that they had given a blanket statement to the public that nothing related to names would be released. We have not been able to obtain it.

Let me stress that we are not interested in information from the actual census forms and we are not interested in name information from the collector's record book. We would like only the addresses from the books. We understand that at the moment this information is not stored in any format after the census and that the record books are destroyed. We agree that they should be destroyed. We would simply like to slice off the address part with a guillotine before they are destroyed and keep that for a national record.

We believe that these addresses are an immensely valuable and as yet untapped source of fresh address data which, indeed, is a resource which could be termed a national treasure. The new Privacy Commissioner has met with the AJRC. Ms Moira Scollay certainly considers this address data—in fact, any address data alone—as being non-sensitive data. Her concerns are centred on the matching of name data. She appeared to have no problem with the collection and dissemination of accurate address information.

Both the AJRC and the AEC would like the opportunity to discuss options of obtaining this information. If it was received, it would be used to update, cross-reference and verify the current address files used for the electoral roll. To have an accurate roll—this is a matter which is certainly being considered by the Joint Standing Committee on Electoral Matters, who are concerned about electoral fraud and enrolment—there is a concern that people may enrol for addresses that do not exist, addresses that are too small to have 12 people living in them, addresses that do exist but are parks or electricity substations, and so on.

**Mr McCLELLAND**—Addresses six foot underground.

**Mr Farrell**—Yes. Hence having a national register of front doors or addresses is absolutely critical to any management process rather than maintenance process of an electoral roll. The AEC has set up an address register which is now a functioning part of the RMANS enrolment system—you may be aware of that to some degree—such that every time a person moves in or out, there is a record kept against a fixed address. The address file maintains vacant addresses so that we can send out letters to addresses where there is no-one enrolled, we can keep records to say, 'This is a one bedroom unit where no more than two should be

involved,' so that we can set up compliance measures or auditing measures should we find five people enrolled at that flat, and so on.

There are other agencies seeking accurate data. We have fairly accurate information ourselves. I think the electoral people would be well in the high 90s of our address base. Nonetheless, to see an independently gathered register of Australia's front doors would be a wonderful verification and integrity tool.

Australia Post is doing the same thing. They are also looking at cross-verifying their address data with that of the Australian Electoral Commission. We would like the ABS to take part in that same process. This census would be the base starter for that cooperation, which we would like to see take place. There would be other agencies as well who would have this in mind.

You would be aware that the ABS have very good maps that are now being produced by the Public Sector Mapping Authority. The ones used in the 1996 census were far better than those used in previous censuses. The mapping system that is being used also has the capacity to accept individual addresses plus the property title material. We are getting very close to the management of electoral rolls, redistribution and electoral management using geographic information system data down to the address. This flows on to polling place catchment areas and the input of demographic information in a two-dimensional and three-dimensional way. I am sure members will understand the importance and promise that that type of activity would show.

I think I will say little more than that, but I would seek the committee's support in at least discussing the options of releasing the address information alone into the more public and Public Service arena for better quality of a range of databases, not the least of which is the electoral roll.

**CHAIR**—Thank you. In your submission you say this:

We strongly support the view of the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) that public apprehension and opposition to the retention of census forms will lead to lower response rates to the census, reduced public cooperation in completing forms and a reduction in the accuracy and quality of data provided.

In the AEC submission they say:

. . . any reversal of the policy to destroy census forms could have an adverse effect on the quality of statistical information provided by the ABS to the AEC for the purposes of the determination of representation entitlements . . .

How do we measure that? It is a hypothetical, isn't it?

**Mr Farrell**—No, I believe not. In my introductory remarks I alluded to the fact that the ABS gives us a figure, best calculated from the census and other material, of how many 18-year-olds there are in Australia who are either Australian citizens or were British subjects as at 25 January 1984. Consistently the electoral roll has been behind that figure, which would indicate that the census figure is more accurate, I think. I am not a statistician but I believe from that, because we work very hard to get accurate electoral rolls, that the figure we should be aiming for for 100 per cent compliance is in fact the one released by ABS. If the ABS figure was lower than the electoral roll or varied in any way in its relationship to the electoral roll, I would think this would be a less solid argument. But the difference is a fairly constant one and it is about as

empirical as I can get.

**CHAIR**—My question is: how do we measure the level of public apprehension and opposition? It is easy to say that, if people know that information is going to be stored and released in 70 to 100 years time, which is the common sort of time frame that has been put to us, there is going to be some diminution in the quality and maybe even the quantity of returns to the census. But it seems to me that it is difficult to actually test that proposition.

**Mr Farrell**—Let us say that the lower standard of compliance on the electoral roll is due to it being a public document, so that people's names and addresses can be readily found by debt collectors and others—and remember this is only limited personal information: it is name and address, it is not date of birth, even though we capture it—and that is giving you a measurable, empirical difference in quality. One would be led to think, I believe, and I am not being empirical here, that the far greater amount of personal information that is disclosed on census forms would increase the disincentive for compliance, although I understand that you have a 75- to 100-year period after which it would be released. I really cannot add to the committee's understanding of how that particular aspect might affect it.

**CHAIR**—But has the Joint Roll Council or to your knowledge the AEC undertaken any assessment of why people do not enrol? One reason which is sometimes advanced is the attitude of: 'Why enrol, because voting only encourages the bastards.' That is a different view to information being contained on rolls which could be used by debt collecting agencies or the like.

**Mr Farrell**—Yes. There has been some limited work done but not a great deal. The AJRC is planning to do greater surveys on compliance. That will be one of our next projects after the ones we have been doing on roll quality, and certainly we need to do a degree of market research on these issues. However, the practical experience, as we move towards 2000, in roll compliance is that the disincentive we are seeing is in fact on the direct mail use of the electoral roll. People are saying, 'I do not wish to receive this mail,' and I must say this includes mail from members of parliament and candidates. There is a fair bit of return to sender mail. Perhaps members themselves may be aware that they get return to sender mail from people who will not accept mail of a political nature. It is not just debt collectors or whatever. This phenomenon has been increasing to my knowledge, and I am sure my colleagues' knowledge, over the last few years.

**CHAIR**—Are there mail-outs that the AEC does for which there is return to sender mail?

**Mr Farrell**—Yes, that is one of our major methods of roll verification. So we accept the return to sender mail. What I am talking about is mail that reaches a person who actually lives there but who will not open that mail and it comes back saying, 'I will not accept this mail.'

**CHAIR**—Are there reports available of the levels of return to sender mail from the AEC? Are there statistical tables kept of that from year to year?

**Mr Farrell**—Yes.

**CHAIR**—So we would be able to obtain that from the AEC?



**Mr Farrell**—Yes. I am not sure in what form that would be but I am sure that we could explore that and get information for you.

**CHAIR**—Can I take up another point which is in the AEC's submission rather than the council's, so if it is not something you can address that is fine, Mr Farrell. It is this reference in paragraph 3.3 that, immediately following the 1975 decision—this was the decision in McKinlays case—the Commonwealth law officers, the then Attorney-General, Mr Ellicott, and the then Solicitor-General, Mr Byers, advised as follows, and there is an extract from the advice and a further one. I was wondering whether that opinion might be available to the committee. Should we direct that question to the AEC?

**Mr Farrell**—I believe it would be a question for the AEC.

**CHAIR**—That is fine.

**Mr Farrell**—I am aware of it but I am not an expert on it, by any means.

**CHAIR**—I will leave my other question because it can go to the AEC as well because it relates to that legal opinion.

**Mr McCLELLAND**—Aside from the use of the address register for checking unregistered voters, you indicated that the address register would be somewhat of a national treasure.

**Mr Farrell**—Yes.

**Mr McCLELLAND**—Is that so for other reasons, aside from the electoral roll?

**Mr Farrell**—I believe so—it is not for me to speak to those issues—but as we move to better geographic information systems, the standard register of Australia's front doors is going to be something of enormous value. It is something that I believe should not be bought and sold on the commercial market necessarily but, in fact, could be used for a range of activities for the national good, such as ambulance services, emergency services or whatever. There are endless ways that we can move towards these things. Rural road numbering—which is happening in many states and has finished in Tasmania—has already saved lives by virtue of having accurate front door recording against the spatial database. That is absolutely critical, I believe, if you have young vets or doctors who are trying to save lives. It goes on and on.

**Mr McCLELLAND**—My second question is: what is the average turnover in, say, a federal electorate of change of addresses?

**Mr Farrell**—You are looking at 20 per cent per annum, as an Australian average. You have areas of high transience and low transience. Rural areas tend to be lower in transience—they tend to move to the cities a bit. Urban areas, particularly those around universities, tend to be those of very high transience. One of the fields in the AEC RMANS address register, in the computer, is the transience level. I believe it goes from one to five or one to 10, so you can actually record what the expected transience would be, which means that you would know that you need to review that every two years or every five years to economically

review the roll.

**Mr McCLELLAND**—And just finally you have indicated that there is a discrepancy between the accuracy of the electoral roll data and the Bureau of Statistics' census data and you are able to check that because the Australian Electoral Commission retains ages—although they do not publish those—and you compare the ages that you have recorded against the ages that the Bureau of Statistics have recorded through census collection, and you are satisfied that their records are more accurate in that respect?

**Mr Farrell**—They have been consistently marginally ahead of the electoral roll and that is really where they should be, which gives me some confidence in it. If they were consistently behind I would think someone had it desperately wrong, but this is not the case. I do not have the figures on me and I apologise, but I am sure the national discrepancy could be brought to the committee. Your secretary would know how to get that.

**CHAIR**—In terms of the inaccuracy or the failure of people to register for electoral purposes, has any assessment been made of who those people are? For example, the two largest categories, I presume, are those who by dint of age become eligible to register to vote—namely, turning 18—and those by dint of becoming Australian citizens who therefore become eligible to vote. Are there any rough estimates of the proportions of categories?

**Mr Farrell**—Fairly rough at this stage because this is a coming project of the AJRC rather than one we have just been doing. We have been looking at continuous roll update rather than the two-yearly snapshot—the doorknock—and trying to get a better method. That has been our project. But, in doing that, we have ascertained to some degree that the enrolment by young people—that is, 18-year-olds—is fairly good. Young people are excited to get on the roll. I have been impressed. I am sure that happens around Australia. Having been on there and found it was not so exciting once they had done it, they tended to drop off. So from the early 20s to 26 or 27, maybe towards 30, we have a lower response rate. It is harder to deal with because they are also highly transient in that period. Both non-voting and non-enrolment tend to be high in that age group, though we have this peak at 18 where they really do get on because it means becoming a citizen and they see it as important. We should capitalise on that first voting experience and make it more special for them, but that is a marketing exercise.

Beyond that you have a group, which needs to be assessed more carefully, of people who perpetually do not enrol. They are not necessarily of a lower socioeconomic class; they tend to be middle-class people who have avoided enrolment for years and years as a matter of pride and will discuss it in the pub. There is a significant non-responding group, not huge but certainly measurable, at all ages, even 45 or 50, who may be public servants or businessmen or businesswomen who do not respond and who are used to the standard methods of habitation in the view of the AEC and simply say they are from New Zealand when someone knocks on the door. These things are not heavily checked and manage to evade our methods.

With an address base, an address base being one of the major factors, and also now with continuing labour identities we have, back to 1987, records of people moving from one address to another to another. Although it is not an Australia card, the virtue of that person with that date of birth and that signature, given that movement record, is a unique identity. Once we start using these sorts of tools, which we are already

doing, accuracy is improved and we can start looking at someone who is 45 years old who suddenly appears out of nowhere and say, 'Where did you come from?' We need to ask those questions and, as we move on to 2000, we will be doing more of that.

**CHAIR**—What about the migrant group? What is the enrolment rate there?

**Mr Farrell**—I cannot comment specifically. Certainly there has been a great increase of the migrant group as they become new citizens. That is now automated and they enrol for the first time when they become citizens. I am not aware of any research to say what happens to them after that.

**CHAIR**—I was going to ask about that because there has been that new procedure or process whereby—and I presume it is around the country—AEC officials attend citizenship ceremonies. A report I had from my local divisional returning officer is that they get a very high response.

**Mr Farrell**—They do; it is a very high response. This is a first capture, a first enrolment only and I am not sure what—

**CHAIR**—What happens after that?

**Mr Farrell**—We have not looked at that specifically. I would imagine it stays on but I cannot swear to that.

**Mr MUTCH**—You indicate that you have approached the ABS in the past about obtaining the address information. You say you believe their response is based on the assurances they give. What has their official response been?

**Mr Farrell**—I am not aware of their official response because I am acting on what the AEC has told me. It may be something you wish to raise with the AEC—if you can get a copy of their official response. But certainly it has been tried over a number of years and the answer has been consistently no. It has certainly been tried at the highest level because the Australian Statistician is a commissioner of the AEC. So it is certainly from commissioner to commissioner and the answer would still be no.

**Mr MUTCH**—Are your views on the support you have for the continuation of the current practice of destruction and your concerns that that would impact differentially on the level of responses and provide lower responses based on any studies or surveys you have undertaken independently, or is that just based on information provided to you by the ABS?

**Mr Farrell**—As I said earlier in my remarks, it is based on experience with another national collection process where we have a demonstrated disincentive by release of information.

**Mr MUTCH**—Have you done any surveys to back that up? Can you provide us with any actual academic research into that question?

**Mr Farrell**—No. Unfortunately, I do not have a great deal. The AEC may have something in their

research that they have done recently. I recommend you put to that to them because they do research that I am not perhaps always aware of.

**Mr MUTCH**—With respect to other countries that do retain their census information, do you have contact with your equivalents in, for instance, Canada whereby you could discuss these problems with them?

**Mr Farrell**—Some contact.

**Mr MUTCH**—Have you ever had the opportunity to do so in the past?

**Mr Farrell**—I have had some contact with other countries: New Zealand, Britain, Canada and Germany, interestingly. I was in Germany, and certainly there is something about the Australian psyche that is quite different to the psyche of other nationalities. When I explained to my colleagues in Germany that we had no Australia card and there was no national number or whatever, they were shocked and horrified that one could exist without a big brother. Canada the same. You have societies in these countries that are perfectly used to their social security numbers and their personal information being distributed widely. This is not something which is in the Australian psyche—very strongly not.

**Mr MUTCH**—So do you think that the Canadian statistical collections rank with ours? Do they draw their electoral boundaries, for instance, on the statistical collections?

**Mr Farrell**—I am not sure.

**Mr MUTCH**—Do they rank them?

**Mr Farrell**—I am not aware.

**Mr MUTCH**—So you cannot really provide us with comparatives?

**Mr Farrell**—No, I cannot. I probably have access to information but I could not at this point give you clear information. One thing I would say is that the information that is gathered is, I am sure, of a high quality but it is gathered in a public atmosphere of a social security number and these sorts of things being part of the way they live, whereas our censuses are not collected in that context. I can see a big difference.

**CHAIR**—Mr Farrell, I thank you for the council's submission and also for coming and talking with us this morning.

Resolved (on motion by Mr Mutch):

That the documents tabled by Mr Farrell be accepted as exhibits and received as evidence to the inquiry.

[9.53 a.m.]

**BARTLETT, Mrs Anne Margaret, President, Genealogical Society of Tasmania Inc., PO Box 60, Prospect, Tasmania 7250**

**HARRIS, Mr David Lowe Llewellyn, Vice-President, Genealogical Society of Tasmania Inc., PO Box 60, Prospect, Tasmania 7250**

**WARD, Mr Chester Bryce, Hobart Branch President, Genealogical Society of Tasmania Inc., PO Box 60, Prospect, Tasmania 7250**

**CHAIR**—I welcome representatives of the Genealogical Society of Tasmania to the hearing. Although the committee does not require you to give evidence under oath, I should advise you that the hearings are legal proceedings of the parliament and warrant the same respect as proceedings of the House itself. The giving of false or misleading evidence is a serious matter and may be regarded as a contempt of the parliament. We are in receipt of your submission to the inquiry and I invite you to make some opening comments.

**Mr Harris**—The Genealogical Society of Tasmania submits that future generations and the national heritage of Australia would be best served by the retention of name identified information gathered by the Australian Bureau of Statistics at each census of the Australian population.

The society does not necessarily support the retention of the whole mass of the census documentation, which would be a huge undertaking. But the society would argue for the retention of the information covering: name; household address; age; gender; marital status; the relationship of persons within the household—for instance, family structure; birthplace; birthplace of parents; internal migration within Australia—given the census address of five years and of the previous census; and occupation. Additionally, optional questions relating to known family genetic disorders—such as glaucoma, diabetes, Alzheimer's disease, Parkinson's disease and carcinoma—would greatly enhance the quality of the present data.

The information gathered from the latter questions could be made available to medical researchers under stringent conditions at the same time as general statistical information is released two to three years after each census. The society would not envisage the release of name-identified material within the average life span of people, and a moratorium of between 75 and 100 years could be imposed.

We are also aware that a submission made to this inquiry by the Australasian Federation of Family History Organisations draws the inquiry's attention to some comparative data on nonresponse to census taking between Australia and other countries which retain their information, and the rate is virtually the same.

The matter of storage of name-identified data would be largely a matter of economics as the technology exists in several forms for the storage of the information that we feel should be kept. Thank you.

**CHAIR**—You say in your submission that the removal of the intrusive question on gross income from the census form would go a long way to removing the privacy fears of most people. On what grounds do you

believe it is the questions about finances that are the most sensitive to people?

**Mr Harris**—This is largely on evidence within our own group, when census has been discussed at various meetings, that people have felt that the main reason for holding back on census information is financial matters that I mentioned in that. So it is simply from within our own meeting structure.

**CHAIR**—The other reason sometimes advanced is what I might broadly call family relations where somebody, for example, has had an illegitimate child that has not been disclosed to other family members. If that question on the census form is answered accurately, then that too would be known in 75 or 100 years. Do you think those sorts of issues are of minor concern compared with the financial question?

**Mr Harris**—It is probably of minor concern these days. It could well have been a concern as it was with people 50 years ago who did not want to know about their convict ancestry, but in today's era they are fairly proud of their heritage and the illegitimacy or otherwise of children is no longer particularly relevant I think to most people—certainly to anyone researching their family it is not.

**Mr Ward**—Often that illegitimate birth disclosed in 75 or 100 years could be a godsend to people endeavouring to do family research because it is the hidden links that often cause a lot of concern and a lot of heartburn to members. The information has been hidden and is not freely available, whereas 75 or 100 years down the track they are delighted to have that information. It can also have a big impact on the medical aspects of it because we do not know what sorts of diseases are going to be turned up in that period. If that information and that illegitimate child is able to be linked into the family, it may well be able to be seen as part of a medical pattern and be of great value to the people who will come afterwards. It sometimes takes a long time for medical patterns to be disclosed and missing links are vital.

**CHAIR**—Can I ask you, before handing over to my colleagues, a question about the cost of storage. You state in your submission that, based on the current commercial costs of microfiche production from a hard copy and estimating some 7.5 million census forms from the 1996 census, the cost of storage by this means would be between \$2 million and \$4 million. How did you arrive at that estimate? There is a fairly major difference between \$2 million and \$4 million, so can you explain that to us a bit more?

**Mr Harris**—The figures that I used in compiling that were simply the costs which are currently commercially available to us in producing microfiche of our own indexes, but I am quite sure that commercially, given the large volume of material that would be involved, the lower figure would be more accurate. The higher figure is the sort of figure that would apply to us doing small runs of 200 or 300 microfiche. Here you would be dealing with huge numbers of microfiche.

**CHAIR**—Is it contracted out, or do you do it yourself?

**Mrs Bartlett**—It is contracted out.

**CHAIR**—Presumably, if it were done in-house, there would be a lower cost. There would be no profit margin for another party.

**Mr Harris**—If it were set up as an ongoing function with all the equipment provided, it could be an ongoing function between each census. It could possibly be staged over a 10-year period between the censuses as an in-house function.

**Mr McCLELLAND**—On that point of \$20 million being allocated to a fund, you are contemplating that not being spent as a one-off but rather interest and revenue from that investment being used to provide an ongoing fund to store a number of censuses.

**Mr Harris**—Yes, that is what I envisage. You would have a capital sum which would be the ongoing funding for the project over a long-term basis.

**Mr MUTCH**—Why is family history research of any value at all?

**Mr Harris**—To the person who is involved in family research, I think it teaches us an enormous amount about our past. That can help us in our future in teaching our children, in particular, what our past contained and where they should look to the future. I do not think we can progress without looking at past history. It is a vital part of our heritage and our ongoing learning. If we can give our children the background information of their roots and where they came from, I think they will have a more solid basis to base their life on. There are enough of them running around at loose ends these days without adding to the problem.

**Mr MUTCH**—Is family history research of any value to the writing of histories of various groups in the community, from Tasmania's point of view in particular? Has family research been of use to professional historians?

**Mr Harris**—I believe so. Our current patron, Professor Roe, whom I believe you will speak to shortly, indicated quite recently that he wished he had spent more time on family research in his professional career. He has only recently become involved in the family research idea through the society. He believes it would have added quite a new dimension to his history teaching. I believe it has an important part to play both academically and for the writing of cultural histories.

**Mr MUTCH**—Why would census collections be particularly significant for your researchers?

**Mr Harris**—We have found from UK censuses that are available that a great number of Australian people derive from English stock. We found that they are often the only way of being able to trace families back. By finding a census record of 1881, you can find family members which you did not know existed because they are living with the parents. For that reason, we would like to see the name identified census material and the relationships kept. They are very much an important source for a genealogist to go back to.

**Mr MUTCH**—How many people would you have in your society? How many people do you believe would be actively interested in the research of family history in Tasmania?

**Mrs Bartlett**—Our society has a membership of between 1,400 and 1,500. I believe that the minority of family historians actually belong to the Genealogical Society of Tasmania. There are a lot more out there in the public domain doing it by themselves. Family history has been introduced into a lot of schools as part

of the social sciences curriculum, to give children a sense of place. It is amazing the number of people you meet who are interested to some degree in their own family history.

**Mr MUTCH**—In your submission you mention that the ABS has continued a campaign of destruction and has continued to propagate this campaign, but, from your dealings with people—even genealogists—can you say whether they would know that the census is not kept or that name identified forms are not kept?

**Mrs Bartlett**—Genealogists who belong to societies are very much aware of the fact that censuses are destroyed.

**Mr MUTCH**—What about the general public—do you think they are aware that censuses are destroyed?

**Mr Harris**—To some extent they are, yes. I have a couple of friends who were census takers at the last census, and they have commented that people were quite aware that their material would be destroyed. The number of people asking for privacy envelopes seemed to have gone up.

**Mr MUTCH**—You mention a possible project under the Federation Fund. Do you think that a campaign telling people that they can leave their mark, as it were, would meet with a positive response?

**Mr Harris**—I believe it could, yes. If the campaign is conducted well, the knowledge that their census material would be there for future generations could be quite encouraging to people.

**Mrs Bartlett**—It could be the ideal time, in a way. Going back to the 1988 Bicentenary there was a great influx in the number of people who were interested in family history. You got a large increase in the number of family histories being written. It is beginning to look as if the same thing is going to happen for 2000. Those who are not interested suddenly become aware of this and want to do something and they are doing it. So people would be receptive to it at this time.

**Mr Ward**—The value of it is shown to us because we have two Tasmanian census results for Hobart and Launceston from the 1840s. They are used very much and are of inestimable value to people who are using them, not only for the family connections—in particular how their ancestors may have arrived here at that time, whether they were free or otherwise—but also because of the social and sociological thoughts that start to stir when people get a name and a date: they want to know more about that.

That is one of the big values in genealogical research. People want to know how their ancestors lived, where they lived, the conditions of the time. They want to be able to study the sociological changes and to get a better picture of the country as it was, to compare it to how it is now and perhaps sometimes to look for reasons we should or should not pursue similar courses. The value is proven to us here in Tasmania from the local information that is available—only for Hobart and Launceston unfortunately, but there was not much else in the 1840s.

**Mr MUTCH**—Do people wanting to write books, for instance, on the immigration history and the Australian history of particular immigrant groups—more contemporary immigrant groups—approach your



society for information about these groups? Is there an increase in interest from groups?

**Mr Harris**—It is often very difficult to assess, without putting personal questions to people, the reasons they have come into the society. The society acts as an organised group of like-minded people. We do not question people's motives for coming in, but people come in and use our facilities and, perhaps, talk to other members and gain knowledge that way. Their purposes are often not open to us, but I would imagine that, yes, people would use our facilities because we do have some facilities that are not available at national and state libraries.

**Mr MUTCH**—Particularly with respect to visitors who come into the country who might not have birth records and so forth, would be an extra reason why the census would be valuable for those sorts of groups?

**Mrs Bartlett**—Definitely. My telephone number is listed and so I get a lot of the initial calls. One group I have picked up which is very interested are those with Aboriginal ancestry which is a hard one to trace. That is becoming more and more popular for a variety of reasons. There are a lot of people out there. There are also migrant groups with very difficult ones to answer. Often they are the children of migrants. If that information had been retained, then down the track that information would have been available, but they are children from areas where records no longer exist, like Ireland and eastern Europe where the records have been destroyed.

**Mr MUTCH**—With respect to Aboriginality, do you have many records in Tasmania of early censuses or parts there of?

**Mrs Bartlett**—Of Aboriginals?

**Mr MUTCH**—What records do exist in Tasmania from a census or an equivalent?

**Mr Ward**—I know there are records in the state archives of the census taken in Hobart and Launceston in 1838, 1840 or 1848.

**Mrs Bartlett**—Between 1848 and 1850 and there are small parts of those censuses for other areas of Tasmania.

**Mr MUTCH**—Would they have picked up Aboriginality?

**Mrs Bartlett**—No.

**Mr Harris**—Those questions were not asked.

**Mr MUTCH**—But the census covered all the population?

**Mrs Bartlett**—I do not know. There are only fragments of it remaining.

**Mr Harris**—There are only fragments of it remaining and it is a little difficult to tell whether in fact it covered everyone and how well in fact it covered them in that period.

**Mr Ward**—The thing with regard to the detention centres—and we are talking about ethnic groups now—is that the information that they have will be put down on the census form and may be known to some of their immediate family. But in 70, 75, 80, 90 or 100 years that will be lost to those families. It may not have been handed down through the various generations. So these people become lost and strike a brick wall and say, ‘Where did my ancestor come from?’ If this information that is being made available can be kept, it can be a reference for the future. We must think of it in terms of the difficulty some of them are going to have with the present structures in society in perhaps tracing some of their ancestors.

**Mr MUTCH**—With respect to writing a book for instance on particular ethnic groups, what other records do we have that actually list the ethnicity of a person?

**Mrs Bartlett**—There is not.

**Mr Harris**—Basically, probably only the immigration records which are not currently available to the average researcher, I would not imagine.

**Mr MUTCH**—They would pick up all legal immigrants then?

**Mr Harris**—They would pick up legal immigrants, but certainly not the illegal. We know for a fact from genealogical research that not all the information was recorded by births, deaths and marriage registrars in Australia, particularly in the earlier years.

**Mr MUTCH**—Would the immigration records include ethnicity or just the country of origin?

**Mr Harris**—I have not seen an immigration form for quite a while. I think basically country of origin at the time.

**Mr MUTCH**—Nationality, in other words?.

**Mr Harris**—Nationality.

**Mr MUTCH**—I have a vested interest, because I was some research on the Maoris in New South Wales, Sydney and so forth and no-one would really tell us how many people of Maori descent lived in Australia because they were categorised as New Zealanders.

**Mr Harris**—I would beg to differ. From memory, and coming from New Zealand, the immigration cards that were used when I came into the country certainly asked the question, ‘Are you of Maori or part Maori descent?’ So that information could be available.

**Mr MUTCH**—It was not available when I was trying to find it.

**Mr Harris**—I came in 1960, so it is possible that it has changed since then. As I say, I have not seen the card since then.

**Mr McCLELLAND**—Some witnesses have expressed concern that the accuracy of the census data may be affected if people are concerned that their information is being kept, even for 100 years. If there were a turn of the century experiment to test the public reaction to the retention of these census records and if there were a compromise whereby there was an opting out provision, and people could say that they did not want their particular information kept, would the census forms which were nonetheless kept be of use to people of your interests in 70 to 100 years time? Would some be better than none?

**Mr Ward**—Yes.

**Mr Harris**—You would have to say yes, in that Bryce has already said that we make use of fragments of the 1840s-1850s census now, because it is the only information that is available. So even fragments are better than nothing. We would, of course, like to see it as a compulsory acquisition of the whole of the name identified census with, perhaps, optional questions. From our point of view, a preferable way to go would be that questions of a particularly sensitive nature may be made optional as to whether they are answered or not. But if it had to come down to an optional question of whether your material was stored or not, then yes, we would be quite happy to accept that.

**CHAIR**—I thank you for your submission and also for coming to discuss it with us this morning. I take it, Mr Harris, that you have actually come from Devonport.

**Mr Harris**—Yes, we came down yesterday, and Mrs Bartlett has come down from Launceston.

**Mr Ward**—I have come from over the bridge.

**CHAIR**—I thank you all for the various distances you travelled to discuss it with us this morning.

### **Short adjournment**

[10.23 a.m.]

**ROE, Professor Owen Michael, 34 View Street, Hobart, Tasmania 7005**

**CHAIR**—Welcome. In what capacity do you appear here today?

**Prof. Roe**—As a private citizen. As stated in the submission, the particular role I have is as patron of the Genealogical Society of Tasmania, but of course I have many other pertinent connections, having taught in the department of history at the University of Tasmania for 36 years until 18 months ago; seven times chairman of the Tasmanian Historical Research Association and honorary life member of that body; and member of various other such associations: the Oral History Association of Tasmania, the Launceston Historical Society. That is part of my general professional practice, which has strong national ties. Again, I am a member of various Australian historical groups and a Fellow of the Australian Academy of the Humanities.

**CHAIR**—Thank you. Although the committee does not require you to give evidence under oath, I should advise you that the hearings are legal proceedings of the parliament and warrant the same respect as proceedings of the House itself. The giving of false or misleading evidence is a serious matter and may be regarded as a contempt of the parliament.

We are in receipt of your submission of 24 June of this year. Are there some general comments that you would care to make about the issues?

**Prof. Roe**—The evidence that has been given to you by my colleagues in the Genealogical Society has made somewhat redundant what I had thought I might say in introduction, but you will excuse any touch of repetition. In the submission, brief though it is, I indicate that I am grinding an ideological axe to some extent.

As an old-fashioned academic historian, I very much regret the tendency in current academic and intellectual circles in Australia to be rather contemptuous of the whole notion of empirically derived truth—truth with a capital T. I am not suggesting all academics are on that path, but a distressing number seem to me to be so. In that situation, as I suggest in the submission, it seems to me all the more important that government and everybody else do their best to support those who believe in truth—with a capital T—and give their time, energy and commitment to discovering that truth.

It is precisely that kind of person whom one meets to some degree in the academy but relatively more and absolutely more in genealogical and local historical groups. If you go to the Archives Office of Tasmania, for example, you will find very few academics—with a capital A—on the chairs; you will find quite a number of local historians and genealogists. There are all sorts of reasons for that situation. Nevertheless, it is a situation of considerable importance. The conclusion I draw from this is that such worthy endeavour should be encouraged and, as you have heard from my colleagues this morning and no doubt many others, the release of substantial material from the census would very much help such research as they are engaged upon.

My colleagues mentioned the use that is made of similar material—name specific material—in UK censuses. For example, I did a little paper some short time back on the Broughton family in Hobart, who ran the cab business in Hobart from the 1840s to the 1970s. I was able to establish a close tie between the family here, the family there and the use of the same christian names, confirming beyond reasonable doubt that that was the family connection.

On Saturday, at a meeting of the local history groups in Devonport, Dr Alison Alexander, the most prolific writer of Tasmanian history at the moment and one who, like myself, bridges the academic and the amateur activities, presented a paper on Charles Davis, the hardware king of Hobart—the man whose business has been bought out in recent years by Sir Donald Trescowthick. Sir Donald is now the chief beneficiary of the State Library of Victoria. The information room in the State Library of Victoria is the Trescowthick room. From the British census records, Alison was able to establish Charles Davis as being in a family business in London which he transferred with remarkable effect to Tasmania.

I, too, was going to refer to the very great value that the scraps of the census material of the 1840s, which give some specific information, have been to local historians. One of our recent seminars in the History Department was by Dr Tony Denholm of the University of Adelaide, who told us of his work in British urban history which has, as one of its essential constituents, the study of trade directories—working out just how many people were doing which particular tasks. Tony has checked back from that data to name specific census data. He told us that he had begun that task in Tasmania. He had looked at some of the directories. It fell to me to break the news to him that in Australia there is no name specific census data which would enable him to complement that work. Those are some examples.

As to issues of privacy and so forth, again I cannot say very much more than many people must have said to you. I do think there are ethical limits to what the historian should do. I do not like historians wallowing, as it were, in the tragedies and miseries of particular cited individuals. Such things exist and should be told about. I do not think such things in anything like recent history—and even extending that term into the middle distant past—should be told about with reference to cited individuals. I think professional historians should develop ethical codes to guard against that.

But broadly speaking it seems to me that the census material is social material rather than personal in that sense and so, in reasonable terms, it is open to historical scrutiny. Like others, I can see the case for particular barriers of time—and, in very particular cases, of information—although I would be grudging as to very specific barriers.

People can stand the shock of considerable knowledge. There is just as good an argument for saying that secrecy damages as much as knowledge. Nobody can be sure, but that argument does have considerable force, in abstract terms and in practical terms. I do not think there is any reasonable doubt that Tasmania is a healthier society for accepting its convict past than it was in earlier times when it denied it, although there were reasons for denying it in the past, as there are reasons for accepting it in the present. But it is morally better that such things be accepted rather than denied. That is the sort of thinking I would pursue on such matters.

**CHAIR**—Professor Roe, it seems to me, to make a passing comment, that you are making a case for

reconstruction rather than deconstruction.

**Prof. Roe**—Absolutely. Or just construction.

**CHAIR**—You say in your submission to the committee, ‘In taking this stance I act less from my background as an academic historian than as Patron of the Genealogical Society of Tasmania.’ To what extent, broadly, is the work of family historians feeding into more general history? Are academic historians making use of family histories that have been compiled by amateur enthusiasts?

**Prof. Roe**—Some academic historians are—Alison Alexander and myself, for example. There is a significant number of academic historians who do have this orientation to the dense, the local and the social. So there are certainly examples of that, but there are too many examples where such material is not used. I recently reviewed a book on the Catholic settlement in central New South Wales. It was an intelligent book, it asked all the right questions, but the author simply had not done enough work of very much the kind that the genealogists do, to provide satisfactory answers to those questions of family connections and ethnic connections, which were his central concerns and which he spoke about very sensibly in abstract terms. I can hardly believe that, if he had looked for such material, either as his own researcher or through the researches of others, he would not have found some. But he did not. So I think there is that considerable gap in the overall academic approach. All the more reason, therefore, to encourage those forces which would close that gap.

**CHAIR**—In the fragments of the census material available from the 1840s through to the 1850s in Tasmania—through which, I presume, some individuals are able to make some connections—have you every come across anybody who has objected to the fact that such information is available?

**Prof. Roe**—No, not that particular information. You have probably heard, of course, the stories of convict records being destroyed—which did happen. One of the very few absolutely known cases—but, of course, we do not know what we do not know—concerns the aforesaid Charles Davis. His convict record sheet has been torn out but that, of course, in turn has some sort of counter-lesson to tell. Those records were kept in various guises in various forms so that, although we do not know quite as much about Charles Davis’s convict past—as we would have if that particular sheet had remained in the black book—we do know a good deal. The truth comes out much of the time. As I say: we, by definition, do not know how often the truth does not come out but we want it to come out as much as possible.

**CHAIR**—If there is an apprehension about keeping material, can we say that, on the experience of people who become aware of material that is over 100 years old, that apprehension has dissipated over a century?

**Prof. Roe**—The answer must be yes, although one must admit in the abstract that we do not know whether there are people who in recent years have discovered they have got convict ancestors and have been morally or otherwise shattered by it. To some extent, it is no doubt true, but I would think it is only a small extent.

It has become the fashion to aver that one is not shattered, and only the people who are not shattered

speak. So it is a matter of fashion to some degree, but I think there is nevertheless a substantial core of truth in the affirmation that people have been exhilarated—that is hardly an exaggeration—by the discovery of truth. That could have happened only after a passage of time. I do not want to slip into the currency of saying that they should have admitted it in the 1860s. In the 1860s people wanted to get away from their convict past, not to celebrate it—it would be unhistorical to put it otherwise. Nevertheless, in the longer term, the discovery of truth has had, broadly speaking, a tonic effect.

**CHAIR**—I am not a subscriber to this but I want to put it to you anyway: there is a view that all history is bunk anyway so in the broad sense what value is there to a state or nation of having this material available a century later? By that I mean that there is no immediate use you can make of it. What is the value?

**Prof. Roe**—I have to sound rather pompous: I can always say that I believe truth is an absolute good, and the discovery of truth is an absolute good—that is my ultimate, bottom line position. It is a healthy, encouraging relaxation and a delightful social bond, et cetera to be engaged in this activity. No, I should not speak in a flippant way—that is just a truth that people who engage in this activity do feel the kind of tie that arises, of course, in other areas of life but this is the particular one that means something to us.

Anne gave that figure of 1,300 to 1,500—that is an extraordinary number in a population of 400,000 people. This is something that really has become a major, social interest, which, again, I would see as a good in itself. I am afraid I am not one of those—and I cannot perjure myself even if I am not taking the oath—who believe in any simplistic notion about knowledge of the past giving you answers to the problems of the present or the future.

**CHAIR**—Do you think Tasmania is a better society for having accepted its convict past and all the tragedy, if I can use that expression, associated with it and in a sense come to terms with what was our past rather than continuing to pretend that it did not exist in some way?

**Prof. Roe**—I do think that, although I must repeat my earlier point that I do not want to adopt any attitude of smug superiority against those in the past who did conceal the truth. That was part of their tragedy—that their situation virtually compelled them to deny their own past. That is part of the tragedy of convictism. It is a good thing that that particular aspect of the tragedy can now be washed away.

**Mr McCLELLAND**—Effectively what is retained now are, as I understand it, snapshots of about 250 households in the census collection districts, which show their income, their racial background in terms of the language that they speak and where they were born. There are about 10 different categories of information that is obtained. What is the benefit of having individual data as opposed to the 250 houses?

**Prof. Roe**—There I think the point between the academic historian and the genealogical historian, broadly speaking, is pertinent. For the academic historian, he might almost be grateful to have his sample worked out. I can assure you there are times when you see masses of material and you say, ‘Why don’t they destroy some of this and just leave me with a manageable amount to chomp through?’ But you are not going to get genealogical historians interested unless they are able to identify particular people. We academics tend to have a little joke at the genealogists with their passion for specific names, but that is the passion that

drives genealogical and family history. Of course, from that original drive comes broader, and from academic criteria more valuable, social local history interest but, without specific names, no genealogy.

**Mr MUTCH**—Do you have any view on the fact that the ABS encourages the use of statistics they collect but they do not actually keep the base data? As an academic, does that offend your sensibilities?

**Prof. Roe**—Slightly because, as everybody knows, data can have different meanings for different generations. They are going to ask the questions which appear, by the standards of that society and government at that particular time, the meaningful questions. That itself is an important historical fact. The particular point as to medicine was made but more general issues can be made. Different generations have different questions to ask about the past. There is almost no limit to the nature of the truth about the past. Different generations will be sensitive to dimensions of truth which earlier generations did not want to or just did not have the conceptual capacity to grasp.

**Mr MUTCH**—The ABS argues strongly that people would not complete the census forms accurately if they did not make a guarantee. Do you have any views on that?

**Prof. Roe**—That should be confronted and challenged and people encouraged to the view that they have a social right and obligation to tell the truth to their present government and to posterity. Again, it is a bit hard to say these things without sounding unduly pompous but it ties in with the point that was made earlier as to trying to mount a campaign where people are encouraged to see it as a positive thing—to leave their mark for the future to pursue.

**Mr MUTCH**—Would you be prepared to take part in a public education campaign to advise people that the 2001 census was to be a commemorative event and that they could leave their fingerprint in history?

**Prof. Roe**—Yes. I think it in many ways comes better from the active genealogists, but if people thought that such endorsement as mine was any great help it would be happily given.

**Mr MUTCH**—Do you feel that we have a bit of a black hole compared to many other nations in terms of the democratic and social history of our nation because of the fact that we have not retained the name identified census information?

**Prof. Roe**—I think that would be an exaggeration. I must admit I am not too sure of the international pattern. I imagine that the UK is particular in the wealth of its name specific information. There has been a strong tradition of social democratic history in Australia. People make the most of the material they have. That history would be better if it had such information as is now sought. I could not honestly say that I think Australia is in an especially parlous position so far as its historical literature is concerned. There are other materials which help cover the gap. You were talking about migration before. My last major study was on migration from Britain in the 1920s especially, and there you do have a file for every assisted migrant that came into most states of Australia during that period. That tells one how rich such material can be. It certainly was a very great help to me in producing a study which I hope some claims to that social democratic tradition that you mentioned.



**CHAIR**—Just on that, after what period of time are the files on assisted migrants available?

**Prof. Roe**—Migration in that period was very much a joint state-federal matter, so those files are kept much more fully in Queensland, South Australia and Tasmania than elsewhere. In the state archives in Tasmania, and I think this is representative of the whole, the 30-year rule prevails.

**CHAIR**—So presumably if someone came to Australia in, say, the great wave of migration after the second world war on an assisted basis and came to one of the states you mentioned, including Tasmania—

**Prof. Roe**—Mine was after the first war—

**CHAIR**—I know your study was, but if someone came here on assisted passage, say, in 1955 or 1956, of whom there were many thousands, presumably therefore there is a file available which contains a great deal of personal information.

**Prof. Roe**—One would think so. Although I have not myself worked on that particular material, students of mine who have worked on postwar continental European migration have had their chief source in the records of the employing agencies and especially the Hydro-electric Commission, which has wonderfully rich material in such areas. But I imagine in the Commonwealth archives there are literally stacks of such data.

**Mr MUTCH**—With respect to the census, though, is it recognised that the census is a particularly important record because it fills in gaps?

**Prof. Roe**—Yes. I thought the point made earlier as to specially giving a base for ethnic groups which do not have the same access to records as those of British background was especially appropriate. It is an important point, not a selling point. In a way, to keep census material would be a genuine multicultural act. British material is relatively easily found; non-British material is not. The census would cover that gap very perceptibly indeed.

**Mr MUTCH**—Do you really think that if you had an illegal migrant living in your home you would fill him in on the census form?

**Prof. Roe**—No, you wouldn't.

**Mr MUTCH**—So there would still be gaps in the history of illegal migration to Australia.

**Prof. Roe**—Yes. One does not find the whole truth. You have to leave that to other files. But presumably there are agencies of government—we saw something about it on *Four Corners* last night, didn't we—which devote themselves to gathering material on illegal migrants. Is that material ever going to be made available, one wonders.

**Mr MUTCH**—That raises another question. The ABS claim that the accuracy of the information provided is very good because of the promises to destroy the name identified data. Do you think that is an

exaggerated claim?

**Prof. Roe**—It is an untestable claim, or it would be enormously difficult to test it. But that cuts both ways, doesn't it? I do not think there is any more certain truth in asserting it than in denying it.

**CHAIR**—One way of testing it would be for the next census to indicate that the data is going to be retained. That could be done on a number of alternative bases. One would be simply to say that, as a commemorative activity for the centenary of federation, the advent of the new millennium et cetera, we are going to retain the 2001 census material, not to be released for 100 years or whatever. There would then be some way of testing it, because you would have a comparison with the previous census as to whether or not there was much of a difference. Another alternative would be to say that but to allow people to opt out, that is, have a box on the front of the form saying, 'This will be retained unless you tick this box, in which case it will be destroyed.' Do you have any comment about either of those propositions?

**Prof. Roe**—I would be pretty reluctant to have that box there, I think. I think people should be encouraged to accept their situation. I can see that that can be seen as a rather smug, bourgeois point of view but nevertheless I think that is where the stress, the emphasis and the encouragement should be, that it is a matter of human dignity to accept the situation—something like that.

**CHAIR**—Whether it is human dignity or a bourgeois notion, we will leave it on that note. If we go down that track it is beyond our terms of reference. Thank you very much for your submission and for coming along and discussing it with us.

Resolved (on motion by Mr Mutch):

That the committee authorises publication of the evidence given before it at this public hearing today.

**Committee adjourned at 10.53 a.m.**