



COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES



**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

**Federation Chamber**

**CONSTITUENCY STATEMENTS**

**McMillan Electorate: Corner Inlet Justice Group**

**SPEECH**

**Wednesday, 19 March 2014**

BY AUTHORITY OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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## SPEECH

<b>Date</b> Wednesday, 19 March 2014	<b>Source</b> House
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<b>Questioner</b>	<b>Responder</b>
<b>Speaker</b> Broadbent, Russell, MP	<b>Question No.</b>

**Mr BROADBENT** (McMillan) (09:33): It is not often we are tested as federal members in our own electorates, but I certainly was when I went to the Corner Inlet social justice group. When I arrived, I saw a whole lot of cars at the Fish Creek Hotel and I thought there must be a function on. There was, and I was the guest speaker. I was a bit surprised at the numbers: nearly 50 people arrived with our hosts Simon and Kerry at the Fish Creek Hotel. Yes, the beautiful art deco hotel has been recently purchased and, yes, there is a great big fish still on the roof.

With the guidance of Peter Philp and Garry Easterman, this group have been meeting for quite some time to talk about general issues that affect the Australian community more in a broad fashion, including overseas aid. We covered a myriad of issues once we went into question time. The others involved were Brenda Linderman, Rosemary Livingston, Neil and Judy Travers, Lyne Muir and Nain Philp.

The most interesting part was the presence of an award-winning winery that has won national and international awards. I was sitting next to a local vet—this was just an eclectic group of people who I was so pleased to interact with at that level. Our time went for two hours, not five minutes. I expected to go and meet five or so people down there and more than 40 people turned up.

These people are directly interested in how we spend our foreign aid, how we treat those who are disenfranchised and how we address ourselves to the movement of people across this world and those who want to come here by boat. It was a pressure time. It was an exhausting time, but it was a pleasurable time to know that there are people in our community who actually take a direct interest in what is going on and are prepared to come out at lunchtime, sit down and discuss the issues with their local member.

As I wound up the day, I had to say to Rosemary Livingston particularly, 'Rosemary, the situation is this when it comes to allocating funds in this nation and who we address first: you and I are in a room and we cannot leave that room until we have made a decision about where we spend the money. It is our decision what money goes on defence, what money goes on our border protection and what money is spent on social services. There is only you and I left in the room and we have to make the decision.' When you put it into that type of context—the decisions that the previous government made and that this government made and governments before this have made that affect us today—and you say to people, 'Now it is us; now we have to make the decision,' I say to every member of parliament in this room today, 'You are the decision makers. Consider carefully how you make your decisions.'