



Speech by

Mr T. SULLIVAN

MEMBER FOR CHERMSIDE

Hansard 16 September 1998

AUNTY RUTH HEGARTY

Mr SULLIVAN (ChermSIDE—ALP) (10.19 a.m.): Many of us would not know who David Unaipon is, yet some of us see an image of him occasionally; his face is depicted on the front of the \$50 note.

Opposition members: Table it.

Mr SULLIVAN: The next time Mick Veivers does a quick shout, we will see on a \$50 note that David Unaipon states that he may claim to be the first but not the last of his race to write about his race's history. He was not and he is not. Last night I was privileged to attend a ceremony at which Aunty Ruth Hegarty was awarded the David Unaipon award for her autobiography "Is that you, Ruthie?" which many members will already know is the prize winning manuscript telling of how when she was four years old, in line with the mission policy of the day, she was sent to live in the dormitory of the Cherbourg mission—separated from her mother, her family, her identity and her home. As she said last night at the Nundah Community Centre and in the magnificent ceremony in the city square earlier this year, the relationship with her mother and family has been very difficult, even 70 years on.

It is a tribute to Aunty Ruth Hegarty that her life story will be published next year. It is a touching story. Many members have already heard her speak. I congratulate the Nundah Community Centre and in particular the Nundah Reconciliation Group, which organised the function. Politicians from all sides of the political spectrum attended, and apologies were sent by others who could not attend. There was great community support for her. We wish her well in her future writings and we thank her for bringing to life a part of history which up to this stage we have ignored.
