



Speech by

Mrs J. GAMIN

MEMBER FOR BURLEIGH

Hansard 9 March 1999

DRUG ABUSE

Mrs GAMIN (Burleigh—NPA) (10.29 a.m.): A national heroin trial is not the solution to the ever-increasing problem of drug abuse in this country. A heroin trial will not assist heroin addicts to kick the habit. Instead, it will guarantee that participants will remain as heroin addicts. The New York experiment with zero tolerance certainly worked for that city, although more work needs to be done to see if it will work in Australia. Zero tolerance will get drug dealers out of concentrated problem areas, but may shift the problem to other localities. As much of our drug dealing culture is imported from overseas, it would be better to aim any zero tolerance problem to shifting that culture offshore and out of this country.

Drug courts are a step in the right direction, provided proper rehabilitation programs are adequately funded, and this should be a whole-of-Government initiative, not just a bit of a bite out of the limited budgets of Health or Corrective Services. The State Government needs to fund more anti-drug and substance-free rehabilitation agencies, such as Mirikai, the Gold Coast Drug Council's establishment at West Burleigh. Mirikai provides residential and outreach programs for people who want to kick the drug habit and who want to turn their lives around from drug dependency and its attendant health and social problems.

Time expired.
