

REDRESS WA — PAYMENTS

817. Mr P.B. WATSON to the Premier:

As a supplementary question, I asked the Premier whether he would commit to providing extensive counselling services. Money is something, but the men who have been to see me have been suffering for 30 or 40 years. Will the Premier commit to providing extensive counselling services above the six sessions offered by Medicare?

Mr C.J. BARNETT replied:

Is the member referring to the Katanning situation?

Mr P.B. Watson: Yes.

Mr C.J. BARNETT: Immediately—the day I announced the Blaxell inquiry—counsellors from outside Katanning were employed and put in place in Katanning, and there are other support services. If we find that there is a need to increase the counselling services required, we will do that. At the moment—I spoke to the minister recently—that seems to be an acceptable level. People are coming forward. I do not know—I do not think anyone knows—how many people will come forward out of the Katanning situation. When they ring the 1800 number, they are directed to the inquiry; if they want counselling, they are directed to that; and if they want to provide evidence, that is sent through to the police if they are making allegations. That has been dealt with properly as far as I am concerned.

Ms M.M. Quirk: Who is providing the counselling?

Mr C.J. BARNETT: That is being done through the department.