

**THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL SELECT COMMITTEE ON REGISTRATION OF OVERSEAS-TRAINED MEDICAL PRACTITIONERS MET IN THE CONFERENCE ROOM, GOVERNMENT HOUSE, 68 ROOKE MALL, DEVONPORT ON THURSDAY 16 APRIL 1998.**

**Mr PETER WYLIE KING AND Mrs CHARLOTTE McINDOE KING WERE CALLED, MADE THE STATUTORY DECLARATION AND WERE EXAMINED.**

**CHAIRMAN** (Mr Wilkinson) - Thanks for coming Mr and Mrs King. Can I ask you, for the sake of the transcript, to state your full name and ladies first. Mrs King - your full name?

**Mrs KING** - Charlotte McIndoe King.

**CHAIRMAN** - And your address?

**Mrs KING** - William Street.

**CHAIRMAN** - Right. Your capacity of seeing us today is because Dr Iastrebov has treated you before, is that right?

**Mrs KING** - Yes, very well too.

**CHAIRMAN** - Right, thank you. Mr King, can you state your full name and address, please?

**Mr KING** - Peter Wylie King, Unit 2, 164 William Street, Devonport.

**CHAIRMAN** - Now, before we start because we have a number of witnesses this afternoon I do not want to cut anybody short but we are restrained by time. So if I do say that time is up please do not feel affronted but we have approximately 20 minutes -

**Mrs KING** - I will not be saying very much because I was unconscious most of the time.

**CHAIRMAN** - Right, that is fine.

**Mr KING** - I just wrote a short - you have a copy of my letter, I presume?

**CHAIRMAN** - Yes, I have, thank you.

**Mr KING** - I have just a short opening statement here to - we call him Stan.

In reference to our letter of 26 January 1988 Charlotte and I would like to stress how important it is that Stan remains in charge of the Intensive Care Unit and the Mersey Community Hospital. Lives could be lost trying to take critically-ill patients to other hospitals. Charlotte would not now be here but for the care and devotion given to her by Stan and the staff of the ICU.

Stan tried to obtain a kidney machine from the LGH and Hobart General Hospital. They all could not supply so he attained one direct from Melbourne. We need him here on the north-west coast to look after all the people needing intensive care. He would be hard to replace. Australian doctors seem not to want to come here to Tasmania.

And I have a list of what odds and ends he did, the number of pathology tests and X-rays and things and a copy, if you need it, of the things he did.

**CHAIRMAN** - We do not need it thanks unless you really want to give to us.

**Mr KING** - No, I just thought you might.

**CHAIRMAN** - The reason we do not is because a number of people have spoken of his expertise and the way he treats patients to us and even though we are not expert in the field of medicine we can certainly understand that he is a good specialist.

**Mr KING** - He gave me a lot of moral support too, it was fantastic. I have not had as much from anybody else in any hospital in the world.

**CHAIRMAN** - What would have happened if you would have been unable to go to the Mersey Hospital?

**Mr KING** - She would have been dead before we could have had here anywhere else. She burst her oesophagus and I managed to scream out 'Debbie' - I do not know the nurse's other name - came rushing and hit the emergency button - I do not know which doctor but they saved her life then took her down to the ICU and then Dr Lamont operated that night. Stan said the risk was very high so we arranged for a daughter from England and from Queensland but Stan said he would get her through somehow or other and Lamont said they would pull her through.

After about six operations and a couple of months in the ICU there were about 500 pathology tests, 50 X-rays that he organised and getting different equipment. She was on nine drips at a time and life support. The staff and the nurses gave me a lot of support but Stan was absolutely - I just cannot put it into words about Stanley, he was unbelievable. So it was a fantastic thing.

I lost my first wife twelve years ago 1974 in a kidney unit so I have a fair idea how hospitals work but this one was - a lot of moral support -

**CHAIRMAN** - Was that here?

**Mr KING** - No, that was in Adelaide. The support there was good but here it was even deeper.

**CHAIRMAN** - When you say that if she did not go to hospital here she would have died, would you have gone to Launceston General or Hobart?

**Mrs KING** - My daughter wanted me to go to Launceston and Peter wanted me to stay and Stan said, 'She'd die before she got to Launceston'.

**CHAIRMAN** - No, no, this was with your hip operation.

**Mr KING** - Yes, that was successful.

**CHAIRMAN** - Where would you have gone for your hip operation? If you did not go here for your hip operation, would you have gone to Launceston or Hobart?

**Mrs KING** - We are in private cover.

**CHAIRMAN** - Yes, so where would have gone?

**Mrs KING** - Well, we would have went to Launceston.

**Mr KING** - Wherever the specialist had said, I suppose.

**CHAIRMAN** - Would you feel that was an imposition on you having to travel, the cost?

**Mr KING** - Yes, because I was going in the morning about nine and dashing home for a quick lunch and back there until about ten at night, every night for three months. If she had been in Launceston it would have been - I hate to think.

**CHAIRMAN** - Did you have any other family at all?

**Mrs KING** - No, not here. Scattered.

**Mr KING** - They are up in Queensland.

**CHAIRMAN** - So you were the only person who really could have offered the support?

**Mr KING** - Well, her daughter came back from England and they came down from Queensland as well.

**Mr LOONE** - Just one question perhaps. In your thoughts and concerns for Dr Iastrebov's future, have you any ideas that you may have picked up around the hospital in your time as to what should be done to retain him here? We are anxious and keen to come up with answers to the problems that we are experiencing with overseas-registered doctors and obviously every little bit of input we get from people like yourselves is a great assistance to us. In your time of discussions with specialists and with doctors I just thought you may have picked up something that would be advantageous to us in our deliberations.

**Mrs KING** - No, all the other doctors seemed to like him but we just feel he is irreplaceable.

**Mr KING** - I cannot think of anything definite, not in that relationship.

**Mrs KING** - I think it would be very hard to replace him.

**Mr KING** - You do not seem to be able to get Australian specialists to come here.

**Mrs KING** - They do not want to come to Tasmania.

**CHAIRMAN** - Is there anything further you wish to put to us?

**Mrs KING** - No, just keep Stan here.

**CHAIRMAN** - Just to inform you. It is a situation that we are struggling with at the moment because it is not just Stan, as you know, it is other doctors as well. There is another question: should members of parliament be able to say whether a doctor should be fully registered or not? Because members of parliament, mostly, do not have the expertise to say that. The medical staff are the only people who have the proper expertise to say whether a person should or should not be registered. That is one of the difficulties that we have to face.

**Mr KING** - He certainly seems to have the experience. I am pretty certain -

**Mrs KING** - He has saved so many lives.

**Mr KING** - I think in a busy big hospital maybe they could not have devoted so much time to her. I was in the ICU pretty well every day but the nurses would not leave Charlotte on her own. In fact if she had to go out for something she always made certain there was a nurse who took over. It was unbelievable, it really was. You had to be there for the two months to appreciate what was going on.

**Mr SQUIBB** - Your experiences are of a more recent time - had you had any experience at the Mersey Community or the Mersey General Hospital prior to this most recent experience?

**Mr KING** - Charlotte had her original hip done ten years ago with Mr Sundrum.

**Mr SQUIBB** - Who we heard about this morning? Who was in a similar situation, who was an overseas-trained doctor without full registration.

**Mrs KING** - He was a very good at the job but personality wise he was abrupt and rude.

**Mr SQUIBB** - I was going to ask have you noticed in that ten year difference between when you were first there, Mrs King, and when you were there on the last occasion, had you noticed any difference in the attitude and the professionalism and the general wellbeing or operation of the hospital at Latrobe?

**Mrs KING** - No.

**Mr SQUIBB** - You had not noticed any change?

**Mr KING** - The first time you were not in the intensive care unit, were you, dear?

**Mrs KING** - No, I was not in ICU. I was only in ICU because I was sick after the anaesthetic.

**Mr SQUIBB** - Right. Did you go back into a general ward though after that?

**Mr KING** - Well, they were a bit short of staff there. If Charlotte wanted to go to the toilet sometimes you had to wait half an hour and then she lost the urge.

**Mr SQUIBB** - On this most recent time or -

**Mr KING** - Yes. Once she could move - she could not move for a while because her leg was a bit funny and I could help her into the toilet, that eased that situation but they were short of nurses, that is for sure.

But the ICU, if they needed it they called extra staff in. Stan ran it but he gave me a lot of real moral support. It was not wishy-washy, it was just - you felt it. I cannot explain it any different.

**CHAIRMAN** - Thanks very much for your interest and coming along expressing your views. Thank you.

**THE WITNESSES WITHDREW.**