

Mr Dan Barron-Sullivan; Deputy Speaker; Mr Mike Board; Mr John D'Orazio; Ms Jaye Radisich; The Acting Speaker (mr P.W. Andrews); Mr Matt Birney; Acting Speaker; Ms Sue Walker; The Acting Speaker (mr D.A. Templeman); Mr Norm Marlborough

APPROPRIATION (CONSOLIDATED FUND) BILL (NO. 1) 2004
APPROPRIATION (CONSOLIDATED FUND) BILL (NO. 2) 2004

Second Reading - Cognate Debate

Resumed from an earlier stage of the sitting.

MR D.F. BARRON-SULLIVAN (Mitchell - Deputy Leader of the Opposition) [4.09 pm]: Earlier today I pointed out that the Gallop Labor Government has some \$1.8 billion in additional revenue in its budget compared with the same time at the last election. In other words, \$1.8 billion extra is being spent in this budget, yet the Gallop Labor Government cannot spend \$14 to check whether a newborn baby has a hearing difficulty to ensure that hearing difficulties among newborn babies are dealt with before they become major problems. There has been a \$1.8 billion increase in revenue, yet the Government cannot spend \$14 to look after newborn children in this State.

This budget becomes interesting when it is unravelled. As I said earlier today, it is reminiscent of previous Labor Governments' budgets. Perhaps that should not be a surprise, because the current Premier used to be the assistant to the former Treasurer, Carmen Lawrence. In those days, there was a massive blow-out in spending, taxation and debt, and the State was running a cash deficit. What is different today? There is a massive blow-out in spending, taxes and debt and guess what? Today there is again a cash deficit. However, the big difference today is that there is an illusion of good financial management. However, the Government has a bit of a budget problem. Expenditure is going through the roof and taxes are being reeled in at a rate of knots. How then does the Government dress up the budget? It calls it a family budget and coins the phrase "families first", as members will find out later on. Members with a sense of déjà vu know that that has been tried in the past. In fact, it was tried for four years under previous Labor Administrations. Essentially, this budget is neither honest nor responsible. It is the hallmark of Labor Party budget management, and increasing debt is indicative of the Labor Government's approach. Future generations of Western Australians will be saddled with that burden, at least until the Liberal Party is re-elected and must do the hard yards to peg things back again.

I will consider the budget figures in some detail, because they are interesting. The first is a simple figure that appears in the budget papers showing that this year's budget is running a cash deficit. Federal Treasurer Peter Costello's budget, which is running a surplus that has been built up to such an extent that the federal Government is able to provide major tax relief and benefits for families, carers, seniors and the broader community, hinges on a genuine cash surplus. Now let us consider the situation in Western Australia. The cash flow statements on page 180 of the *2004-05 Economic and Fiscal Outlook* document shows that, hey-presto, compared with 2003-04, there is a \$103 million turnaround in the bottom line of this state budget. The State is running a \$71 million cash deficit. What does a cash deficit mean? It means debt is increasing. The cash deficit feeds into the cash situation. Members are aware that debt in this State is blowing out. The fine print of the budget papers shows that over the previous year net debt has increased by \$844 million. That is typical Labor Party budget management. However, the big difference, as I said, is that this year the Government has put a different spin on it.

Before I examine the spin, I will examine the figures in more detail. This is where it becomes very interesting. We are fortunate that at the time of every election Treasury produces what I call an honesty document. It produces a pre-election budget statement that shows the underlining budget situation as at the time of the election. The last pre-election budget statement produced by Treasury was in February 2001, and it showed the budget situation in the out years. The last Treasury document estimated expenditure and revenue up to the 2003-04 financial year. It is easy to get a rough estimate of what the situation would have been in the financial year 2004-05, by extrapolating a four per cent across-the-board growth figure on expenditure and revenue. The pre-election budget statement prepared by Treasury can be used to gauge what the Government has done since the election. I will go right back to the months after the election, when we heard that the Liberal Party had left a black hole in the budget. A comparison of the pre-election budget statement and the 2001-02 budget - Labor's first budget - shows that revenue had increased by \$289.6 million. Rather than there being a black hole, almost \$300 million in additional revenue throughout that financial year was available to the Labor Party to spend. It knew full well that it had additional money, but it said it was broke. The Government said that it would have to cut government spending by \$850 million, which I will demonstrate never eventuated.

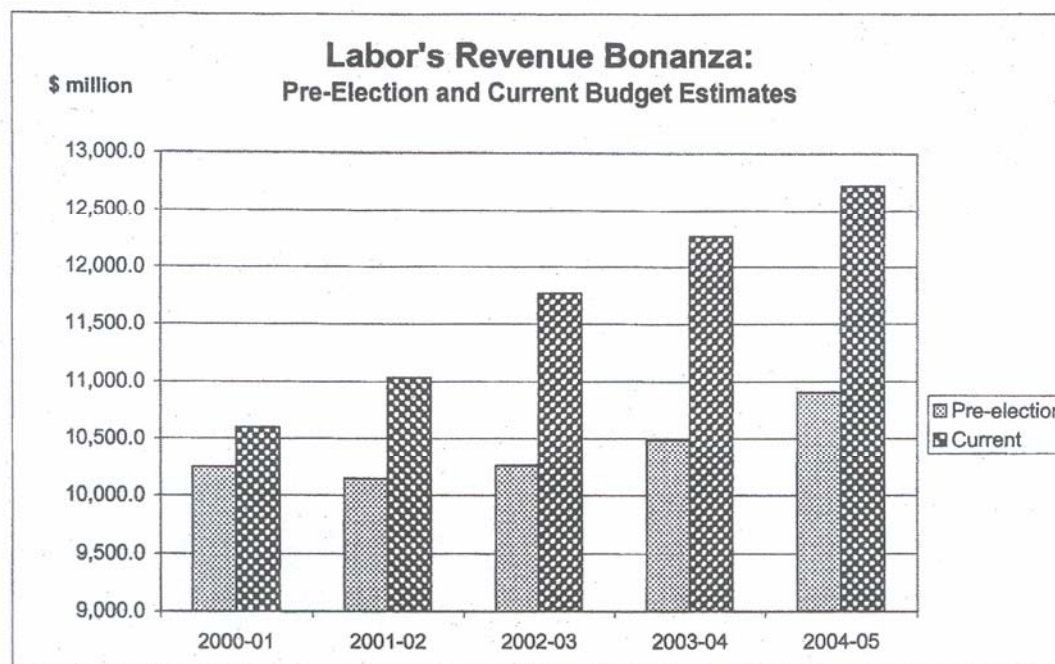
Each year the revenues in this State have gone through the roof. Last year, the pre-election budget statement showed in the forward estimates that there would be revenue in 2003-04 of \$10.4834 billion. The actual figure from the budget papers before us now is \$12.266 billion. Allowing for a four per cent growth on the pre-election statement figures, the 2004-05 budget shows a total revenue figure of \$10.9 billion. This year's budget papers show that revenue is expected to be \$12.7 billion. That is an annual increase of more than \$1.8 billion. In

Mr Dan Barron-Sullivan; Deputy Speaker; Mr Mike Board; Mr John D'Orazio; Ms Jaye Radisich; The Acting Speaker (mr P.W. Andrews); Mr Matt Birney; Acting Speaker; Ms Sue Walker; The Acting Speaker (mr D.A. Templeman); Mr Norm Marlborough

Labor's first year of government, when it inherited the previous Liberal Government's budget in 2000-01, revenue increased by \$354.6 million. So much for a black hole that year. In 2001-02, revenue increased by \$892.3 million, and in 2002-03 revenue increased by \$1.5169 billion. I referred to the 2003-04 figures earlier. In total, the Government has had the benefit of more than \$6 billion in additional revenue compared with the figures at the time of the last election. If this Government had kept revenue down and given tax concessions etc to hold revenue at the level it was expected to be at the time of the last election - I am talking about the forward estimates, not that particular year - allowing for the growth that was provided for in the budget, there would be \$6 billion less revenue because of expenditure. Although revenue has increased, as sure as apples are apples, expenditure has too. The pre-election budget statement shows that the amount of expenditure in the 2003-04 budget was expected to be \$10.5 billion. It was more than \$12 billion. This year it has increased to just under \$12.5 billion. When the pre-election budget statement is compared with the current budget, it can be seen that the Gallop Labor Government is spending almost \$5 billion more - in an accumulative sense - than was allowed for in Treasury's pre-election budget statements. The Government has spent \$5 billion in additional expenditure over the past four budgets, but the Gallop Labor Government still cannot provide \$14 to check whether a child has a hearing disorder.

I have a very neat little table that demonstrates the increases in revenue under the Gallop Labor Government, which shows how the revenues have increased by about \$1.8 billion a year compared with the pre-election statement. I seek leave to have the table incorporated in *Hansard* and can provide the necessary details to *Hansard*.

[The following table was incorporated by leave of the House.]



Mr D.F. BARRON-SULLIVAN: The Government has \$1.8 billion more revenue to spend. Its expenditure has increased by nearly \$5 billion and, for the life of me, I do not know what we have to show for it. We still have major problems in our hospitals. We cannot build roads such as the Peel deviation despite having increased revenues by \$6 billion. The Government is not meeting its commitment to provide an extra 250 police. What has the Government done with \$6 billion in additional revenue? When the Treasurer tries to cry poor, and tries to demonstrate that he had to cut spending to meet his revenue constraints, we know that, frankly, far from being truthful Treasury information, we are dealing with spin of the worst kind; it is absolute budget dishonesty. The \$850 million of savings we heard about in the first year of this Government have never eventuated; they have turned into increased expenditure of almost \$5 billion. What a wasted opportunity. What could be done with a portion of that in the health portfolio? What could be done in law and order is beyond me.

However, that is not the only area of concern in this budget. When looking beyond the current side of the budget at the capital situation, we are being conned not once or twice but three times by the Treasurer. The Premier and the Treasurer had lauded the fact that this budget is built on a massive \$3.9 billion capital works program. That

Mr Dan Barron-Sullivan; Deputy Speaker; Mr Mike Board; Mr John D'Orazio; Ms Jaye Radisich; The Acting Speaker (Mr P.W. Andrews); Mr Matt Birney; Acting Speaker; Ms Sue Walker; The Acting Speaker (Mr D.A. Templeman); Mr Norm Marlborough

is the political headline figure that they want us all to believe. However, when the rhetoric is scraped away and the detail in the budget papers is examined, that \$3.9 billion capital works figure actually comes out at \$2.9 billion. The Government has overestimated its capital works program by \$1 billion. I will give a couple of examples to demonstrate how this has been done. The truth lies in the fine print of the budget papers. I draw the attention of members to, for example, page 31 of the fiscal strategy and financial projections chapter which reads, in part -

... unlike the financial projections in Appendix 1: *Detailed Financial Projections*, the Capital Works Program also includes monies spent on fixed assets that are not necessarily held by the State (e.g. grants paid to local governments or the private sector for fixed asset purchases by third parties).

Hang on a minute, what does that mean? It says there that the capital works program - this massive \$3.9 billion program that the Treasurer was so proud about - actually includes moneys spent on fixed assets that are not necessarily held by the State. Let us go and see what that means. There is a table on that page headed "Reconciling Capital Spending Aggregates". In the column headed "Purchases of Fixed Assets" the line item "Total Public Sector" appears, with a figure of \$2.927 billion. Underneath that there are a number of other figures and then the line item "Capital Works Program" with a figure of \$3.9 billion. Hang on a minute - the purchases of fixed assets for the total public sector were \$2.9 billion. What is underneath this? There is a line item "Keystart home lending loans" for \$506 million. I stand to be corrected if I am wrong, but I think I know how Keystart works. It is a very simple arrangement whereby people obtain loans to buy houses. Those loans are not provided by the Government, but by private financial institutions. That \$506 million, if I am correct, is loans not from the Government but from private financial institutions. It is not capital spending. It is certainly an amount being spent by private home owners, but how someone's private home purchase can be included under a government capital works program is beyond me. I will be building a new home shortly; I may as well put my home under that item. Is my home part of the Government's capital works program?

Mr M.F. Board interjected.

Mr D.F. BARRON-SULLIVAN: They probably would have, they could have put my home under that item. The member for Murdoch is quite right. They could have put my home under the Government's capital works program and boasted about it. The member for Bunbury might have put out a press release saying "Dan Sullivan is going to build a new home, we are proud of that. It is part of the Geoff Gallop capital works program." What an absolute farce! Members should not take my word for it. Let us have a look at some official paperwork. Let us begin with an official press release, with the Premier's smiling face on the top left-hand side. It is headed "Massive boost for first homebuyers" and reads -

"An estimated 12,000 Western Australians will receive Government support through Keystart . . .

"Throughout the State, Keystart will inject an estimated \$506million into the housing industry. . .

"Of this, an estimated \$200million will be for construction loans . . .

Hang on a minute. Those loans are not from the Government. The \$506 million is not money from the Government or from taxpayers or whatever. Those 12 000 Western Australians who are getting support through Keystart do not owe their housing loans to the Government in any way. It is certainly not government capital works, and it does not equate to fixed assets in a budgetary sense. Where it says that the State Government has committed \$2.1 billion over the next four years through the Keystart home loan program, it is quite incorrect. The Government is not committing at all to spending this money. However, it is happy to include it under the \$3.9 billion capital works program. In the *2004-05 Economic and Fiscal Outlook* tables, under the heading "Cash Flow Statement" an amount is included that once again gives it away. It refers to "Purchase of non-financial assets". It is the Government's capital works program. Sure enough, it is \$2.927 billion, not \$3.9 billion. The Keystart Housing Scheme Trust annual financial report dated 30 June 2003, under the heading "Principal activity" states -

The Trust was established exclusively to provide housing finance to low and middle income householders independently from traditional State Housing Commission of Western Australia ("The Commission") financing. The Commission has, via a Support Agreement with the Trustee, agreed to meet cash shortfalls of the Scheme borrowings should any arise.

In other words, the Government's annualised responsibility under the Keystart program is to meet any shortfalls, not to provide the capital and certainly not to build the houses. That does not stop the Treasurer from laying claim to \$506 million worth of capital expenditure that never happened. I am not saying that this is necessarily new accounting. I am saying that it is bad accounting; it is a bad spin and it is dishonest to come out and say

Mr Dan Barron-Sullivan; Deputy Speaker; Mr Mike Board; Mr John D'Orazio; Ms Jaye Radisich; The Acting Speaker (mr P.W. Andrews); Mr Matt Birney; Acting Speaker; Ms Sue Walker; The Acting Speaker (mr D.A. Templeman); Mr Norm Marlborough

that. The figure of \$3.9 billion includes some other fudgy figures, including "Expensed Capital Works Program" of \$320 million. It is not a small amount of money. The fine print reads -

Includes items expensed as operating activities such as grants to local government and private sector agencies.

It does not require much knowledge of budgets to know that an operating activity is not a capital works activity. The words "operating" and "capital" are very different. In actual fact, that amount has already been counted as operating expenses elsewhere in the budget. All the Government has done is say that it needs to beef up its capital works budget so that it looks like it is doing something around the State. It will not build the Peel deviation or too many new hospitals; it will not build new schools, except for one new high school, although it will pretend to build one in Ellenbrook; but it will put in an artificially inflated capital works program so that everyone will think the Government is doing a great job. The truth is that there is no \$3.9 billion capital works program. It is \$1 billion short of that; it is \$1 billion worth of spin, but we are getting used to that from the Government.

The second capital con is very simple. Every budget carries Treasury's estimates of how the current financial year will end, since the budget was brought down before the end of the financial year. Naturally some variation would be expected between the estimates set a couple of months before the end of the financial year and the final outcome. We are dealing with the budget now but we are not yet at the end of the financial year. Indeed, the budget papers we are dealing with were presumably set in concrete some weeks ago. We should expect some variation between now and the end of the financial year. When large discrepancies occur after a budget is presented to Parliament, one must question what is going on. In Labor's first two years we saw budget estimates for capital works severely slashed by the time the final results were released, usually in September, some four months after the budget. By the time we find out what Labor has spent in a capital works budget, we find that the figures have changed quite significantly. Indeed, in last year's budget we were told that the estimated capital works spending by the whole public sector in 2002-03 was going to be \$2.335 billion. That compared pretty well with the 2002-03 budget estimate of \$2.319 billion. The final result, released months later, showed that public sector capital investment in 2002-03 was \$2.094 billion. In other words, \$241 million - a very substantial amount of capital expenditure - had simply failed to eventuate in the space of two months. Between the budget and the end of the financial year, \$241 million of capital expenditure disappeared off the books; it did not happen. The same result is found in Labor's first year when the budget estimate of \$2.344 billion in capital works for 2001-02 became an actual outcome of \$2.01 billion, which is a \$334 million post-budget reduction in capital works. The budget has been handed down and we are told that the Government is spending a certain amount that year, but when we see the real figures a few months later we find that the Government has underspent the capital works budget by \$334 million in that year. These are very large amounts. It becomes incredibly hard to understand how the Treasurer could not have known two months before the end of the year that so many projects, indeed, a few very large ones, would not be proceeding. This year's budget shows that estimated capital expenditure in 2003-04 will be \$2.579 billion. That is already \$138 million less than the budget estimate at the beginning of the year. Hopefully, for the benefit of the whole community and the Western Australian economy, the final results will not show a further post-budget cut of hundreds of millions of dollars in capital works. Who knows, in the lead-up to the election maybe the Government will spend the money. Otherwise, when we go through next year and the new Government has to unravel what the Gallop Labor Government has been doing with its budget, it will probably find that it has again underspent. Given Labor's record of cutting capital works whenever possible to fit in the new rail project and its general disinterest in public works, particularly in areas such as road funding and sewerage infill programs, it is really quite reasonable to treat with hesitation and some cynicism Labor's planned capital works spending for the next financial year, which just happens to be an election year. It would not surprise me to find that the planned \$2.9 billion, not \$3.9 billion, in capital works ends up being reduced by hundreds of millions of dollars if Labor is returned.

It is interesting to note further fine print in the budget papers. There is a little hint that the Government is perhaps not putting as much investment into the economy through its capital works program as it would like us to believe. Again, if one refers to the *Economic and Fiscal Outlook* and looks at the components that make up the gross state product and the category "contributions to growth" - which refers to the things that go on in the economy that contribute to growth in the economy as measured by the gross state product; that is, the state equivalent of GDP - one finds that under the public sector category and its investment subcategory, the percentage of gross state product that is accounted for by public sector investment in 2004-05 is zero. There is absolutely no impact whatsoever on the increase in gross state product this year accounted for by public sector investment. Guess what? There was none last year in 2003-04. In 2002-03 the figure was 0.4 per cent. There is better news next year because the amount that public investment contributes towards gross state product next

Mr Dan Barron-Sullivan; Deputy Speaker; Mr Mike Board; Mr John D'Orazio; Ms Jaye Radisich; The Acting Speaker (mr P.W. Andrews); Mr Matt Birney; Acting Speaker; Ms Sue Walker; The Acting Speaker (mr D.A. Templeman); Mr Norm Marlborough

year, 2005-06, is forecast by the Treasury to be negative 0.2 per cent. That probably gives us an idea of exactly what impact the Government's capital works program will have.

I move to the third capital con. I alluded to it briefly earlier on. Operating expenses are increasingly being included in the capital works budget. There are reasons for that. An obvious and very significant item is the \$50 million of so-called operating expenses, which are found in the Main Roads capital budget. It is a very large item, \$50 million, but it is certainly not the only one. Agencies now include in their capital works budgets items such as computer software, other IT equipment of a minor nature, other office material, routine maintenance work and even computer consultancy contracts, as in the case of the Water Corporation, as we discovered in previous budget estimates committees. There are three acts of blatant budget deception that occur when operating expenses are shifted into capital accounts in this way. The first is that the capital works budget is falsely inflated. Bingo, there is the \$3.9 billion spin figure again. Not only is the \$3.9 billion wrong, it should really be around \$2.9 billion - who knows, the figure might be lower still if the operating expenses were not included under capital works. The second reason for major concern is that overall operating expenditure is falsely decreased by shifting the current expenditure into the capital works side of the budget. Of course, that makes the bottom line look better in the current budget. It makes it look as though the Government is keeping its spending down. The third reason is that lower operating expenditure on paper creates the false impression of expenditure restraint. The Government has given into the temptation to fiddle the capital works budget. It has done it before and I would not hesitate to suggest that, if it had the opportunity, it would do it again. The \$3.9 billion is over inflated by at least \$1 billion. However, I have a sense of déjà vu with all this because of the article in the newspaper only the other day about the PICL project. In my home town we find that WA Inc will cost taxpayers another \$1.9 million this year as a result of a shonky deal that the Labor Party did with a company run by Alan Bond some years ago. Indeed, we will be paying for that shonky deal until 2011. Members should excuse me for having a sense of déjà vu. I sat in this Chamber and heard the Premier and Treasurer talk about their family first policy and so on as enunciated in the Treasurer's budget speech. He said that the Government would freeze key tariffs and fees and charges in 2004-05 that impact on household expenditure. He went on to list a few items. He tagged it as a family first approach. The Treasurer later stated -

Mr Speaker, it has always been the intention of this Government to keep the burden of taxes as low as possible -

Blimey! He could have told me when we heard about the revenue increases earlier on - \$6 billion worth of increases -

within the context of responsible financial management. This is why we have worked so hard to ensure the tax system is as fair, efficient and simple as possible.

Let us go back to 1989 and the then Treasurer, Mr Parker, the member for Fremantle. He said a few interesting things in this place. He said on 31 August 1989 -

The centrepiece of this Budget is the Family Pledge.

It is not quite family first, but the family pledge. He continued -

The increased cost to families of electricity, gas, water and bus fares has been held to an average seven per cent this year . . . As well, the cost of registered a family car will be reduced . . .

The third element of the Family Pledge - educational allowance for all school children . . .

They brought in a little spin to try to tailor the budget increases to look as though that Government was supporting families. That continued for a number of years. I have a copy of the budget speech presented by Dr Carmen Lawrence, the then Premier and Treasurer, on 29 August 1991. She said -

In formulating this budget, the easy solution would have been to increase taxes and charges -

That is the usual Labor formula -

but that would not have been the responsible course to follow. At this time, the community, and the business sector in particular, must not be diverted from the task of increasing activity by additional government imposts. For these reasons, the budget includes no new taxes and no increases in the rates of existing taxes.

This follows last year's approach of increasing only the financial institution duty . . .

We have also held firmly to our Family Pledge . . .

Mr Dan Barron-Sullivan; Deputy Speaker; Mr Mike Board; Mr John D'Orazio; Ms Jaye Radisich; The Acting Speaker (Mr P.W. Andrews); Mr Matt Birney; Acting Speaker; Ms Sue Walker; The Acting Speaker (Mr D.A. Templeman); Mr Norm Marlborough

The family pledge again. Going back to 1989 and 1991, one sees exactly the same underlying budget strategy and the same underlying spin to try to deflect attention away from massive increases in taxes, government expenditure and government debt by making it look as though the budgets were orientated towards the interests of Western Australian families. Despite all the rhetoric, and despite expenditure growth of nearly \$5 billion and revenue growth of more than \$6 billion, the Gallop Labor Government still cannot pay \$14 to check whether a newborn baby has a hearing problem.

I turn to the small business sector. The Labor Government heralded the establishment of the Small Business Development Corporation, and I do not think one member in here would not agree that the Small Business Development Corporation does a tremendous job in encouraging and fostering the small business sector in Western Australia. Why has the Government cut funding to the Small Business Development Corporation? It received \$8.677 million in 2002-03, and that allocation has been cut to \$8.218 million. The Government has cut small business programs such as the very successful small business improvement program, and folded the small business guarantee program, but savings made have not been directed to assist small businesses. Instead, over the last two budgets alone, a five per cent reduction in funding has occurred in small business programs. In the last budgets, a three per cent reduction occurred, which amounts to a five per cent reduction in real terms. That comes on top of the other imposts the Government has applied to small businesses, including a restrictive industrial relations system; a failure to tackle excessive fuel prices, especially in country areas; a failure to act quickly enough to resolve the public liability insurance crisis for small business; and a failure to contain a blow-out in taxes.

It is no good for government members to say economic prosperity has brought about increases in taxes, and that explains the blow-out in revenue. If one looks in the fine print of the budget papers dealing with stamp duty, one sees that the amount of stamp duty and financial institution taxation has increased this year by 36 per cent. In other words, a 36 per cent increase has occurred in stamp duty and financial institution taxation in this coming financial year. The budget papers state clearly that had it not been for conscious policy decisions of the Gallop Labor Government, the increase would have been not 36 per cent, but only eight per cent. The remainder is due entirely to decisions made by the Gallop Labor Government to increase the burden of tax on small businesses and families. These are the families that years ago the Labor Party had a family pledge for, and for whom today it has a family first policy, but members opposite are prepared to see families pay increases in taxes across the board. I give some due: a small amount has been given back in the form of concessions for first home buyers, who account for 15 per cent of the home buying market and a far smaller proportion of the overall community. Broadly speaking, taxes have been allowed to increase by at least \$300 million annually under this Government. The details are contained in the budget papers. A massive blow-out has occurred in expenditure and revenue. Expenditure has increased by \$1.5 billion a year, and revenue has increased by \$1.8 billion a year, yet, as I keep saying, this Government cannot pay \$14 to check to see whether a newborn baby has a hearing defect.

I turn briefly to my home town. It was some surprise to hear the member for Bunbury describe the budget as "the most stunning budget I have seen for some time". Far be it for me to say that that is not case or to say that no major capital works are to be found in the Bunbury area. No new school is to be provided for Dalyellup and no school improvements anywhere else in the region. No funding has been allocated to the Peel deviation or the port access road, and the Bunbury Regional Hospital has no specific funding allocation. The budget shows that the Government will not meet its promise of 250 extra police.

An independent editorial from the *Bunbury Mail* headed "But who's left to hold the baby?" reads -

State budgets are a bit like newborn babies.

Governments roll them out, proudly showing them off while everyone is expected to go goo and ga.

We are supposed to love this baby so much that we will elect its parent in the next State election due in February.

But to be honest, there's nothing about this baby that makes it particularly interesting for Bunbury people.

Among listed items for Bunbury were \$5.6 million funding for the Back Beach (already allocated in a previous budget) -

It was a Liberal budget, I might add -

e-library funding (already allocated in a previous budget), port facilities worth about \$6 million (already allocated in a previous budget) -

Mr Dan Barron-Sullivan; Deputy Speaker; Mr Mike Board; Mr John D'Orazio; Ms Jaye Radisich; The Acting Speaker (mr P.W. Andrews); Mr Matt Birney; Acting Speaker; Ms Sue Walker; The Acting Speaker (mr D.A. Templeman); Mr Norm Marlborough

I think members have the message. The editorial goes on in that manner, and mentions the needs I outlined. It also reads -

No extra resources for Bunbury Regional Hospital, while four metro hospitals get money for increased after-hours services.

These are key areas and important to the city's future.

At least it's not an expensive, demanding baby.

It's just not very attractive to people living in Bunbury.

That sums it up. People living in the Bunbury area can look at the budget papers and say, wow, this Government has obtained an extra \$6 billion since the last election - that is, \$6 000 million of additional revenue - yet the people of Bunbury cannot get a new school, have a road built to link them to the metropolitan area, get improvements to the hospital or get enough extra coppers. More importantly, the Government cannot spend \$14 to have a newborn baby checked to see whether he or she has a hearing defect.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I clarify a request to have a chart incorporated in *Hansard*. I am satisfied that under Standing Order No 86 it complies, and I so direct that it be incorporated in *Hansard*.

MR M.F. BOARD (Murdoch) [4.49 pm]: My contribution on the state budget will be in three parts. First, I will refer to the overall budget in a fiscal sense and its overall direction for Western Australia, and I will talk about the specifics of the health budget; second, I will talk about the areas the Liberal Party will pursue under a coalition Government; and, third, I will talk about issues relating to the state seat of Murdoch. This will be all in a relatively short period.

The biggest disappointment for me in the state budget is that this Government is committed to taking the State into further debt. As a result of the federal budget, we have seen the benefits of debt reduction. Since the Howard federal Government came into power, it has reduced the federal debt from \$100 billion under a Labor Government to \$30 billion - a magnificent decrease of \$70 billion in the debt of the national economy. As a result, the federal budget has produced a real social dividend. The rationale behind that is that our economy is in great shape and interest rates are low. In general terms, business, particularly the mining industry throughout Australia, is booming and the federal Government is in receipt of strong incomes from personal income tax through bracket creep. The federal Government has been able to return a recognisable and significant social dividend, and the polls are showing support for the Government as a result of that dividend. Much of this has come about because of the federal Government's ability not to have to service a massive debt.

In Western Australia and other States there has in the past been an effort by Liberal Governments to reduce state debt. We saw it with the Kennett Government when it came into existence. We also saw it with the Greiner Government in New South Wales and other coalition State Governments that endeavoured to reduce debt knowing that in real terms debt is the trap into which Governments fall, as they have to repay massive amounts of interest that restricts their ability to move and introduce new policies into the State. The Court Government reduced state debt in Western Australia significantly. In 1993, we came into Government with a \$10 billion state debt on the tail of the WA Inc years. This Government wants to ignore that in its budget speeches. It wants to ignore the massive decrease in debt and the way in which the Court Government was able to bring about a re-engineering of the Western Australian economy so that business could flourish and the State could again get on and develop new policies and initiatives; and that we did. However, in doing so, we managed to bring down debt, some of it through the sale of government assets. They were assets that were in many ways not delivering a great return to the Western Australian community. A better return was to reduce the debt and therefore reduce the liability of the interest payments on that debt and return those saved moneys back to the community in the form of capital works or outcomes. That is what we did.

It is disappointing that this Government is increasing state debt in a budget year when it is, by any standards, reasonably flush with funds that have been brought about by a strong and stimulated Western Australian economy driven by federal initiatives and a booming Western Australian resource industry. This Government has had massive increases in funding, particularly with stamp duty through what was, some might argue, an overheated, but certainly a vibrant and profitable, real estate industry over the past few years. The Government has capitalised on not only the increased amount of stamp duty coming in, but also the increase in stamp duty payable. It has also capitalised through increases in taxes and charges through various mechanisms. There has also been a massive return to the Government as a result of the increase in oil prices. Hence, the Government has had wins on every front. As other speakers have indicated, it is hard to see why this Government is increasing state debt when we have taken so much effort and work to reduce that debt. As a Liberal member, I

Mr Dan Barron-Sullivan; Deputy Speaker; Mr Mike Board; Mr John D'Orazio; Ms Jaye Radisich; The Acting Speaker (mr P.W. Andrews); Mr Matt Birney; Acting Speaker; Ms Sue Walker; The Acting Speaker (mr D.A. Templeman); Mr Norm Marlborough

sometimes wonder why it is incumbent upon coalition Governments to always follow big spending Labor Governments, only to find themselves reducing debt and being unable to put in place the larger infrastructure projects or provide social dividends because we are on a debt reduction program. The history of the Australian States and the federal Government shows that that is how it is, and, quite frankly, we are tired of it. I would love to be in the situation that this Government has inherited; that is, a strong, viable and booming economy and restored debt. We can thank the Court Government and many others who contributed towards putting this State on a solid footing so that this Government could be flush with additional funds, and, now, additional debt. I regret this Government's attitude in that regard.

In a strange sort of way it would not be in a position to borrow funds had it not been for the sale of Dampier to Bunbury pipeline. Members opposite stand in this place day after day and condemn the Court Government for reducing debt in Western Australia, only to set this Government on a path for additional borrowing. Members opposite should recognise that they are on very thin ice when it comes criticising the former Government, considering what we inherited when we came to government, what we left this Government with and what its members find in front of them now. It is most disappointing that debt will continue to rise. Taking into consideration the forward estimates of this budget and the next, the projections particularly in health over the next 13 years, the projections on the rail line to Mandurah - keeping in mind that funding arrangements in place and under contract are only for the rail line up to Thomsons Lake at this stage - and the blow-out and additional expenditure that is expected, Western Australia will find itself with an increasing debt. That is not a good thing for future Governments or the future economy. This Government should rein in its public spending and spend within the confines of the growth in its fiscal endeavours without going into additional borrowings. Many people have sacrificed and worked particularly hard to reduce debt in this State, and it is very selfish of this Government to assume that it has the mantle to take us back from where we came based solely on its social agenda and socialistic policies that do not seem to care too much about who will have to pay these debts in the future. That responsibility is incumbent upon any Government. A good Government must have restraint and it must take into consideration the next generation, which will be responsible for those debts; it should not be flippant with our economy. This Government has been flippant. That has been seen in the way that the Minister for Planning and Infrastructure talks in terms of billions of dollars in the Western Australian economy and her vision for the large infrastructure projects and borrowings. She talks about not only borrowing in a capital works sense, but also the recurrent losses that are forecast as a result of that borrowing. It would be different if the Government were spending this money to create a return or something that would build additional money into the Western Australian economy. The Government could argue it with electricity, gas and other infrastructure programs. However, that cannot be argued when it comes to this rail project. It has been indicated that the forecast loss on the railway to Thomsons Lake will be least \$120 million a year recurrent. I am not sure what the total cost of the rail to Thomsons Lake is, but let us assume it is about \$1 billion in contracting. From that point of view, what will we have actually achieved by spending hundreds of millions of dollars? All we will have done is replace a fast bus system. That is all we will have done for \$1 billion expenditure and the privilege of losing an additional \$120 million a year. Nothing is costed into those figures for the further expansion to Rockingham and Mandurah. I am talking about the current contracting to Thomsons Lake. After all the expenditure, disruption, money and debt, what will we have done? We will have replaced an efficient bus service with a recurrent loss of \$120 million a year. That is great government. It is very short-sighted and tragic that future Governments will be saddled with that debt and handcuffed as a result of a very short-sighted project. That will severely handicap opportunities for future Governments.

Mr A.D. McRae: You cannot be serious.

Mr M.F. BOARD: I am.

Mr A.D. McRae: This railway is infrastructure that will serve the community for 100 years.

Mr M.F. BOARD: The member did not listen to me.

Mr A.D. McRae: I did.

Mr M.F. BOARD: He did not. The contracting is only to Thomsons Lake. For the huge expenditure and the debt that the Government will incur, the reality is that all it will have done by the time the railway gets to Thomsons Lake, where it finishes, is to replace a fast bus system. For all that money, disruption and recurrent debt of \$120 million, all that will be achieved is that people will have been taken off current buses and put onto trains. For what purpose? It will be for the projected next stage to Rockingham and the projected next stage after Mandurah, if the Government can afford it and if it happens. The first and most expensive stage, which is all the Government will have done, involves ripping out something that works and replacing it with something that will work but is an extremely expensive exercise. People in my electorate will take a lot longer to get to the

Mr Dan Barron-Sullivan; Deputy Speaker; Mr Mike Board; Mr John D'Orazio; Ms Jaye Radisich; The Acting Speaker (mr P.W. Andrews); Mr Matt Birney; Acting Speaker; Ms Sue Walker; The Acting Speaker (mr D.A. Templeman); Mr Norm Marlborough

city at probably more expense. They will use three modes of transport instead of one. For what purpose? It will be for the privilege of losing \$120 million a year. If the member looks at the project in those terms, he will recognise why people do not see it as a wise decision. A huge amount of money will be spent to enable people who live in Mandurah and Rockingham to get to the city eight minutes faster. For everybody else it will take maybe two or three times longer.

Mr A.D. McRae: No.

Mr M.F. BOARD: Yes.

Mr A.D. McRae: You know that is not true.

Mr M.F. BOARD: I will give the member an example. The people in Leeming, Bull Creek and Winthrop in my electorate walk out of their home, go to the corner and catch a bus that goes straight onto the fast bus lane and into the city. The member cannot tell me that it will be quicker for them to get a bus to a railway station, have to wait for a train, connect with another train and then travel into the city, and if they happen to be going to East Perth or West Perth, change again. At the moment they can get a bus directly from their home to West Perth or East Perth.

Mr A.D. McRae: You have three problems.

Mr M.F. BOARD: No, that is the reality.

Mr A.D. McRae: First, you know that although the bus route might work now, it will not work in a few years time.

Mr M.F. BOARD: Why?

Mr A.D. McRae: Because we know from population growth that the freeway will not sustain the current growth levels of private and public transport use. It simply will not sustain it.

Mr M.F. BOARD: No, there is a fast bus lane.

Mr A.D. McRae: The fast bus lane will not satisfy the demand that is coming.

Mr M.F. BOARD: Replacing the fast bus service with a train will not force out of their cars the people who are currently not catching a bus. That is ridiculous. There are two different arguments. All that would happen is that people who are currently catching a bus would be forced onto a train.

Mr A.D. McRae: That is not the experience in other cities, nor in the northern suburbs. In the northern suburbs people got out of their cars to do exactly what you are saying they would not; that is, catch a bus to the train station.

Ms K. Hodson-Thomas: You did not listen to my speech yesterday. All we will be doing is building car parks.

Mr M.F. BOARD: The argument does not stack up. People living in Rockingham and Mandurah in 10 or 15 years might get a railway line. However, nowhere in the world is a commuter railway line being built at this sort of expense to locations that are that remote from a central metropolitan area. Frankly, it is lunacy. It does not stack up on any world scale, any costing or any basis of patronage. There is not one way that the project can be looked upon with any credibility. It is sad because it is the centrepiece of the Government's capital works budget; not only that, it is the centrepiece of where all our money is going. It is why we are getting into more debt, why we cannot have many of the additional services that are required, and why the expansion of the hospital system has been retarded until this point. The Government has locked itself into the project. Frankly, I think the Government is crazy. This will be the State's legacy for a very long time.

Much has been said about the health budget. There has been much rhetoric from the Government about the massive increases in the health budget and the implications of trying to change an overburdened hospital system in Western Australia. The 2004-05 health budget shows an increase of \$213 million over last year's expenditure. If the capital works contribution were taken out, it would be \$159 million. Yes, it is an increase, but it is not a significant increase and well below growth projections in health delivery and certainly well below what the expectation was for the budget. It certainly does not match up with the rhetoric and press releases that have come out of the Government. By any stretch of the imagination, a \$213 million increase in a nearly \$3 billion budget is not significant. It is important and represents a move forward, as has happened in every health budget, but it does not match up with the picture of massive change and movement.

I want to talk about this because the Government has created an illusion for Western Australian people. It came into power on the plank of a massive reform and change in public health, yet we saw a malaise, with nothing

Mr Dan Barron-Sullivan; Deputy Speaker; Mr Mike Board; Mr John D'Orazio; Ms Jaye Radisich; The Acting Speaker (mr P.W. Andrews); Mr Matt Birney; Acting Speaker; Ms Sue Walker; The Acting Speaker (mr D.A. Templeman); Mr Norm Marlborough

happening for three years. There was a replacement of the minister and a panic by the Government because things had not happened and progress in the hospital system had reversed. Hospitals were in disarray, ambulance bypass was rampant, there were delays everywhere and the Government was in panic mode. It was to be judged by its number one plank in the 2001 election campaign. It spent a very large amount of money bringing experts in from the eastern States. I have great respect for those experts. They were paid a lot of money to repackage and reorganise existing health reports. On their own admission that was the case. They had to come down with a big picture for health for the next 13 years. As a result, we have the illusion that the Government has a direction in health. However, it is three and a half years late, we have lost a lot of time, patients have missed out and, because of the Government's dallying, many ambulances have driven past hospitals where they could have delivered patients. However, there is a plan.

There is the Reid report of the Health Reform Committee and some commitment to the recommendations contained in the report, some 65 of which have been agreed to. The Government is embarking upon a promise to revamp the configuration of hospitals, particularly in the Perth metropolitan area. It appears to have a vision for country health that will bring about stronger primary health care and it appears that it will spend a lot of money revamping those hospitals. However, when one digs down past those press releases and the rhetoric, one finds that what Professor Reid has done for the \$1.7 billion commitment to capital works is introduce 370 additional beds into the public hospital system in the Perth metropolitan area. That will involve a reconfiguration of tertiary hospitals north and south; further re-engineering of health service administration and the delivery of those services; a change in what we consider to be our quaternary services - that is, the high level of specialist care in tertiary hospitals, such as transplants and so forth; an upgrading and extension of secondary hospitals, four of which will go to 300-bed status; and the introduction, thanks to the federal Government, of GP clinics offering 24-hour or extended services in Western Australia. The Opposition has been pushing for many of those things for some time. The Government had argued against them but is now adopting them because it is in panic mode in the lead-up to a state election.

I will concentrate on some of those issues. The first is the reconfiguration of the hospitals. The Opposition's response to the Reid report will be put to the Western Australian community in a few weeks. That response will be our vision for the configuration of hospitals, both tertiary and secondary. We will make a commitment to provide a greater number of hospital beds in the metropolitan area and throughout Western Australia. One area in which the Reid report falls short is that it does not really anticipate, to a large degree, the strong growth that will occur in the demand for public health beds and, in particular, aged care beds. The report relies heavily on growth in the private sector, but without saying so. It relies heavily on there being more day opportunities and community-based services, which are not available at this time and which were not funded in either the Reid report or this budget. A strategy outlined in the Reid report has been adopted by the Government. The report outlines that we will not need more than 370 additional beds in the next 13 years because other things will happen. However, those other things have not been planned, and there is no structure or funding for them. It is a bit of a pea in a thimble trick from that point of view. Even within the context of the Reid report, the Government has admitted that it will need a further 320 mental health beds. If an additional 370 beds will be provided within the public health system, and 320 of those need to be mental health beds, one does not need to be as good at mathematics as I am sure you are, Mr Speaker, to realise that only an additional 50 beds will be provided in the public health system. It does not add up. The minister, by his own admission, said today that he was putting a 320-bed winter strategy in place for the Perth metropolitan area. That is almost the number of beds that the Reid report said would be needed over the next 13 years. They are temporary beds. What it is saying is that what we temporarily need in winter 2004 is all we will need in totality in 2013, 2014 or 2015. I do not agree. There are great flaws in that report. It relies on other things happening that have not been budgeted for. It relies on a great deal of federal money that is not in place at this point to assist. Hence, to a large degree, the Government is creating an illusion of significant change when the ability to make those changes is not necessarily in place.

Many of the decisions the Government has announced are three years too late. They include upgrades to Rockingham-Kwinana District Hospital and the provision of additional services at Swan District Hospital. Upgrades that we expected at Joondalup Health Campus and Armadale-Kelmscott Memorial Hospital long before now are only just starting to be included in the fine print of the planning stage. Many hospitals in country areas have been waiting many years for upgrades. I refer to Margaret River District Hospital and Denmark District Hospital in particular. They are still overlooked in that sense. We have not seen a brick provided to those places. The Government promised a hospital in Moora and then walked away from that promise. Public pressure has enabled \$6 million to be allocated to Moora District Hospital. How cynical would the people of Margaret River and Denmark be about that? They have again been walked over and overlooked because of a political exercise. I think that a lot more bricks will land at the Premier's office. That seems to work. He might

Mr Dan Barron-Sullivan; Deputy Speaker; Mr Mike Board; Mr John D'Orazio; Ms Jaye Radisich; The Acting Speaker (mr P.W. Andrews); Mr Matt Birney; Acting Speaker; Ms Sue Walker; The Acting Speaker (mr D.A. Templeman); Mr Norm Marlborough

find himself with a big, brand-new building, given the number of bricks that will be delivered to his office. Bricks seem to work.

Mr P.B. Watson: Money was put aside for Denmark District Hospital. The previous Government promised it but did not put it in the forward estimates.

Mr M.F. BOARD: How long have they been waiting? The member for Albany knows as well as I do that the work should have been completed by now. The Government should hang its head for not having gone through with that.

The Government has spoken about a reconfiguration of public hospitals. However, it tends to forget that public hospitals provide only 50 per cent of hospital services in Western Australia. We have an independent, private health system that has been screaming out to cooperate and to use its resources to assist the public sector in some way. We have not seen any great movement in that regard. I am a fan of co-location of our public and private health systems. There has not been any advancement of that by this Government. Punitive measures have been taken against the Joondalup and Peel Health Campuses, which are both public hospitals that run public services but happen to be run by the private sector. They have been penalised to a large degree by their contracting, and held out to ridicule, certainly by the previous Minister for Health. However, they have been found to be some of the best performing hospitals in terms of the cost of separations and episodes. They have performed exceptionally well, yet this Government has singled them out for attention because the private sector is involved. Members should mark my words; the Government will try to emulate some of those strategies in the public sector to get the sorts of efficiencies and outcomes that those hospitals have managed. I would have preferred the Government to admit that people do use the private health system. There is an opportunity for not only co-location but also the sharing of some resources, such as radiology and pathology, tendering, which could provide savings through public-private cooperation; and the training of nurses, doctors and allied health professionals. Those are the areas in which we could make significant inroads if the Government could just walk away from some of its philosophical hurdles and start to realise what is happening in the health system around Australia. Ninety-nine per cent of health professionals are self-employed. They work for themselves or for a corporation, but deliver public services in the process. We need to understand that, so that we can move forward in the health system.

I am disappointed that there has not been a stronger allocation to primary health care and public preventive health and population health. There are significant and long-term issues for the Western Australian community. Problems associated with obesity have been mentioned a number of times in this House, such as the huge cost associated with dealing with obesity. One in four young people is considered obese in Western Australia. That is a horrific figure. It is likely that one in nine of those people will have diabetes II by the time he or she is 40. The cost to the public from that will be horrific. These things are preventable. However, the Government is not putting in place a significant strategy to deal with public and population health issues and to attack the rising incidence of problems that could be addressed. Another generation will pay for that. People in this generation may be the ones who will need to use dialysis machines, but our children and grandchildren will pay for that. I understand that it costs in the order of \$12 000 a month - I could be corrected on that - for each person on renal dialysis. That can be multiplied by the hundreds of thousands of people around Australia who require that service. The number of people who will require renal dialysis is projected to be in the millions in a few years. We need to do something about this issue. They are the chronic diseases of our era, yet we are still fiddling around with the squeaky wheel and internal problems of the hospitals. We are not getting on with the main game of prevention and primary health care.

A report of the Standing Committee on Education and Health was tabled today. That report deals with many of these issues, particularly with the need to do more in the area of primary health care. It refers to the way in which the current hospital-based health system can be re-engineered to become a preventive, primary whole-of-life health care system. The report explains how the emphasis has shifted to the acute end rather than to the front end of the health care system. That must be addressed. The recommendations will assist the Government, without its necessarily spending more on resources. It recommends reprioritising where those resources are spent. If the Government adopted and followed those recommendations, we would see a benefit in the short term, and the long-term pressures on our public health system would be alleviated.

I will deal with some initiatives that the Liberal Party has recommended in its "Health Directions and Initiatives" discussion paper. I will address one matter in particular that the Government has put in place with the cooperation of the federal Government, and with mostly federal money. I refer to general practitioner clinics that are to be co-located at hospitals, particularly tertiary hospitals, in Western Australia. Without being critical of the federal minister, who is doing his best, he has been misguided and badly advised by this Government about co-locating those clinics. What is the point of people being attracted to hospitals, particularly tertiary

Mr Dan Barron-Sullivan; Deputy Speaker; Mr Mike Board; Mr John D'Orazio; Ms Jaye Radisich; The Acting Speaker (mr P.W. Andrews); Mr Matt Birney; Acting Speaker; Ms Sue Walker; The Acting Speaker (mr D.A. Templeman); Mr Norm Marlborough

hospitals, only to be triaged next door to a general practitioner clinic? Would it not be far better if the clinics were community based and people did not have to go to the hospital in the first place? Hospitals are the last place people should go to. People should go to hospital only if they need to be taken by ambulance or if they suffer an acute episode. Why do people who seek primary health care, advice, support, public health messages, stitches or whatever need to go to hospital at all? It is because Governments have capitulated and have failed to provide adequate services closer to where people live, in the hours that they need them. That is why the GPs in this State are fighting against this move. It is also why the divisions of general practice are up in arms, notwithstanding that the minister says they have signed contracts. I predict that those co-location clinics will not get off the ground because the GPs want to own and run primary health care in the community. They do not want people to travel 10 kilometres to a hospital to be bulk-billed. Why not let the GPs own and run the 24-hour seven-day-a-week clinics? Governments could build them and the GPs could lease them back. The market share would not be destroyed, the GPs' livelihood would be protected and the community would have health services provided closer to their homes. That should have been the Government's vision. That is the vision that the GPs and the Australian Medical Association support. Unfortunately, this minister, and I believe the federal minister, were badly advised and have rushed to put in place co-located GP clinics that will not get the support of GPs in Western Australia.

The "Health Directions and Initiatives" paper includes many initiatives. I cannot go through them all, but I want to talk about a number of them. Members have heard much in this Chamber about nurses in the public health system, including the lack of nurses, the desire of the Government to increase nursing places and other issues associated with nurse training etc. I will mention two initiatives in the Liberal Party's discussion paper. Western Australia will always rely on agency nurses to support the public hospital system. However, because of the advent of the huge demand and reliance on agency nurses, for the life of me I cannot understand why this Government has not entered into a statewide tender for the supply of agency nurses. The Government would do that for any other statewide program for the supply of services, including aircraft services or building projects that go to tender and are awarded to a pre-approved group at a pre-approved price. A system of statewide tender for nurses would allow hospitals to deal directly with agencies independently. The Government found itself wanting and came up with an alternative - NurseWest, which has not been a success. Any hospital will tell the Government that they are not satisfied with the operation of NurseWest and would prefer to deal with the agencies. However, agencies have extorted extraordinary amounts of moneys from the public hospital system because of the need for nurses. To some degree, they have held public hospitals to ransom. If there had been a statewide tender for the supply of city and country nurses, that situation could have been avoided. I ask the Minister for Health to consider that proposal as a way of regulating and controlling standards and prices for agencies. That would be a much better system.

Another issue I raise is the education of nurses in universities and their subsequent face-to-face training. The hospitals recognise that the attrition rate of nurses in the public hospital system to agencies has been very high. Nurses are not necessarily being entirely lost to the profession, but they are being lost to the public sector and government agencies because, to some degree, they cannot deal with the pressures or they have not had enough time in the hospital system to be able to deal with being thrown in at the deep end. It is strange that third-year university nurses work at McDonalds, Farmer Jacks or on the till at Woolworths to supplement their income while they are studying. The Liberal Party proposes that third-year tertiary trained nurses be employed as part-time trainee nurses within the public hospital system at an enrolled nurse rate. If an enrolled nurse could be employed after two years of TAFE training, why could a third-year tertiary nurse not be employed in the public hospital system, at an enrolled nurse rate, as a trainee nurse? Therefore, the trainee nurse would assist with the job pressures within the public hospital system and it would increase the nurse's education. The employment would give those nurses some face-to-face contact and an understanding of what happens in the public health system. That would be a win-win situation. The bill for wages would increase, but the attrition rate would be reduced. Nurses would have a greater satisfaction rate and it would relieve, to some degree, some of the workload pressures that have been discussed under the enterprise bargaining agreement.

The Liberal Party's paper contains many recommendations on allied health professionals and GPs, and there are many recommendations regarding access to primary health care. The Government might not know that the divisions of general practice and the AMA have agreed with the Opposition's proposal that we could effect 20-hour a day, seven-day-a-week coverage of GPs in the local community by providing, through the divisions of general practice, what is called an access fee of cooperation and coordination by the State. That means that in a given geographical area, for example, Albany, where it is difficult to access GPs after hours, the divisions would guarantee that some GPs would be open for 20 hours a day for seven days a week. That would not mean that one GP would have to work for 20 hours. Every now and again a GP would open later and close later; for example, he could open later on a Saturday and close later that Saturday night. The GPs would rotate that

Mr Dan Barron-Sullivan; Deputy Speaker; Mr Mike Board; Mr John D'Orazio; Ms Jaye Radisich; The Acting Speaker (mr P.W. Andrews); Mr Matt Birney; Acting Speaker; Ms Sue Walker; The Acting Speaker (mr D.A. Templeman); Mr Norm Marlborough

system. For cooperation with the program, they receive what is called an access fee. It is not a co-payment under Medicare; it is an access fee for giving the community primary care services after hours. Patients can find a general practitioner by calling a hotline and then go to Dr Smith instead of the regular Dr Jones because Dr Smith is open until 11 o'clock on Saturday night. The cost of doing that is far less than running emergency departments and gives stronger primary health care as a result.

Mr P.B. Watson: Do you think you can get the doctors to stay open that late?

Mr M.F. BOARD: They have all agreed to it. They are not working longer hours; they are just changing their hours to suit the community. In addition, patients would carry their health care records, so that when they went to see a different doctor, he can swipe the card and have access to the patient's health records. It all there and is done within the system. It is not expensive, it could be achieved very quickly and would take a great deal of demand away from the hospital system, giving stronger primary health care. That has already been agreed to. All the Government has to do is facilitate it. I cannot understand why these things have not developed in Western Australia. We have not moved on, and we come up with these extremely expensive alternatives that will not work and are opposed by the general practitioners.

The last topic I want to touch on is the deletion of the Fremantle eastern bypass. I was previously the member for Jandakot, and this is my twelfth year as a member of Parliament. No issue has made my community more angry and no issue will significantly affect my electorate more than the massive increase in freight traffic movements in residential suburbs. The Government's decision not to complete the Roe Highway and to delete the Fremantle eastern bypass will affect the amenity and livelihood of many people. As a result, residential communities, which had no understanding that the Government intended to take this path, will be put at risk. Notwithstanding the Government's plan for development of rail, which I encourage if it is achievable, we will still see increased truck movements once the freight leaves the rail system. The Government's plan is for a 300 per cent increase in container traffic movement through those roads. That will simply not be acceptable. One way or another the community south of the river will win this issue, whether at the next state election or subsequently. The community will not allow a 300 per cent increase in truck movements down South Street or Leach Highway. The people will fight tooth and nail and to the end to maintain what they have tried to achieve in the southern corridor: quality of life that does not involve risks to their children, their livelihood and their personal health through the massive increase in pollution from these trucks as well as through massive delays and other safety issues. Only the other day we saw another truck roll over within a few days of the opening of Roe Highway stage 6. These things are not acceptable, and even though I am a retiring member of Parliament I can assure members that whoever takes up the cudgels on this issue will continue the fight until we get some justice and a rational approach to it. Political decision making is one thing, but long-term planning cannot be prostituted for the sake of a few votes and to assist individuals. It is not acceptable, it is not good government and we will not tolerate it.

MR J.B. D'ORAZIO (Ballajura) [5.34 pm]: I rise to make some comments on the budget and to tell members how exciting it is to be part of the Gallop Labor Government, especially when the outcomes of the budget are put into the equation. The electorate of Ballajura includes all of Ballajura, Morley and Noranda. The decision to cut stamp duty for first home buyers, particularly in Ballajura, is hugely popular. In Ballajura the mean house price is about \$200 000, so a saving of \$6 000 to \$8 000 is a huge benefit. Numerous people are coming to my office saying how difficult it is to be a first home buyer, with all expenses, and this will make one helluva difference to those people. It is a great decision by the Premier, the Treasurer and the Cabinet. The reduction in stamp duty on conveyancing, which will result in a saving of \$500 on a \$250 000 home, will also be a substantial benefit in my community. The capping of land tax will also be a great benefit. Today the Public Accounts Committee had a briefing on the budget. It is fantastic to look at the graph of the surpluses since this Government came into power. More important are the predictions for future surpluses, which are fantastic.

Mr M.F. Board: What about the debt?

Mr J.B. D'ORAZIO: The member for Murdoch, being a businessman like me, understands as well as I do -

Mr M.F. Board: I understand that debt is very expensive.

Mr J.B. D'ORAZIO: The member also understands that extensive surpluses make it easier to manage debt, and the debt management of this Government is second to none.

Mr M.F. Board: Why has the debt gone up so much?

Mr Dan Barron-Sullivan; Deputy Speaker; Mr Mike Board; Mr John D'Orazio; Ms Jaye Radisich; The Acting Speaker (mr P.W. Andrews); Mr Matt Birney; Acting Speaker; Ms Sue Walker; The Acting Speaker (mr D.A. Templeman); Mr Norm Marlborough

Mr J.B. D'ORAZIO: It is because this Government is so proactive and needs to provide the infrastructure to get results like we got today of a five per cent unemployment rate. It is unheard of; it never happened during the time of the previous Government, but it has happened now.

It was great seeing the forward projections looking so good, especially for the 2007-08 budget. This gives us the flexibility to provide the infrastructure this State needs to continue at its present level of economic growth, creating jobs and benefiting the whole community. Having worked in retail, I can always tell when farmers are having a good year, the miners are doing well and the economy is booming. People are happier to spend money, but more importantly that leads to the creation of more jobs, more excitement and more opportunities across the board. There are benefits for the lowest and the highest income earners. Economic growth makes the whole place buzz, and it is important that we as the Government make sure that that continues.

I will take a few minutes to look at the seat of Ballajura and some of the benefits in the budget for my electorate. There will be some road funding from the Office of Road Safety for two areas. The first is the intersection of Reid Highway and Alexander Drive. Anyone who knows the area will understand that is a very busy intersection and has been the scene of numerous accidents. Spending on that intersection is a fantastic contribution to improving safety. It is on the border of my electorate. The intersection will receive a non-skid micro-surface treatment. It is very important because there are many accidents at this intersection, and anything that can be done to improve the safety of the intersection is of great benefit to the whole community. The other amount is \$270 000 for the intersection of Morley Drive and Crimea Street. Those who know my electorate will know this is the worst intersection in the whole electorate. It is a four-way intersection at the base of two hills. Right-hand turn movements always cause a problem and accidents are prolific at this intersection. The expenditure is fantastic and includes improvements for pedestrian crossing facilities, which is a must as there is a small shopping centre on the corner. It makes sure that this intersection is to be treated in such a way that improvements of safety occurs. There have been a number of accidents at the intersection. It is probably the one I get the most complaints about, and it is fantastic that we will get some money in the budget for this purpose.

In the budget there is also an amount of \$60 000 for the business enterprise centre in Malaga. Again, that is fantastic because Malaga is booming. Every business in Malaga seems to be expanding. The amount of exports coming out of the Malaga industrial area is phenomenal. The people of Malaga need this support. A few years ago people asked when Malaga was going to take off. It is now absolutely booming; things are happening so quickly that there is a problem providing enough infrastructure. For example, more power is needed in Malaga because of the current draw down by businesses and industries. Malaga is exciting; things are happening there. The economy is booming and the businesses are prospering. Exports are prospering and it is fantastic that there are so many companies in Malaga that are winning awards. It is phenomenal. I commend the City of Swan, which has appointed a business development manager to work in Malaga. It means that it has again supported the community in boosting the area. Malaga will become the powerhouse of the industrial areas of Perth.

My long-term wish is that one day a railway line will run through Malaga, joining Wanneroo to Armadale. I know I have mentioned this in the past. Once the Mandurah line is constructed, the Government and the community need to understand that Joondalup and Armadale will become the major regional centres of those areas. It is important that we look at connecting those areas directly through rail but not go through Perth. The rail connection through the Reid and Tonkin Highways should be considered in the future. I am glad that the member for Carine is looking at me like that because she is thinking what a great idea it is; she supports it and we will work together to make sure it happens. I have spoken about the project four times. I have a picture from when I was in the City of Bayswater. It shows a map with a line connecting the airport via the Midland line and it incorporates the Armadale and Joondalup lines as cross-regional transport links. At some point in the future we need to talk about making that happen. It will connect the Malaga industrial area, the airport, the Kewdale industrial area and the residential areas of Noranda, Ballajura, Embleton, Belmont, Armadale, Maddington and go over to Joondalup through the Mitchell Freeway extension that will pick up the northern line. Of course, it is a long-term project and it needs to be planned and talked about. In the discussions I have had with the community, it has had 100 per cent support. There is excitement in talking about connecting rail to the corridor.

Ms J.A. Radisich: Yes.

Mr J.B. D'ORAZIO: Thank you, member for Swan Hills. It means that if I get my railway line, her railway line to Ellenbrook will become closer to reality because it has the same alignment.

Mr J.H.D. Day: Compared with the amount of money to be spent on the railway line to Mandurah, you have probably got a reasonable argument. Because of Mandurah, it will be 50 years away.

Mr Dan Barron-Sullivan; Deputy Speaker; Mr Mike Board; Mr John D'Orazio; Ms Jaye Radisich; The Acting Speaker (mr P.W. Andrews); Mr Matt Birney; Acting Speaker; Ms Sue Walker; The Acting Speaker (mr D.A. Templeman); Mr Norm Marlborough

Mr J.B. D'ORAZIO: Because we are a Labor Government and so efficient at managing money, I am sure that at some time in the future we will be able to accommodate other major capital works of that nature in an appropriate time frame. I thank the member for congratulating us on how wonderful we are.

Mr J.H.D. Day: I was not exactly doing that!

Mr J.B. D'ORAZIO: I will now concentrate on money to be spent on a project in Noranda, which is the development of the Noranda regional active sporting ovals. I started this project when I was the Mayor of the City of Bayswater. It is fantastic that it will now come to fruition. To get the project to happen we needed a lot of players working together. The land was originally owned by the Department for Planning and Infrastructure. It was a disused sandpit site. Adjacent to the site is Lightning Swamp, which is 25 hectares of pristine natural bush with fantastic ecological phenomena. More importantly, it is something that we, as a community, need to protect for the future. The sandpit site is in an ideal location to develop active recreational space. Noranda has a huge problem with a lack of space for various sporting clubs. When I was the mayor, together with the council and the sporting clubs, I put forward the proposition of developing this area. Unfortunately, the area is in the City of Swan. However, through negotiations, the City of Swan has agreed to allow this land to be transferred to the City of Bayswater; that is, the land will not be in the council's area, but it will be under the control of the City of Bayswater. That has allowed the area to be developed. Thanks to the Minister for Planning and Infrastructure, we will now be able to get an access road off Tonkin Highway to this area. Basically, that was the fundamental thing that was needed to enable this development to proceed; otherwise, the area would be landlocked, and people would have to get access to it via the residential streets of Noranda. That would never have happened. I would like to thank the minister and Main Roads, because this will be the first time that direct access off Tonkin Highway to a facility like this will be permitted. It means that this area can now be developed.

In addition, the Government, through the Department of Sport and Recreation, has committed \$316 000 in this budget to that project. In all, it will be a \$5 million to \$6 million project. I am thankful that the City of Bayswater has committed so strongly to the project. When completed, it will incorporate two major active recreational spaces, which could be used for a football oval, a cricket pitch, a soccer field or a hockey field. There will be a pavilion, and the environment will be protected - a natural watercourse flows through that area. There will be parking. Most importantly, the residential area will be protected from through traffic, and the access will be onto the Tonkin-Reid Highway. This is fantastic news for the communities of Noranda and Morley. There is a great deal of pressure in Ballajura for more recreational space. This will help the clubs in that area, because they will be able to use this facility as well. Hopefully, it will become a regional facility. It shows that when there is cooperation between the State, local government and the community, outstanding results can be achieved. This will be of great benefit to the community. Again, I thank the minister for allocating funding to the tune of \$316 666 for the development of the first stage. Hopefully, we will be able to get more money next year and the year after.

There is also \$510 000 in the budget for the installation of further storage capacity for the Ballajura sewage pumping station. With the areas of Ballajura and Malaga developing and expanding so quickly, this is an absolute must. It is not one of those glamorous things in the budget. I cannot go to the community and say, "Aren't I really wonderful? I got you a sewage pumping station overflow facility." However, that facility is very important; it is a necessity. We had a couple of problems last year with the overflow capacity, when sewage went into the lakes and also into the natural wetland areas around the pumping station. This facility is absolutely necessary. Again I thank the Government for giving us the money - it is half a million dollars - to make sure that the overflow capacity of the station is increased further. That is the formal part of the process.

Interestingly enough, in Ballajura itself some exciting things are happening. Last year, some youths caused a problem at a wedding. Following that incident, members of the community got together and formed a community-based group. They are now working diligently to try to solve some of the social problems. Through that committee, we have set up what we call the HYPE - Hillarys Youth Project Enquiries - program for Ballajura. All the state government agencies are working together. The police, the Department for Community Development, the Department of Health, the council, the business community and the community at large come together to share information. Under the process we have set up, all those agencies meet every Monday to talk about some of the problems in the community, and to identify specific families who need support and specific problems that need to be addressed. With a relatively small amount of money, we have been able to address some problems that would, in the long term, be areas of major concern for the whole community. It just shows what can be achieved when there is goodwill on the part of the agencies, the community at large, the business community and the council. When people work together, outcomes are achieved that are for the benefit of the whole community. I want to congratulate all those members of the community who give their time so freely to work together as part of this process. Instead of giving state agencies brickbats for what they do not do, I am

Mr Dan Barron-Sullivan; Deputy Speaker; Mr Mike Board; Mr John D'Orazio; Ms Jaye Radisich; The Acting Speaker (mr P.W. Andrews); Mr Matt Birney; Acting Speaker; Ms Sue Walker; The Acting Speaker (mr D.A. Templeman); Mr Norm Marlborough

happy that they have come together, and that they meet every Monday, share information and identify those families who need support. Interestingly enough, if intervention occurs at that stage, the community can be saved a huge amount of money in the long term. More importantly, it helps the community to solve social problems. What I see as a problem is not a problem to other people. That is the dilemma a number of agencies face. It is difficult to intervene until people ask for help. When schools and the Department for Community Development share information with other agencies, specific problems can be identified before they become a major issue for the community. That is exciting.

The other exciting matter I bring to the attention of Parliament is the Noranda Community Bank. I am chairman of the organising body. Last week we launched a prospectus, and we are at the point of almost committing to opening a new community bank at Noranda in July. This follows the success of the Bayswater Community Bank. After the major banks left the Noranda Palms Shopping Centre, the community decided to make banking facilities a priority within that shopping centre. I congratulate all those who got behind the project and supported it strongly to the point that they can tell the big banks that banking facilities are an essential service, not a nice thing to have if possible at the convenience of the major banks.

Mr P.G. Pendal: Hear, hear!

Mr J.B. D'ORAZIO: The Bayswater Community Bank has over 8 000 accounts and has produced three dividends for its shareholders, who are ecstatic. In fact, many are now investing in the Noranda project. When the community wants something to happen, and people take ownership, things happen. It is an exciting process in which to be involved. When we launched the bank last week, it was fantastic to see family members stating that they want to be part of it. When as chairman at the last annual general meeting I told everybody how wonderful it was to have a 10 per cent return to shareholders, some people said they invested in the bank not to get a dividend - they could not give a damn about the dividend - but because they wanted the service in their community. I thought that spirit had gone in the community, but I can tell members that it is alive and well. People have shown with their feet what they will do; that is, 8 000 new accounts have opened at the Bayswater Community Bank, which is the most successful community bank in Western Australia and one of the most successful in Australia. I hope the addition of the Noranda bank will continue the process and provide desired facilities. Interestingly, when we opened the bank at Bayswater, businesspeople told me their turnover increased by 25 per cent. The big banks need to understand that making huge billion-dollar profits is not all that is important; they also owe it to the community to provide banking services. I congratulate Bendigo Bank for grabbing the concept. The community banking part of Bendigo Bank's business now amounts to \$4.5 billion - it is astronomical. There are 27 community banks in Western Australia owned by shareholders in local communities. Through their hard work, local people have told the big banks that they have had enough of their nonsense and that local people will put services where they want them. It is great for me as a member of Parliament to be part of the process. I did so as mayor, and have continued in my capacity as a member of Parliament. Nothing is nicer than knowing that something has happened through the efforts not of big business, the council or Governments, but of local people who say they will not put up with being told what will happen.

In conclusion, I thank the Government, and the Treasurer and Premier in particular, for what I am getting in the budget for the electorate of Ballajura. It is exciting and a privilege to be the representative for the Ballajura area. It is an exciting time. It is a fantastic honour for me to be the member for Ballajura. I am only the mouthpiece for the community. It is the members of the community who are important. They make things happen in the community.

I could go on and tell members about the exciting things that are happening at the Ballajura Community College. Since the new principal has taken over, he has brought a new culture to the school. He has made a deal with the students that they all need to wear their uniforms and that any savings they make in the maintenance of the school will be used for the direct benefit of the kids by way of better facilities. Members need only walk into the Ballajura Community College to see the difference. It is sensational. What I have learnt from that is that it is important that people work with each other, not against each other.

Mr J.H.D. Day: Who is the principal?

Mr J.B. D'ORAZIO: Steffan Silcox. He is a great operator who has done a fantastic job. Honestly, Ballajura Community College is a pleasure to visit. It is a great part of our community. It has more than 2 000 kids. I went to its Anzac Day ceremony last month, and all the kids were in school uniform. It is an absolutely fantastic school. I walked around the classrooms, and the students were so quiet and involved in learning that it is a credit to the principal, the school and the community. I think those students will make outstanding citizens in the future.

Mr Dan Barron-Sullivan; Deputy Speaker; Mr Mike Board; Mr John D'Orazio; Ms Jaye Radisich; The Acting Speaker (mr P.W. Andrews); Mr Matt Birney; Acting Speaker; Ms Sue Walker; The Acting Speaker (mr D.A. Templeman); Mr Norm Marlborough

I thank the Government very much for this budget. It is a privilege to be part of this Government and I look forward to another four years in government after the election.

MS J.A. RADISICH (Swan Hills) [5.56 pm]: I am pleased to support the Bills and the fourth Gallop Government state budget. I will reflect on a number of exciting projects that are happening in the electorate of Swan Hills. My electorate has received some attention in the Parliament over the past few days, which I am very pleased about, and I look forward to a lot more attention in the coming months. Education is very important to me and I think it is a very important issue for my electorate. A number of educational projects have been or are taking place; some have been resolved and some will be resolved in the not too distant future. I will run through a few of those projects.

The project that everybody is now more than familiar with is the Ellenbrook high school project, which has been the subject of some debate over the past couple of days. Again I put on the record my positive sentiments about this project and acknowledge the role that the Minister for Education and Training has played in recognising the need that exists in the new and growing community of Ellenbrook, which now has between 10 500 and 11 000 residents. When I was first elected to the Parliament as the member for Swan Hills, I was told that there were no plans for a high school in Ellenbrook and that the best possible scenario for the development of a high school was 2009 or 2010. Members can imagine that that was pretty disappointing to hear. In the order of 70 or 80 lots were sold in the area in the last month of 2003. It is not acceptable for such a growing community to be told that something will not happen. That is why I am particularly happy that that has been turned around. A formal commitment by the Government has now been made, and the planning and preliminary works that need to be undertaken, as well as the important process of community consultation, will get under way in the very near future.

That is not the only important educational project in the electorate of Swan Hills. There are many others. I was very pleased to learn today that a long-awaited project in my electorate will happen very soon; that is, the much-needed replacement - I am not sure whether it is a replacement or an upgrade - library for Sawyers Valley Primary School. This issue, too, has been on the agenda for a number of years. Fortunately, Sawyers Valley Primary School had made it to the top of the priority list for a new library building when it was in the Midlands education district. However, when the redistribution was done and the school was reallocated to the Swan education district, unfortunately, it fell down the priority list for a replacement library. Today I have been advised that the school is back at the top of the priority list in its current education district and that the project will proceed shortly. The project is important to me because the library building at Sawyers Valley Primary School is located some distance from the school's other buildings, and that is not a suitable environment for either the teachers who use the facility or the students.

Sitting suspended from 6.00 to 7.00 pm

Ms J.A. RADISICH: I will continue my remarks on the appropriation Bills. I had mentioned the library upgrade, which is on top of the list, for the Sawyers Valley Primary School. I welcome that new addition to that small but growing school in the hills portion of my electorate. I also acknowledge the efforts of school principal Marian Gard, the parents and citizens association president John Kessey and the whole team on the P&C for all the effort they have put into the Sawyers Valley Primary School since they have occupied those positions. This year is actually the 120th anniversary of the Sawyers Valley Primary School, which makes it one of the oldest primary schools in WA. The school has celebrated and is continuing to celebrate its birthday throughout this year. In fact, the school had a big fundraising fete a couple of Sundays ago, which was a tremendous event. It was good that the school could bring together the entire community to help raise funds and generate community spirit. The fete was attended by St John Ambulance, first aid volunteers, the State Emergency Service crew and the Sawyers Valley volunteer fire brigade. The audience was entertained by the school choir, which was conducted by Elisa Kessey, as well as the Eastern Hills Senior High School band.

[Quorum formed.]

Ms J.A. RADISICH: The Eastern Hills Senior High School concert band entertained a large crowd on the day, which was tremendous. There were all sorts of activities. The Calamunnda Camel Farm camels came, which gave everybody the opportunity to have a camel ride. It was a lot of fun. I commend the organising committee for all the effort it put in to make the event very successful.

I have mentioned Eastern Hills Senior High School. There is an issue that I and the school community are at present working to address with the Minister for Education and Training. The music program that currently runs at the school is exceptional but it is not formally recognised, unlike those that schools such as Perth Modern School had, which obviously come with additional staffing and resourcing to deliver specialist services. I was pleased that the Minister for Education and Training came to meet all the students and staff associated with the

Mr Dan Barron-Sullivan; Deputy Speaker; Mr Mike Board; Mr John D'Orazio; Ms Jaye Radisich; The Acting Speaker (mr P.W. Andrews); Mr Matt Birney; Acting Speaker; Ms Sue Walker; The Acting Speaker (mr D.A. Templeman); Mr Norm Marlborough

music program at Eastern Hills Senior High School to see first-hand the quality of the performance that the students are able to deliver with their current resources. I hope that we might be able to offer them some better resourcing in the future so that the music program can be delivered even more effectively at Eastern Hills Senior High School. I commend the whole music department at the school, particularly Maurice Bourgault and the whole crew, as well as Mr Peter Borstel, who is the current parents and citizens association president and who is heavily involved with the friends of music association. He is a consummate advocate for Eastern Hills Senior High School and in particular its music program. I also acknowledge the efforts of the principal, Mr Gerry Chapman, who is also very committed to the school and puts in a lot of effort to ensure that the students have the best opportunities at Eastern Hills Senior High School.

I note the recent opening of a new primary school in my electorate, the Arbor Grove Primary School, which was formerly known as Coolamon Primary School and was part of a school-in-offices project in the north of Ellenbrook. That scheme was very successful, and I commend the initiative of the previous Government for the innovation of this arrangement while the population grew sufficiently to warrant the approximately \$5 million expenditure on the new school. The new school has now been opened under the leadership of its principal, Chris Leed. The numbers at the school are growing, but it is great for the pupils to have a new facility rather than to work in the offices, which did serve them for some time but which they have certainly now outgrown.

Bullsbrook District High School is another important educational facility in my electorate. Together with Kununurra District High School, it is one of the largest district high schools in Western Australia. It has many hundreds of students. Unlike most district high schools that take students up to year 10, Bullsbrook District High School takes students up to year 12. The Robson report was delivered some time ago. The inquiry investigated district high schools. The report recommended that, given the unique nature of Bullsbrook District High School and Kununurra District High School, additional resourcing was required to cater for both the fact that there were so many students at the schools and that the schools took students up to year 12. I do not believe that to date the full recommendations of the report have been implemented. I hope it can be investigated so that some increased staffing levels can be provided at Bullsbrook District High School to allow for at least two, if not more, heads of department at the school, so as to allow for the best possible planning strategy rather than the already overworked principal, Elizabeth Guilbert, taking on that role to try to manage the district high school as well as overseeing the junior school, which has a deputy principal as its figurehead now. While I am on the subject of Bullsbrook District High School, it is worth acknowledging Elizabeth Guilbert, who has been the principal of that school for a few years now. Before Elizabeth came to the school, the school had had five principals in seven years. That turnover in staff does not provide the most stable environment for students and staff. Elizabeth has provided the stability and leadership that the school very much needed; and the results speak for themselves. I thank Elizabeth for her long-term commitment to that school. I also acknowledge Lee Greenberg, the president of the P&C association at that school, who is also committed to improving the status and resourcing levels of the school, as well as the other parents and teachers who support all of the endeavours of the school.

Finally, while I am on the topic of education, Upper Swan Primary School has now been housed in its new cluster block, which was provided by this Government at a cost of approximately \$1.5 million. Early in my term as member for Swan Hills, the Minister for Education and Training came to look at the facilities at Upper Swan Primary School. I have raised the conditions at that school in the Parliament previously. That need was identified, recognised and acted upon, and the students at that school now have a fantastic cluster block that provides a much more friendly learning environment for the students. It is also worth acknowledging the principal of that school, Chris Reed, and Jude Homes, the president of the P&C association, as well as the immediate past president, Paula Kosovich, who is a very effective advocate for her community.

I have said enough about education. I have many other areas to cover to tell members what is happening in my electorate of Swan Hills. The newest part of my electorate is, as I think I mentioned earlier, Ellenbrook. When I first became the member for Swan Hills, there were about 1 800 households in that area. There is now in the order of 3 500 households. With sales of around 70 blocks a month, things are certainly progressing quickly in Ellenbrook. A significant proportion of the land sales in Ellenbrook are to first home buyers. That is why I particularly welcome the initiative in the state budget to abolish stamp duty for first home buyers for properties valued at up to \$220 000. That will make a practical and tangible difference for many people who are choosing to either build or buy in Ellenbrook. The additional relief offered in this budget for home buyers other than first home buyers is also welcome. A significant proportion of the property sales in Ellenbrook are to people who have been living in Ellenbrook for a few years and have decided that they are ready to upgrade and are buying their second or even third home in the area. It is good that the community has longevity and is perpetuating itself. As a new community, certain things are needed in Ellenbrook and are being developed. Ellenbrook is unlike some of the other areas in my electorate in which there are a lot of groups and organisations that have

Mr Dan Barron-Sullivan; Deputy Speaker; Mr Mike Board; Mr John D'Orazio; Ms Jaye Radisich; The Acting Speaker (mr P.W. Andrews); Mr Matt Birney; Acting Speaker; Ms Sue Walker; The Acting Speaker (mr D.A. Templeman); Mr Norm Marlborough

existed for many years and are functioning well, know what they want to do and have a long-term plan. It is a bit different in Ellenbrook, because it is so new. There are a lot of groups in Ellenbrook that are just starting to find their feet and get active so that they can encourage residents to get involved in the activities that they are offering and to participate in what we would call grassroots community building. One of those groups is the Ellenbrook Community Support Group. I have mentioned that group in the Parliament previously. The last time I mentioned it, I said that it was just an idea and something that was being worked on. I am pleased to say that it has come a long way since that time. Mandy O'Brien, the vice chairperson of that organisation, needs to be acknowledged for her efforts and her amazing commitment to that organisation. Mandy has really driven that group to get to where it is today. The Ellenbrook Community Support Group has recently opened a new youth centre in Ellenbrook. It comprises two separate buildings that have been newly decked out using TAFE student labour and a lot of donated equipment.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr P.W. Andrews): Member for Kalgoorlie, your voice is carrying across the Chamber. For some reason the Chamber is comparatively quiet tonight, so you sound louder than normal.

Mr M.J. Birney: I apologise, Mr Acting Speaker.

Ms J.A. RADISICH: The opening of the youth centre was held at the beginning of May. It was an exceptional evening. Plenty of bands were there and lots of local young people came to see the new facilities. We are trying to develop a sense of ownership of the new facilities by these young people, so that they know they have a place in which they can relax, hang out together and have a good time, and be safe at the same time. There are a lot of partnerships in that project. One partnership that is very close is the one between the support group and the Ellenbrook Cultural Foundation, of which I am a board member. The board has been in place for over a year. Our objective is to promote arts and culture within the Ellenbrook community, and we are getting started on that. We have provided a range of activities and opportunities to residents of Ellenbrook, which people are taking hold of. We have facilitated the establishment of a painting group and a pottery group, and have provided music scholarships. We are working with other organisations in the area, including the Ellenbrook Youth Performance Group, which is a volunteer organisation ably run by Terri Phillips and Patti Williams. We are also working with the Ellenbrook music academy, which is spearheaded by Neil Thomson. The cultural foundation is very active. It is currently embarking on a stained glass art project. That project will enable local residents to learn about and gain skills in making stained glass, and how they can apply that skill in their own homes. They will also contribute to a window that will be created for display in a public building for everybody to see. That is part of the community building process that is currently under way. I acknowledge the board members with whom I work on the Ellenbrook Cultural Foundation, particularly our chairperson Danny Murphy, as well as Bob Litchfield, Mandy O'Brien, Lynne Oliver, Neil Thomson and Jenny Beahan. I particularly acknowledge our executive officer, Yonna Sunderland, who spends a great number of hours formulating the projects, applications and so forth that the board wishes to develop, and works directly with the community to make sure that they happen.

I am pleased to announce that a doctor will be arriving in Ellenbrook at the end of this month. This is a project I have been working on for quite some time, and I am pleased that it has finally come to fruition. There were doctors in Ellenbrook originally. They were part of a commercial group that unfortunately pulled out of the area nearly two years ago. That has placed a lot of pressure on families, particularly mums and dads who may have only one car in the family and have struggled to get children to medical services in other suburbs, whether in Beechboro, Midland or Joondalup. Dr Samuel Bada will start his own practice, which will commence on or about 1 June. That is very exciting. He rang me and could not believe the fantastic opportunity that existed to work in a town of 10 000 people that had no doctor. He has eagerly taken up the opportunity to serve the community and offer a bulk-billing practice, which is quite rare in this day and age of the decline in Medicare caused, in my view, by the lack of funding and support provided by the current federal Government. Nonetheless, the new doctor will provide a full bulk-billing practice, which is very welcomed. We look forward to welcoming him in his new practice very shortly.

Many other things are happening around the area. The Minister for Planning and Infrastructure and I are presently involved with making better use of the *AvonLink* railway line. Currently, the train travels through the east Swan area every day to carry commuters from Avon to the city. It simply does not stop at stations on the way to the city, which is neither a particularly good nor efficient use of government resources given that the train costs about \$8 million or \$9 million a year in operating costs. If a new station were built in the Swan Valley, the patronage on that train service would easily be doubled, if not tripled, which would increase the revenue the train would generate. That increased revenue could be used to offset some of the operational costs, which are quite outrageous. I understand that a train station would cost between \$350 000 and \$400 000. Given that it costs \$10 million to run the train line each year, that is not an unreasonable sum of money to not only provide an

Mr Dan Barron-Sullivan; Deputy Speaker; Mr Mike Board; Mr John D'Orazio; Ms Jaye Radisich; The Acting Speaker (mr P.W. Andrews); Mr Matt Birney; Acting Speaker; Ms Sue Walker; The Acting Speaker (mr D.A. Templeman); Mr Norm Marlborough

important and much needed transport service in the Swan Valley but also make the best possible use of the existing service.

The Swan Valley Planning Committee is a hard-working committee. It was established under the Swan Valley Planning Act 1995, which is well overdue for review. The Minister for Planning and Infrastructure has significantly progressed that review. Almost all issues about the future of the Act have been resolved. A feasibility report on the final area of contention - area D in Middle Swan - was submitted recently. I am sure that the minister has reviewed the final report. She is liaising closely with the Swan Valley Planning Committee to get its input to try to resolve the future planning for the Swan Valley region and to finalise the review of the Act. That is something I look forward to very much. A great deal of uncertainty has surrounded this matter. The language in the current Act is fairly loose and, in my view, has raised some expectations in the community that were probably unintended at the time the legislation was introduced. I hope that the draft legislation that is made available will be something concrete that residents and future investors in the Swan Valley can take as gospel and will provide them with some certainty regarding land use and land zoning in the Swan Valley. I thank all members of the Swan Valley Planning Committee for the time and effort they contributed on a voluntary basis to make sure that the Act was implemented as it was intended and for ensuring that the best possible planning recommendations were made to the City of Swan and the Western Australian Planning Commission.

I am speaking much longer than I thought I would. I will try to hurry it up a little. A lot is going on in the hills portion of my electorate. Chidlow is a great community with which I am working. The Chidlow Progress Association, ably led by Neil McGurk and Pat Gardhouse, is working to try to create a real statement in the town centre of Chidlow. Chidlow is a very special place; it is the home of Lake Leschenaultia. It has a wonderful country style with some small lots and a lot of larger rural-style lots. However, the town centre lacks a decent entry statement and recreational area, not only for visitors but also for local people who do not want to go to the football oval but who would like to have a park or picnic area in which to relax and recreate with their families. The markets have been initiated by the Chidlow Progress Association. The association has run the markets a couple of times, giving the local people an opportunity to show their wares and enhance the local economy in Chidlow. They also attract people from other parts of the hills to see what breadth of wares are available in Chidlow. There is a lot to be done to make the town centre the place that the community wants it to be. In fact, although there are differing views on where the community should be heading, there is no firm view yet. Certainly, new toilets are needed in the town centre - or village green as it will be known - in addition to other attractions, such as a water feature, park benches and landscaping, to make it a pleasant area for residents and guests.

The hills area has a problem with transport, in particular the Great Eastern Highway. As the Great Eastern Highway is the gateway to the eastern States, heavy-haulage vehicles are a constant feature of the traffic on that highway. I share the sentiments expressed to me by the Shire of Mundaring about the way the road is being upgraded on a rather ad hoc basis. It is a bit like patchwork - there are a few metres of lovely asphalt, then a few metres of chip seal and another few metres of chipped chip seal. It is not the most pleasant road to drive on and possibly not the safest either. That matter really needs to be looked at. On the drawing board currently is the orange route - the Perth-Adelaide leg of the national highway - that is estimated to cost in the order of \$100 million to \$200 million. Given that the national highway is a federal responsibility, federal funds will be required for that project. To date that funding has not been forthcoming from the federal Government; it is therefore very difficult for Main Roads Western Australia to commence the project without having money from the feds. Despite that, Main Roads is upholding its end of the bargain by progressing all the necessary planning to make sure the Perth-Adelaide leg of the national highway can be built sooner rather than later. Some of the issues that have to be resolved include an alignment between Wundowie and Clackline, some preliminary design concepts and some technical work. Currently community consultation is being undertaken to consider the options for the highway at Koojeddah Swamp and the Harmer heritage trail. All of that consultation is expected to be concluded in the middle of this year. An amendment to the Shire of Northam town planning scheme will also be required to ensure that the orange route is implemented according to that scheme. The orange route is a very important strategic transport route and it should be commenced as soon as possible. We need federal support to construct the orange route to ease the pressure on Great Eastern Highway. Many residential properties are located only a few metres from that route that heavy-haulage and all sorts of other vehicles traverse on a daily basis. That road was simply not built for that amount of traffic; it is outdated. As a State Government we must do what we can to ensure that we obtain the necessary federal funding to build the orange route, which will cost an exorbitant amount. Nonetheless, it will be needed in the future as the eastern region develops according to the north east hills settlement plan. It is a big project and will require cooperation and a positive working relationship between the State and federal Governments. I hope we can pursue that. The Minister for Planning and Infrastructure is keen to work with her counterpart, John Anderson, or his successor,

Mr Dan Barron-Sullivan; Deputy Speaker; Mr Mike Board; Mr John D'Orazio; Ms Jaye Radisich; The Acting Speaker (mr P.W. Andrews); Mr Matt Birney; Acting Speaker; Ms Sue Walker; The Acting Speaker (mr D.A. Templeman); Mr Norm Marlborough

to make sure that route materialises, thus ending the ridiculous situation of Great Eastern Highway being used for something it was never intended to be used for. It will create a much safer environment, especially in light of the number of deaths that have occurred on that road. Repairs to the road must not continue in a piecemeal fashion. Many of the acceleration and deceleration lanes need repair; they are inadequate. Main Roads Western Australia is aware of these matters, as is the minister, and more action must be taken as a matter of urgency.

I have gone way over time so I will conclude my comments. I acknowledge the BPW Guildford on Swan Group. For the past couple of years that group has organised a mentoring breakfast for young women students from around the north east metropolitan region. I commend its members for their efforts. The mentoring breakfast provides an excellent opportunity for young women from the local high schools to meet other women who are active in community groups, not-for-profit organisations, business organisations and so forth. It enables them to have close, one-on-one discussions and to explore the opportunities that they could take for their future. It also endeavours to give them some incentive and encouragement to keep on the right track in achieving their goals and perhaps even inspiring them to set goals they had not thought of, and to achieve whatever they set their mind to. It is easier for some young people to achieve their goals than it is for others, but their dreams can be achieved if they have the passion and dedication to pursue them. Judith Roach is the president of that group. She does a great job, as does the whole committee. It organises many activities for business and professional women throughout Midland, the hills and the Swan Valley. It gives them a chance to get together, take some time out, and share stories and opportunities with each other. The other night I was at the Karakamia Sanctuary in Chidlow with the Minister for Tourism, Hon Bob Kucera, for the environmental tourism package launch that the sanctuary, as part of the Australian Wildlife Conservancy, had organised. Martin Copley owns the property and was there with his team to show off all the animals and the successes they have had. We were told that when Martin first took over there were not very many animals there at all. However, during the short walk we took the other night there was any number of wallabies, woylies and so on. I cannot remember the names of all the mammals and bird life we saw, but their abundance illustrated a very high level of achievement. I commend and recognise the very committed and dedicated team that has made all that happen.

I also commend Jennifer Rupp and the Mundaring Tourism Association. Tourism is a growing industry in the hills. It provides opportunities for many people to have home-based businesses and earn their income from the place they love to live in, where the environment is so special. It is fantastic for them to be able show off the natural wares as well as the human-created ones. Tourism brings people to an area they can experience and whose sensitivity they can share, and they can have a great time as well as generate business and employment opportunities. It is a little-known fact that there are nine wineries in the shire of Mundaring, of which the shire is very proud. I still have not managed to take a daytrip around all the wineries, but that is something that the shire president and I must put on our agendas in the not-too-distant future. I have been to several of the wineries, and their wines are impeccable. I would like to visit them all very soon.

To conclude, a number of people assist me and my office to make our lives easier and to enable us to achieve the outcomes we want on a number of local issues, and on individual and family concerns that are raised with us. I would like to mention particular people who make our lives and our jobs a little easier: Kathy Leong, Christine Ward, Mark Chiemelowski, Zoe Anderson and Nicky McKimmie; as well as my own staff, Karen Treanor and Martin Drum. They all help me to help other people as much as possible within the framework of government policy, the resources made available through government, and the initiatives the Government is producing to make people's lives in Swan Hills the best they can be.

MR M.J. BIRNEY (Kalgoorlie) [7.37 pm]: It is fair to say that this is judgment week for the state Labor Party. This is the week we examine the proposed policies set down by the Labor Party three years ago, and try to find out which of those policies have come to fruition and which have not. While over the past three years it has been understandable that the Labor Party might say, in regard to a particular promise, that it still intends to fund it since it still has another two or three budgets, as the case may, that excuse does not wash any more. As we all know, this is the last budget for this term of this Government. If a particular policy does not exist in this budget, the only conclusion that can be drawn is that that policy or promise will not eventuate in this term of government. There can be no more excuses.

I will turn to the goldfields for a moment. The goldfields region is a major contributor of wealth to this State, and has been for many years. Sadly, the people of the goldfields, and particularly the people of Kalgoorlie-Boulder, do not believe that they have received their due over the years. They rightly believe that there is an imbalance between the amount of wealth Kalgoorlie-Boulder and the goldfields region generate for Western Australia, and the amount of wealth that comes back by way of state initiatives in the region. The Premier said today that he supports regional Western Australia, and I take issue with that. The Labor Party's one vote, one value policy is the single policy that has the most potential to devastate rural and regional Western Australia. If

Mr Dan Barron-Sullivan; Deputy Speaker; Mr Mike Board; Mr John D'Orazio; Ms Jaye Radisich; The Acting Speaker (mr P.W. Andrews); Mr Matt Birney; Acting Speaker; Ms Sue Walker; The Acting Speaker (mr D.A. Templeman); Mr Norm Marlborough

Premier Gallop thinks that the people of Kalgoorlie-Boulder and regional Western Australia will simply roll over and allow him to tickle their tummies, he has another think coming. The fact is that the people of Kalgoorlie-Boulder are not second-class citizens. They will not put up with this rubbish that is constantly being thrust upon them by Premier Gallop and the state Labor Party. We do not want one vote, one value. We know what it means to us, and we do not want it. Premier Gallop ignores the people of Kalgoorlie-Boulder at his own peril.

A number of other issues also need to be explored when we are talking about the Labor Party's commitment, or lack thereof, to Kalgoorlie-Boulder and the goldfields region. The transportation to Kalgoorlie-Boulder of toxic waste formerly treated at the Brookdale waste plant is an absolute insult to the people of Kalgoorlie-Boulder and the goldfields region. Kalgoorlie-Boulder people are not second-class citizens. They do not want a waste dump on their doorstep any more than the people of Brookdale did. I say to the Premier that if he does not move that waste dump, but leaves it there, he does so at his own peril, and he will face the political consequences. We do not want a waste dump on our doorstep. The people of Kalgoorlie-Boulder will not cop it, and I will not cop it.

I will move on. I was pleased to see in the budget this year some \$1.5 million set aside for the upgrade of the South Kalgoorlie Primary School. I was pleased last year to see that same figure in the budget set aside for the South Kalgoorlie Primary School, and I was pleased to see that same figure the year before and the year before that. The reality is that that money has not been spent in four years. It was promised by the Labor Party prior to the last election for a long overdue upgrade of the South Kalgoorlie Primary School. Every year the Government rolls it over and re-announces it. The initiatives in the budget this year for Kalgoorlie-Boulder were so thin on the ground that the \$1.5 million upgrade of the South Kalgoorlie Primary School was re-announced again because the Government was struggling to find announcements to make. That money has not been spent, and, sadly, I cannot see it being spent any time soon. It is simply a padding for the budget to make people think that something is happening when in fact it is not. The people of Kalgoorlie-Boulder are not stupid. They remember seeing that money in the budget last year and the year before and the year before that. They know only too well that the South Kalgoorlie Primary School has not been upgraded, as was promised prior to the last election by the Western Australian Labor Party.

One of the first actions that this Labor Government took when it came to power was to wipe out \$8 million worth of funding from the Kalgoorlie Regional Hospital. The last Liberal Government had \$8 million worth of funding set aside in the budget for a full upgrade of the Kalgoorlie Regional Hospital. The first action that we saw from this state Labor Government was the axing of that money. That in itself is disgraceful. However, what is even more disgraceful is that in this year's budget some \$20 million is set aside for a hospital in Geraldton. I am sure that the people of Geraldton need, want and deserve a hospital. However, I simply ask the question: is \$8 million of that \$20 million the money that was set aside for the Kalgoorlie Regional Hospital? I suspect that it is. Why is it that once again the people of Kalgoorlie-Boulder are being treated like second-class citizens? Could it possibly be that Premier Gallop is in fact from Geraldton -

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr P.W. Andrews): Member for Kalgoorlie, in this place you need to refer to "the Premier".

Mr M.J. BIRNEY: Certainly, Mr Acting Speaker. Could it possibly be that the Premier is in fact from Geraldton? Is that why he has unceremoniously plucked \$8 million from the Kalgoorlie Regional Hospital budget and transferred it to Geraldton? Once again, the Premier is treating the people of Kalgoorlie-Boulder like second-class citizens. We will not cop it.

The seat of Kalgoorlie turned Liberal for the first time in history at the last election because the people of Kalgoorlie-Boulder could see what this state Labor Party was all about. I fear that the seat of Eyre might turn Liberal if the current slide or degeneration in the Labor Party's recognition of Kalgoorlie-Boulder is not halted. I note that when the Minister for Planning and Infrastructure came to Kalgoorlie for the budget breakfast, she announced with great fanfare that the Labor Government intended to build a resource centre at the Kalgoorlie Regional Hospital. I understand that a resource centre is a pooling of all medical resources in one area. That is not a bad idea, and I welcome the initiative. However, in front of about 70 people at that budget breakfast in Kalgoorlie, I asked the minister how much of the money was in the budget this year and how much was in the forward estimates. She replied none. I said that we all knew that if the money was not in the budget or the forward estimates, history told us that it would not get built. What an insult to the people of Kalgoorlie-Boulder for the minister to swan in and dangle the carrot in front of them, and make them think they are to get something from the State Labor Party, when the reality is that not one cent is in the budget or the forward estimates for that centre. Clearly, I must draw the conclusion that the Labor Party does not intend to build a resource centre at the Kalgoorlie Regional Hospital. History tells us that members opposite are pretending. One need not be Einstein to work that out.

Mr Dan Barron-Sullivan; Deputy Speaker; Mr Mike Board; Mr John D'Orazio; Ms Jaye Radisich; The Acting Speaker (mr P.W. Andrews); Mr Matt Birney; Acting Speaker; Ms Sue Walker; The Acting Speaker (mr D.A. Templeman); Mr Norm Marlborough

Kalgoorlie-Boulder has a significant, serious and ongoing problem with juvenile crime that is of concern to the majority of my constituents. Some of these teenagers are juvenile by virtue of their age, but adults by virtue of their actions. Some do not respect the police, their parents or their community; the only thing they truly respect is their freedom. Until we have the capacity to take their freedom from them, we will not truly tackle juvenile crime. I call on the State Government to fund a juvenile detention centre in Kalgoorlie-Boulder. In doing so, the Government must recognise the serious problems we have with juvenile crime in the area. There are many good reasons to build that centre in Kalgoorlie-Boulder. First, we have a significant problem with the issue. Second, a significant drain on police resources arises when a juvenile is sentenced to detention in Perth. In fact, two police officers must drive the juvenile from Kalgoorlie to Merredin, and two police officers are despatched from Perth to Merredin to pick up the juvenile to be taken to Perth. Four police officers are lost for an entire day. The judiciary is too well aware of the drain on police resources from this process. Sadly, some recidivist offenders escape a term of detention because the judiciary is aware of the drain this transportation places on police resources. When a juvenile is sentenced to detention, as far as possible the term of detention should occur in his home town. If that happens, the juvenile can receive visits from family and friends. Sending a juvenile away from his home town can have a negative effect on him because of infrequent visitors. I notice that the Government intends to upgrade the Kalgoorlie-Boulder Eastern Goldfields Regional Prison, and \$5 million is talked about. Again, I am not sure whether it is provided for in the budget. This work strikes me as a very good opportunity to bolt a juvenile detention centre to the prison upgrade. I call on the Premier and the State Government to accept and understand that we have a significant problem with juvenile crime in Kalgoorlie-Boulder, and we need to take appropriate action. At some stage, we need to think more about the rights of the victim and less about the rights of the offender.

Kalgoorlie-Boulder over time has been a place where people come to work and earn a quid over a couple of years, and then, generally speaking, they take off to what might be considered by some, certainly not by me, to be greener pastures. I think the time has come for us to change our focus when it comes to allocating resources to country areas, particularly Kalgoorlie-Boulder and the goldfields region. It is important that we ensure that we have adequate health and education services. It is important that we have a booming economy in the mining industry. Never before has it been as important to concentrate on lifestyle issues, sport and recreation and tourism. It is vital that places such as Kalgoorlie are not only prosperous and good places in which to earn a quid, but also places in which people enjoy living and raising their families. Invariably, when those sorts of resources are provided, people tend to stay in the region longer.

I am involved in a number of projects in my electorate, not the least of which is the LoopLine Tourist Railway project. The concept of the LoopLine railway is to bring the old LoopLine train, which ran in the goldfields for 100 years, from the Boulder station down to Hannan Street, the main street in Kalgoorlie. Of course, it would border the super pit on that route. That would provide a first-class tourist attraction for the people of Western Australia and for the wider tourism market. I am very hopeful that we might see some government funding for that project.

I have also proposed that we undertake a feasibility study with a view to building a recreational lake based on an existing lake system in the goldfields region. Once again, a facility of this nature would lend itself to people wanting to live in and enjoy Kalgoorlie, rather than simply work in the area for a couple of years and take off again, as is the case with some people now.

There is considerable interest in motor sports in the goldfields region. Sadly, only a couple of months ago, a young fellow who was allegedly drag-racing another person died as a result of that activity in Kalgoorlie. For some time now I have said that Kalgoorlie-Boulder needs an international-standard drag-racing strip for a couple of reasons. First, motor sport is a very popular pastime in the goldfields. Secondly, too many young people are taking it to the streets. The tragedy of that young fellow's death a month or two ago speaks volumes. I am hoping for some form of funding for an international-standard drag-racing complex in the goldfields. That would be another string to the bow. It would ensure that people enjoy living in Kalgoorlie-Boulder. Many people do enjoy living in Kalgoorlie-Boulder now, but we need to keep ahead of the eight ball. We need to keep providing these facilities. We need to make the message clear; that is, Kalgoorlie-Boulder is not just a place in which to work and earn some money and then take off after a couple of years; Kalgoorlie-Boulder is the sort of place where people raise their families, enjoy themselves and pursue social activities. I think that message is very important. The message becomes clearer when Governments fund recreational facilities such as the ones I have just proposed.

Currently, a lot of freight comes to Perth from the eastern States by rail and passes through Kalgoorlie. It is then unloaded in Perth and trucked, in some cases, to the Pilbara and, in other cases, back to Kalgoorlie. It seems somewhat of an anomaly for the freight to come through Kalgoorlie-Boulder by rail but then be freighted back

Mr Dan Barron-Sullivan; Deputy Speaker; Mr Mike Board; Mr John D'Orazio; Ms Jaye Radisich; The Acting Speaker (mr P.W. Andrews); Mr Matt Birney; Acting Speaker; Ms Sue Walker; The Acting Speaker (mr D.A. Templeman); Mr Norm Marlborough

again by truck. The reason for that is that the economies of scale do not allow those trains to be unloaded simply for Kalgoorlie-Boulder and the goldfields region. If freight for the Pilbara could be unloaded in Kalgoorlie-Boulder and then trucked up to the Pilbara, the economies of scale would allow us to create a transport hub in Kalgoorlie-Boulder and the goldfields region that would be capable of unloading those trains and then shipping the freight by truck to the Pilbara, the north eastern goldfields region and Kalgoorlie-Boulder. However, the one restricting factor is the road between Wiluna and Neds Creek, which is of a very poor standard. It is not possible for big trucks to get that freight from the goldfields to the Pilbara. Every year in the budget papers a line item for the Wiluna road appears. I cannot remember the exact figure, but I think it is either \$40 million or \$60 million. The budget papers then refer to an allocation for this year of zero. That is in the budget every year: allocation zero, allocation zero. I thought this Government might have taken the initiative, given that this will be its last opportunity to appeal to the people of my electorate, to build that road or at least get it started. Sadly, that has not been the case.

There is no doubt that country Western Australians are turning away from the Labor Party. They believe that this state Labor Party is an ultra-left, radical Labor Party, the likes of which have not been seen before. Former Labor Premiers would turn in their graves if they could see some of the social engineering that we are currently seeing from this state Labor Party. This Labor Party is gripped by minority interests. A radical, ultra-left green movement is now part of the Western Australian Labor Party, and it is anti-development. Also, some union bosses who are interested only in flexing their muscles and creating their own power base have a firm grip on the Western Australian Labor Party. There are many, many other minority interests and groups with control of the state Labor Party. In days gone by the Western Australian Labor Party was perceived to be the working man's political party. That is no longer the case. It is now this new, ultra-left, radical state Labor Party that is firmly in the clutches of minority interest groups. Guess what? Another minority interest group has now infiltrated the state Labor Party. Apart from all the obvious ones, the druggies have been running their own agenda in the state Labor Party, and they have done that with some success, because we have seen the decriminalisation of marijuana. This ultra-left, no-development green movement has the state Labor Party by the gills and will not allow any development. The elite homosexual lobby has been successful in ensuring that two gay men can now adopt a child. That is an absolute disgrace. I mentioned before that some union bosses who only want to flex their own muscles and create their own power base are pulling the strings in the state Labor Party. The new minority group that has now infiltrated the state Labor Party is the IRA. That sounds extraordinary. I can hear a couple of chuckles from members opposite.

Mr M.P. Whitely: I have a confession to make.

Mr M.J. BIRNEY: Is the member one of them?

Mr M.P. Whitely: No, not the IRA, but the BRS.

Mr M.J. BIRNEY: Notwithstanding the old gun banger in the background, I want to make this point, although I know it sounds outrageous. In fact, it is a very serious matter. When I make that allegation I am very serious about it. I suggest that members present read the *STM* magazine in the *Sunday Times* of last week, and more specifically the interview that was conducted with a senior member of the state Labor Party executive, Mr Little. Mr Little is a senior member of the Labor Party and an individual who purports to be standing for preselection for the state seat of Perth. Those two facts are not extraordinary, but what is extraordinary is that this fellow Little went into print in the *Sunday Times* to say that he did not mind if his money was donated to the IRA so that it could buy weapons. That is an extraordinary admission by a senior member of the state Labor Party. We all know what the Irish Republican Army does with weapons - it kills and maims people. A state Labor Party executive member is happy for his money to be donated to that organisation. That is an absolute disgrace. I do not think that I have ever read anything like it.

Of course, it is the case that the federal Government has anti-terrorism laws, I believe some relatively new ones, that make it illegal for people to donate money to terrorist organisations. This fellow, Mr Little, the future Labor member for Perth, is on the record as saying - if one believes him - that he donates lots of money to Sinn Fein, which is the political wing of the IRA, and that he does not mind if some of that money goes to the IRA so that it can buy weapons. Is this the new minority interest group that has infiltrated the state Labor Party?

The same fellow is also on record in the *Sunday Times* as saying that there is nothing wrong with branch stacking and that he does it all the time. He pays for people's membership so that he can sign them up into a branch of the Labor Party. He is an IRA sympathiser and branch stacker. This is the fantastic one: he is also in print as saying that the member for Roleystone is a moron, and also the member for Yokine, the member for Victoria Park and I. In fact, he is in print as saying that every member of this Parliament is a moron.

Mr Dan Barron-Sullivan; Deputy Speaker; Mr Mike Board; Mr John D'Orazio; Ms Jaye Radisich; The Acting Speaker (mr P.W. Andrews); Mr Matt Birney; Acting Speaker; Ms Sue Walker; The Acting Speaker (mr D.A. Templeman); Mr Norm Marlborough

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr P.W. Andrews): Order! The member cannot refer to any members of this place using that word in the guise of it being quoted from another source. Does the member understand what I mean?

Mr M.J. BIRNEY: I certainly understand, Mr Acting Speaker. I was very shocked to read that any member of the Labor Party would speak of his Labor colleagues like that. I was flabbergasted, although in the case of some backbench members, I would probably have to agree with him.

Mr Little, the potential new member for Perth, also broke the first rule of politics in that article. He boasted about beating his opponent before he had beaten him. Of course, if someone says that and does not beat the other person, he looks pretty silly. If this guy was just somebody off the street, a completely insignificant person who was banging his gums together, I do not think I would be talking about him. This fellow is an executive member of the Western Australian Labor Party and an IRA supporter. What will the Premier do about it? What will the weak-kneed, jelly-backed Premier do about it? Will he allow an IRA supporter to remain in the Labor Party?

Withdrawal of Remark

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr P.W. Andrews): Order! Again the member has come very close; in fact, he needs to withdraw the expression.

Mr M.J. BIRNEY: I withdraw, Mr Acting Speaker.

Debate Resumed

Mr M.J. BIRNEY: I make the point again: what will the Premier do about it? Will he allow this supporter of terrorist organisations to remain in the State Labor Party? We have only to turn on the television on any night of the week to see people being maimed, killed and blown up. We can see absolute carnage involving women and children, some of which has been perpetrated by the IRA, the very organisation that this Labor Party person purports to be supporting.

When one looks at all the other minority groups that have the Labor Party in their clutches, I guess it is probably not all that extraordinary. No longer does the State Labor Party represent blue collar, working-class people; it represents noisy minority groups. The Liberal Party on the other hand stands for mainstream Western Australians. It has mainstream views and mainstream values. Those views and values are consistent with the views and values of the people of Western Australia.

Mr J.C. Kobelke: What are they?

Mr M.J. BIRNEY: We will not be hounded by minority groups into changing legislation.

Mr J.C. Kobelke: What are they?

Mr M.J. BIRNEY: The minister should read our membership form.

Mr J.C. Kobelke: You do not know.

Mr M.J. BIRNEY: I will tell the Leader of the House the sorts of things that we do not stand for. How about that?

Mr J.C. Kobelke: Tell us what you do stand for.

Mr M.J. BIRNEY: We certainly do not stand for decriminalising marijuana, thereby sending a message to young kids that it is okay to blow their brains out with it. We certainly do not stand for supporting quasi-families by letting two gay men adopt a child. We certainly do not stand for supporting criminals so that they can walk free after they have committed serious offences, as members opposite do, as evidenced by the fact that they have abolished jail terms of six months or less and have been beating their chests about how they have been emptying out the prisons. Do I need to go on? The state Labor Party in Western Australia is a morally-decayed political party. Oblivion is just around the corner, my friend.

I turn now to my portfolio responsibility of police. A policy document titled "more police, better policing" was put out by the Labor Party at the last state election. The executive summary of that document outlines the 16 promises that the Labor Party made to the people of Western Australia with a view to extracting their votes. I would like to go through those 16 promises, with your indulgence, Mr Acting Speaker, to see how many of these initiatives have been implemented by the Labor Party; and, when I have finished, everyone in this Chamber will be of the view that the Minister for Police and Emergency Services and the Labor Party have failed the people of Western Australia by not keeping those promises that they made prior to the last election.

Mr Dan Barron-Sullivan; Deputy Speaker; Mr Mike Board; Mr John D'Orazio; Ms Jaye Radisich; The Acting Speaker (mr P.W. Andrews); Mr Matt Birney; Acting Speaker; Ms Sue Walker; The Acting Speaker (mr D.A. Templeman); Mr Norm Marlborough

The first promise made by the Labor Party was that it would boost police numbers by 250 police officers over four years. We now know that that promise has not been kept. Between 30 June 2001, which was the beginning of the Labor Party's first full financial year in charge of this State, and 29 February this year, which is the latest figure that we have, police numbers have gone backwards in Western Australia by 35. Therefore, far from increasing police numbers by 250, or anywhere near that figure, police numbers have gone backwards by 35. That is a complete failure of a major plank in that election policy.

The Labor Party said also that it would establish five new police "flying squads" as a strong and pro-active policing force to complement the existing area commands. I think the Labor Party said that it would even put one in the electorate of my friend the member for Mitchell - perhaps in Bunbury. Do members think those flying squads ever eventuated? In the police estimates committee debate on 29 May 2002, the police minister admitted that those squads did not exist and were never going to exist. That is strike two.

The Labor Party also said that it would ensure that all police stations were staffed to their authorised strength. This is an absolute beauty! If it were not so serious, it would almost be laughable, because as at 31 August 2003, 11 of the 14 police districts in Western Australia were operating below their authorised strength. It could not get much worse.

The Labor Party said also that it would work to identify more areas in which civilian staff could be used for non-police duties. Guess what? The very first thing it did after the election was get rid of those civilian staff with a \$1.6 million redundancy program. That was a complete failure once again.

The Labor Party said also that it would investigate new and flexible ways to improve recruitment to the Police Service and increase retention levels. Guess what? In 2001-02, 170 officers left the Police Service, and in 2002-03 that number increased - it did not decrease; it increased - to 186 police officers. With regard to recruitment, in 2002, the Labor Party's first full year in office, it recruited just 120 police officers, whereas in 1999 the Liberal Party recruited 204, in 2000 it recruited 220, and in 2001 it recruited 290. Of course, when the Labor Party came to power it recruited 120. Once again, it is a failure.

The Labor Party also said that it would set clear targets for all police response times. I thought that was interesting as well, so I looked up the figures for that. Surprise, surprise! Half of all priority 1 calls in the metropolitan area were not responded to in the targeted time in 2002-03. Priority 1 calls include life-threatening incidents, such as armed hold-ups. Four of the six police districts failed to reach those targets. More than one-third of all priority 2 calls in the metropolitan area were not responded to in the targeted time in 2002-03. Priority 2 calls are for offences such as homicide, domestic violence and rape. Five of the six metropolitan districts failed to meet those targets.

The Labor Party also said that it would increase support for the mounted and canine sections of the Police Service by \$1.4 million over four years. I thought I should have a look at that as well. In the year that the Labor Party took power, it spent \$504 000 on mounted police and canine units. In 2003-04 it spent \$605 000. Instead of increasing the budget for that particular initiative by \$1.4 million, it increased it by \$100 000. When inflation and other bits and pieces are taken into account, that increase was negligible. In any case, it was not \$1.4 million. Once again, the Labor Party sadly failed.

The Labor Party also said that it would introduce comprehensive legislation to control and regulate the sex industry. We all know what happened to that. The legislation was so ridiculous that it was thrown out. It failed on that count as well. It said that it would introduce a modern Police Act. Guess what? There is no modern Police Act. I have looked everywhere for it but cannot find it. The Labor Party also said that it would -

recognise that specialist units are an integral part of a smarter Police Service; and retain the Child Abuse Unit and re-establish the Asian Squad, -

The Asian squad never saw the light of day. Once again, they were just words. They were never genuine commitments to the people of Western Australia. The list goes on and on. In fact, of the 16 key initiatives announced by the Labor Party at the last election, nine, or 56 per cent, have failed to eventuate. What State Government could stand before the voters at a subsequent election and ask them to vote for it again after it has failed to implement 56 per cent of its written promises? I am not twisting the words of the Labor Party or being tricky or smart; I have been reading from the Labor Party's election policy headed "More Police, Better Policing". Of its key initiatives, 56 per cent never eventuated. At the next election I will be shadowing the Minister for Police like never before. Every time she takes a podium I will take a podium straight after her. That figure of 56 per cent will be prevalent in what I say. There will not be too many people in Western Australia who will not have heard the figure of 56 per cent by the time I have finished with them in the next state election campaign. They have a right to know that this State Labor Government pulled the wool over their eyes

Mr Dan Barron-Sullivan; Deputy Speaker; Mr Mike Board; Mr John D'Orazio; Ms Jaye Radisich; The Acting Speaker (Mr P.W. Andrews); Mr Matt Birney; Acting Speaker; Ms Sue Walker; The Acting Speaker (Mr D.A. Templeman); Mr Norm Marlborough

at the last election. The Labor Party wanted people to think that it would be tough on crime. The reality is that its Government has done next to nothing. Nine of its 16 initiatives never eventuated.

I was interested to see in the budget this year, and announced with great fanfare by the Minister for Police, that six police stations would be open in Perth 24 hours a day. Members might be amused or interested to note that some six months ago I raised this very issue with the Minister for Police on the Paul Murray show on 6PR. I asked the minister when these police stations would operate 24 hours a day. Do members know what she said? They will find her response extraordinary. She said that they already operated 24 hours a day. She went to great lengths to explain to me, Paul Murray and the listeners of the 6PR morning show that those police stations were already 24-hour-a-day police stations. If that were the case, do members not think it is an extraordinary announcement that the Minister for Police has provided money for these police stations to become 24-hour-a-day police stations? I am having trouble reconciling this. Were they 24-hour police stations at the time of the Paul Murray interview or not? It must be assumed they were not. The question is begging to be asked: why did the minister publicly say that they were? I suspect it was a mistruth.

The Minister for Police has announced that these police stations will be funded with a \$1.5 million program for civil servants. It is all well and good to have a lovely middle-aged lady at the front counter of a police station at three o'clock in the morning, but she will hardly fend off an attacker. Members all know that 24-hour police stations become refuges for victims of domestic violence or any other types of violent crimes. What is the good of having civil servants man the front counters at two o'clock or three o'clock in the morning? Why can uniform police officers not man them? The Minister for Police keeps telling us that she has increased the number of police in this State by 250, yet she wants to staff the police stations with civil servants. I have said for some time that that program of an extra 250 police officers is floundering and has all but failed. If I were incorrect, those police stations would have been staffed with police officers, not with civil servants.

Another extraordinary thing is that the Minister for Police says that she will employ civil servants with \$1.5 million, yet over the past four years she has had a \$1.6 million redundancy program for those very civil servants. The minute this mob was elected to power they chopped civil servants' positions to save \$1.6 million and now in the lead-up to an election she wants to spend another \$1.5 million to bring them back again. It is an extraordinarily cynical Government. I have never seen a worse State Government in all the time I have followed politics. On the one hand the Minister for Police says that the Government will employ \$1.5 million worth of civil servants and on the other hand she has had in place a \$1.6 million redundancy program for those very same civil servants. She sent them away the minute she got elected and now she is begging for them to come back.

The budget tells an interesting story. An interesting pattern emerges upon examination of the number of full-time equivalents that were budgeted and subsequently provided for in the past financial year. Under the portfolio of police - response and investigation - the Government budgeted for 2 098 FTEs but employed only 2 068, a shortfall of 30 police officers and FTEs in that portfolio. For services by the police to the judicial portfolio, the Government budgeted for 575 police officers and employed only 566 for the year, a shortfall of nine. For traffic services - we all know how the Minister for Police loves to bang on about road safety and traffic issues - the Government budgeted for 1 030 FTEs in that portfolio but employed only 1 013, a shortfall of 17. Under the portfolio of prevention of crime and unlawful behaviour, the Government budgeted for 2 270 police officers and employed only 2 212, a shortfall of 58. By the Government's own budget admission, there was a shortfall of in excess of 100 police officers and FTEs in key portfolios. I again ask: if the Government's promise of employing an additional 250 police officers was being met, why has there been a shortfall of over 100 FTEs and police officers in key police portfolios? The fact is that the Government is not meeting those budget requirements.

Another interesting pattern has developed in the capital works budget in the latest set of *Budget Statements*. In 2003-04 the Government budgeted to spend \$65 million on capital works and achieved a spend of only \$57 million - a shortfall of some \$8 million. Interestingly, last year's budget papers set out the forward estimates for capital works for the ensuing three years. They stated that the Government would spend \$55 million on capital works this year, but this year's budget papers indicate that the Government intends to spend only \$43 million on capital works. The Government also planned to spend \$31 million on capital works in 2005-06, but this year's budget papers indicate it intends to spend only \$22 million. The Government had planned to spend \$34 million on capital works in 2006-07, but this year's budget papers indicate it intends to spend only some \$26 million. All in all, that is a total reduction of around \$37 million for capital works.

The Western Australian Police Union has been saying to me for some time that the capital works program is floundering. Guess what, Mr Speaker? I just found some proof. A total of \$37 million has been pulled out of the capital works budget for the next three years. The reality is that the Minister for Police has failed utterly in

Mr Dan Barron-Sullivan; Deputy Speaker; Mr Mike Board; Mr John D'Orazio; Ms Jaye Radisich; The Acting Speaker (mr P.W. Andrews); Mr Matt Birney; Acting Speaker; Ms Sue Walker; The Acting Speaker (mr D.A. Templeman); Mr Norm Marlborough

her duty to the people of Western Australia and to the police portfolio. She has failed to implement 56 per cent of her written pre-election policies and she has dramatically reduced the capital works program for the Western Australia Police Service. She has no credibility in the issue of police and crime, nor does the state Labor Party. That message will be made very clear at the next state election. Members can rest assured that I will be all over this State during the next election campaign, spreading that message and making sure that people understand that we have a useless, hopeless State Labor Government.

MS S.E. WALKER (Nedlands) [8.21 pm]: What a great budget we see. I will make some comments on what a great budget this is. The National Farmers Federation has said that the budget is a welcome relief for drought-affected farmers. Fabulous! The Australian Medical Association has described the budget as Christmas coming twice. I am sorry, I forgot to say that I am talking about the commonwealth budget. From time to time the Opposition receives comments about its federal counterparts who, I am very proud to say, have done a fabulous job in federal government. It is a shame that this State Government has not done such a great job.

Let us just compare the budgets. The federal budget was handed down recently and a lot of things have been said about the budget by commentators and in press releases. The state budget was handed down last week. Let us look at the comments about that. An extract from ABC Online of 11 May on the federal budget states -

Farmers see Budget boosting competitiveness

National Farmers Federation president Peter Corish says the Budget is welcome for drought-affected farmers.

...

The Queensland farm lobby group AgForce agrees the Budget is good for the rural sector.

What does the WA Farmers Federation say about the budget? In *The West Australian* on Friday, 7 May under the title "No vision or benefit . . .", the WA Farmers Federation said -

... agricultural industries and regional communities again had been ignored.

The Australian Hotels Association said the Budget had not increased vital support to tourism, one of WA's biggest industries.

What did the Australian Medical Association say about the federal budget? A story on ABC Online states -

Australian Medical Association head Bill Glasson has described the Budget as Christmas coming twice.

"We've seen a consolidation Budget in relation to health," he said.

"We commend Tony Abbott and the Prime Minister on the issues around medical indemnity."

They were commended. What did the Australian Medical Association say about this State? On Friday, 7 May 2004 in an article headed "Money missing for new city hospitals", it stated -

Money has not been set aside in the budget to build any of the planned big public hospitals in the next four years.

I have some interest in this issue because most major hospitals are in the electorate of Nedlands. The Australian Medical Association criticised the Gallop Government's performance, saying that hospitals will struggle to cope. The AMA state president, Brent Donovan, said in that article -

One must recognise the effort made but they came to power promising to fix health and after this Budget they have failed to do that. If you analyse capital expenditure, there is not much money until after 2007.

The Gallop Government's budget has failed miserably in relation to health services. An article in *The West Australian* of 6 May states -

Doctors and nurses have cast doubt on State Government claims that it will increase spending on health next financial year, saying the 5 per cent rise is likely to be a decrease in real terms.

However, rural lobby groups say that the federal budget creates the right economic conditions for the sector, which continues to grapple with the effects of drought. Farmers have welcomed the \$135 million for the farm help program for struggling farm families and more funding for biosecurity. It included \$130 million to protect Australia against the threat of avian influenza. National Farmers Federation president, Peter Corish, has endorsed the measures. He said that, overall, he sees it as a positive budget and, hopefully, with a budgeted surplus will lead to further low inflation. Mr Corish says that the National Farmers Federation particularly welcomes renewed support for the "Agriculture - Advancing Australia" suite of programs and funds for transport

Mr Dan Barron-Sullivan; Deputy Speaker; Mr Mike Board; Mr John D'Orazio; Ms Jaye Radisich; The Acting Speaker (Mr P.W. Andrews); Mr Matt Birney; Acting Speaker; Ms Sue Walker; The Acting Speaker (Mr D.A. Templeman); Mr Norm Marlborough

infrastructure in rural Australia. The AAA package has delivered significant benefits to farmers through FarmBis, farm help and the Rural Financial Counselling Service. The budget ensures that these programs will continue for the next four years.

What about the state budget? The Government called it a budget for families first. The Government has plagiarised that term from the Victorian State Labor Government. In ABC Online, Matthew Liddy said that Mr Costello's ninth budget makes far-reaching changes to family assistant benefits and provides for a new maternity payment and extra child-care places. He also said that the \$19 million more help for families package spells the end of the government's controversial baby bonus; the family targeted budget revamps the system of family tax benefits, both increasing payments and making them available to more families; and it is a highly successful federal budget that the community has said is an excellent budget.

Continued economic growth, increasing employment and low inflation will underwrite tax cuts and additional spending. The federal budget will provide for continued economic growth and increasing employment. This State has been criticised for its appalling employment rate despite its surplus budget. That is why I had something to say when, during question time, the Premier tried to convince the House that employment was high in this State.

I will say a little more about what the commonwealth budget will achieve and then highlight what the Western Australian budget will not achieve. A letter in *The West Australian* on Saturday from Paul Higginbotham, Principal of the Speech and Hearing Centre for Children in Western Australia, states -

What a pity the V8 economy couldn't slow down long enough for deaf babies to jump on board. Surely Dr Gallop and Mr Ripper could have spared \$300,000 of the \$230 million Budget surplus for a newborn screening program in our hospitals. Deafness is the most common disability in Australia.

The federal budget has outlined a number of health initiatives, including added assistance for carers, and spending to cut the waiting lists for cochlear implants for profoundly deaf children. In addition, it has thrown its support behind a new diabetes treatment that removes the need for sufferers to have regular injections.

The federal Government has given some thought to quite a number of issues. It is extending its program of backing Australia's capacity for science and innovation. It is thinking about science and innovation. Today the member for Perth talked about the State Government supporting the arts - so does the federal Treasurer. Let us hear what the Chamber of Commerce had to say about the Costello budget -

Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ACCI) chief executive officer Peter Hendy has welcomed the Budget saying it is full of "goodies".

"It is also a good economic document because the Government shows how it pays for those goodies and yet still deliver a Budget surplus, which is crucial to business because it keeps pressure off interest rates," he said.

The Australian Industry Group (AIG) has largely welcomed this year's Budget saying it is good for business and industry.

Compare that with what the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Western Australia has said -

The Chamber of Commerce and Industry said the "Families First, Business Last" budget provided no significant tax relief and no strategy to address the state's record tax burden.

The Property Council of Australia noted the \$133 million in tax relief followed annual increases in property tax revenues of \$502 million since 2000-01.

WA Property Council executive director Joe Lenzo described the concessions as "an incremental little gift".

It was interesting for me to do some research about the federal budget, what commentators thought about it, and what commentators thought about the state budget, which is not very much at all. *The Australian Financial Review* of 8 May said -

Western Australia has the weakest balance sheet of the five AAA-rated states and territories, and there were question marks about whether it had the flexibility to react to an unexpected economic downturn, a ratings agency said on Friday.

Mr Dan Barron-Sullivan; Deputy Speaker; Mr Mike Board; Mr John D'Orazio; Ms Jaye Radisich; The Acting Speaker (Mr P.W. Andrews); Mr Matt Birney; Acting Speaker; Ms Sue Walker; The Acting Speaker (Mr D.A. Templeman); Mr Norm Marlborough

Standard & Poor's confirmed WA's AAA credit rating, despite the state's plans to take on an extra \$2 billion in debt to pursue a capital works program that includes the contentious \$1.5 billion upgrade of its metropolitan passenger rail network.

...

Analyst Brendan Flynn said the WA government did not have much of a buffer before it breached its limit and it had less flexibility than the other AAA administrations - Queensland, the ACT, Victoria and NSW - to deal with adverse economic events.

An editorial in *The Australian* states -

The West Australian economy grew by an extraordinary 6.75 per cent in 2003-04, but it would be worth hearing Mr Ripper explain why, with that sort of growth, the state's unemployment rate lingers slightly above, not way below, the national average.

That is why the Premier came in here today at question time and started trying to talk up employment. It is Law Week, as I said, but I have not seen the Attorney General at any of the events yet, which is noted. The Minister for Community Development turned up to the function I attended today.

Mr R.C. Kucera: What is the point you are making? He has a role in Parliament.

Ms S.E. WALKER: The point I am making is that it is Law Week, and the Attorney General has not attended any of the functions. I do not want to hear from the Minister for Tourism; I would not trust a word he said. I will not even take any notice of him. The point is that it is Law Week and when I go to functions, the Attorney General is not there. He is not supporting the group of people he should. Maybe he is too ashamed to turn up; who knows? An earlier part of the editorial in *The Australian* states -

... Mr Ripper began his speech with the words: "This budget puts Western Australian families first." Was Mr Ripper plagiarising Victorian Treasurer John Brumby, whose state budget on Tuesday was called "Putting Families First". In the exclusive club of Australian treasurers, "families" seems to be code for "spend like a drunken sailor".

Here is something for the Minister for Tourism, since he has something to say, which is never very riveting. I have an article that states -

Rottneet Island and tourism were the big losers in the State Budget - and it could cost jobs, angry tourist operators said yesterday.

...

"Victoria has just given \$35 million to its tourism marketing authority simply to attract new events. That means that WA tourism is going backwards at a significant rate ...

Can the Minister for Tourism find something good for me? I looked. I combed the Parliamentary Library to try to find something that was good about the Western Australian budget. All I came up with were glowing reports about the commonwealth budget - the Liberal Costello budget. I could not find anything good about this Government's budget. I despaired!

Mr J.L. Bradshaw interjected.

Ms S.E. WALKER: Who does?

Mr J.L. Bradshaw: All of them.

Ms S.E. WALKER: Why is that?

Mr J.L. Bradshaw: Tax cuts.

Ms S.E. WALKER: There we are. Hang on; I did find something on water; but here we go again. I have another article that states -

The looming water crisis has been largely ignored in the Budget, with no funding for a desalination plant or for pumping water from the South-West Yarragadee aquifer.

I ask myself is there anything good in the budget.

Mr J.R. Quigley: Yes, the Corruption and Crime Commission. It is well funded, as you will soon find out.

Ms S.E. WALKER: When I was talking to people at the Law Society of WA, they said, "Please keep the member for Innaloo up there, because he talks a load of rubbish. You're copping it today. We have had enough

Mr Dan Barron-Sullivan; Deputy Speaker; Mr Mike Board; Mr John D'Orazio; Ms Jaye Radisich; The Acting Speaker (Mr P.W. Andrews); Mr Matt Birney; Acting Speaker; Ms Sue Walker; The Acting Speaker (Mr D.A. Templeman); Mr Norm Marlborough

complaints about him. Please don't send him back to us." I said, "I hope that he won't get up to speak. Frankly, in Parliament he's not allowed to speak. They let him go sometimes. In his maiden speech he said that he was a loose cannon." He said that he was directing it to our side. However, when he first came into this place, he directed it to the government side of the House. Do members know what happened? The Government put a big plaster band on his face and said, "Shut up, member for Innaloo! Be quiet!"

Mr J.L. Bradshaw: Do you remember the yellow sheet he held up?

Ms S.E. WALKER: Yes.

Mr J.L. Bradshaw: He said that he was going to save the Scarborough Senior High School site. What happened to him? He got duded by his own people.

Ms S.E. WALKER: He is an embarrassment. Today the Government took off the band. No-one has any respect for the member for Innaloo. Everyone thinks he is a fool. Do members know what? My money is on them. I have another article that states -

State debt is forecast to surge from \$4.5 billion to \$6.6 billion in the 2005-06 financial year as the government embarks on a \$4 billion capital works program aimed at fixing the ailing state-owned electricity network and upgrading roads and the public hospital system.

What does the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Western Australia say about that? We know that the Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry thinks that the Costello budget is absolutely marvellous. What does the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Western Australia say? The article continues -

The WA Chamber of Commerce and Industry said in a pre-budget submission that more tax increases would hamper the state's economic competitiveness and the competitiveness of individual businesses. "In the longer term, it is not sustainable," it said.

No wonder the Premier came into this place and tried to talk up employment figures in this State. They are appalling. I have been through everything. I have asked for everything.

Mr J.R. Quigley interjected.

Ms S.E. WALKER: I have never been on stress leave. My friend should not carry on because, if he does, I will have to talk about the complaint about him with a woman. The member came into this place and talked about women.

Mr J.R. Quigley: You are sick from stress.

Ms S.E. WALKER: I am sick of the member. Another article I have with me states -

Take State debt, for starters. Labor has managed to weave what it bills as a record capital works program into the Budget while keeping debt below the self-imposed limit required to keep the State's AAA credit rating - that is, below 47 per cent of total revenue. In fact, the highest ratio throughout the forward estimates is 41.7 per cent in 2006-2007.

But in raw terms -

Mr J.R. Quigley: Why don't you talk about the increases in the rural health budget?

Ms S.E. WALKER: The member needs it, not me. It continues -

State debt is still projected to rise \$2 billion (from 2002-2003 levels) by 2006-2007 while the WA economy has been outperforming other States.

Mr J.R. Quigley interjected.

Ms S.E. WALKER: I do not take pills, but I believe the member does. I feel sorry for you, dear.

I return to the commonwealth budget, which is a much happier budget. *The Australian Financial Review* article of 12 May headed "A better deal for most parents" stated -

The budget's \$19.2 billion family payments bonanza has something for almost all Australians raising children, particularly low- and middle-income earners and households where the mother works part time.

The commonwealth budget is absolutely superb, and was reported upon as superb, and we have a piffling, embarrassing, shoddy -

Mr J.R. Quigley: Member for Nedlands.

Mr Dan Barron-Sullivan; Deputy Speaker; Mr Mike Board; Mr John D'Orazio; Ms Jaye Radisich; The Acting Speaker (mr P.W. Andrews); Mr Matt Birney; Acting Speaker; Ms Sue Walker; The Acting Speaker (mr D.A. Templeman); Mr Norm Marlborough

Ms S.E. WALKER: - shambles of a WA state budget. I am very flattered that I can get under people's skin.

What do people say about Eric Ripper? When I spoke about the budget debate last year, I referred to a *Sunday Times* editorial of 11 May 2003, which said the following about Ripper's budget -

Let's be clear. The State Government has skinned taxpayers to balance its books.

That has been done for the past three years. It further reads -

The \$83 million budget surplus announced this week has little to do with good accounting. The surplus relies heavily on increased taxes.

Without all the taxes and revenues, what would happen to the State under this Government? The *Sunday Times* articles continues -

From July 1, Western Australians must find an extra \$162 million a year in their already tight household budgets.

Homebuyers will be hit hardest.

I have been in a couple of taxis tonight, and the drivers who picked me up from Parliament said, "Are you a politician? You're not a Labor politician, I hope, because if you are, I've something to say to you: you lied to us when you said you were not going to raise taxes." I said that I am not a Labor politician; I am a Liberal politician. He said that I look honest. He was right.

I return to what commentators have said about the appalling budgets handed to the people of this State. People with mortgages, car payments, kids at school and bills to pay thought they had elected a Government that would look after them and would give them hope for the future. What did they get? They got skinned. The third budget is shocking. When I came into this place for the first time, I found it rather startling -

Mr J.R. Quigley: That you were allowed in the door!

Ms S.E. WALKER: I think they will let you in at Graylands, mate.

I found envy, jealousy and nastiness in members opposite towards those of us on this side of the House. It formulated quickly with the premium property tax. Remember that? I bet the caucus room was an interesting place at that time.

Mr J.L. Bradshaw: It was a great effort!

Ms S.E. WALKER: It was a great effort. Members opposite soon backed off on that one. I remember the member for Perth stating that those in the western suburbs are just greedy kids, and the member for Roleystone said that they will inherit millions and millions. I do not know what people opposite think. There are plenty of people in my electorate of Nedlands, which covers a broad area, who struggle to get ahead and have all sorts of payments to meet. We see this mixture of intense resentment and jealousy from members opposite. It has manifest itself in a variety of ways through this Government in my electorate. One example is the closure of the Shenton Park licensing centre, where 85-year-old pensioners and seniors would go -

Several members interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Order, members! The member for Nedlands has the call.

Ms S.E. WALKER: Last year I raised in Parliament the Government's closure of the Shenton Park licensing centre. I had received many letters from elderly constituents and I thought it was a very spiteful thing for the minister to do. She thought it was a joke; she thought it was funny. I think that the person who used to take my constituents for their test drives left his bag in the building and it was taken. The facts never really emerged. I do not doubt that that happened to him. However, on the basis of that, the licensing centre was closed, because it turned out that some money had been taken. The minister said in Parliament that the assessor came back from doing a test one day and found and confronted a person in the process of stealing the proceeds. I went down to the Shenton Park community centre and met with quite a lot of my senior citizens. They said to me that that could not possibly have happened because they never paid any money at the centre. They would ring the licensing centre at East Perth, the numbers would build up and then an assessor would come out to them. These 85-year-old people drive only down to the shop or to the doctor. They drive only in the suburb, not in the electorate. The assessor used to work from the toy library in the Shenton Park community centre. He would shut the door and then take them for their test drive. My elderly residents never went into his room. They paid their money through the licensing centre at East Perth. I thought its closure was quite spiteful, because now some of them have to drive to Willagee. They have been told to go to the West Perth licensing centre. Those of us who have ever tried to get across to the Polly Farmer freeway from Parliament will know how difficult it is, let alone for people over the age of 85. It really did not cost the Government anything for the assessor to come

Mr Dan Barron-Sullivan; Deputy Speaker; Mr Mike Board; Mr John D'Orazio; Ms Jaye Radisich; The Acting Speaker (Mr P.W. Andrews); Mr Matt Birney; Acting Speaker; Ms Sue Walker; The Acting Speaker (Mr D.A. Templeman); Mr Norm Marlborough

out for the afternoon. He did not take any money or process anything. I thought that was fairly spiteful. I have been told by one of my constituents that she now has to go to Willagee, I think, but I could stand corrected on that. She told me that there are lots of nervous elderly people there. They are out of their environment and it is hard. It is very spiteful. That is the only word I can use to describe this closure. It is seen as a bit of a joke on the blue rinse set. I am talking about people who live in Shenton Park and all over my electorate. Lately I have heard people comment on the western suburbs. A lot of people in those suburbs lead very ordinary Australian lives, and not lives of luxury. It is very poor when services are withdrawn from 85-year-old people on a spiteful whim of a minister with power.

Mr J.L. Bradshaw: They shut down the Pinjarra licensing centre as well, so people now have to go to Mandurah. If they want to get their licence for a five-tonne truck - it may be a 10-tonne truck; I'm not sure - they can't get it done in Mandurah as they could in Pinjarra. They have to load up their truck and drive to Perth, or have somebody drive them, to get their licence done in Perth.

Ms S.E. WALKER: I think the member for Kingsley said something about her electorate. This Labor Government is supposed to think about people's feelings.

Mr J.L. Bradshaw: It shut down the courthouse in Pinjarra as well.

Ms S.E. WALKER: The member for Murray-Wellington might not have been here when the people from Lifeline WA came to the Parliament. Last year I went to the White Wreath Association's service at St George's Cathedral. The White Wreath Association is a suicide group that holds a service each year. This service is held in St George's Cathedral because the dean told me that one day he happened to see these people in the Governor's gardens performing a service and he asked them if they would like a special place in the cathedral. To the left of the main altar in the cathedral there is a little book in which parents can write the name of their child if he or she has suicided. Each year at St George's Cathedral a white wreath service is held and white wreaths are laid on the lawn. I have to tell you, Mr Acting Speaker (Mr D.A. Templeman), that I thought I just could not go to another one of these services because they were so sad. I do not have a lot of good things to say about the member for Riverton, because of some of his behaviour in the Chamber, but during that service there was a lady whose two sons had suicided and she was very upset, and the member for Riverton went up and held her for about five minutes. I thought that was a very poignant thing for him to do. As I say, I do not have a lot of good things to say about him, but I thought that was a very poignant moment. The point is that those people work for Lifeline WA. The other day they came up to the Parliament to try to get \$300 000 to keep Lifeline going because they receive hundreds of thousands of calls each year from people who are lonely and isolated. They asked whether they could meet with the Attorney General, but he stayed up in his room. I saw him up there after I had been to the rally. There were some National Party and other members present, and that lady who had lost two sons spoke as well as someone else. I expected the Government to come up with the \$300 000. The Attorney General did not even come down and speak to them. The Labor Party is supposed to think about people's feelings. Frankly, I have not seen that reflected in its actions. Whether backbenchers have different views and are not allowed to articulate them, I do not know.

Last year the Property Council of Australia said of the Western Australian Government's 2003 budget that it was a recipe for disaster. It said that the announcement of a \$109 million stamp duty grab would place excessive reliance on property tax for government revenue. The Property Council's executive director, Mr Joe Lenzo, said that the Gallop Government was acting irresponsibly by relying on a high number of property transactions to fund essential services. The Government will be left with its own budget black hole if it succeeds in crippling the property industry. The irresponsible tax slug on all WA properties is unsustainable. I want to look at the stamp duty taxes in this State.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr D.A. Templeman): Order, members! The member for Nedlands has the call and conversations across the Chamber are not appropriate.

Ms S.E. WALKER: *The Australian Financial Review* states that this State's stamp duty remains second only to that of the Australian Capital Territory, with a \$5 million property purchase being slugged duty of \$293 170 in WA. I rang the Real Estate Institute of WA today and got a breakdown of the conveyancing rates in the suburbs based upon median house prices in December 2003.

Mr R.C. Kucera: Did you also get a breakdown of the fees charged?

Ms S.E. WALKER: No, that is not the point. I am not talking about fees. I am talking about where the people in my electorate will go if they wish to relocate. I am looking at the reality for them. Whatever happened to the catchcry about people owning their own home? Whatever happened to relocating and moving up the ladder of opportunity? Mark Latham plagiarised it by saying he wants people to move up the ladder of opportunity, when in Western Australia all the rungs are being knocked out, and this is one. A breakdown of the median house

Mr Dan Barron-Sullivan; Deputy Speaker; Mr Mike Board; Mr John D'Orazio; Ms Jaye Radisich; The Acting Speaker (mr P.W. Andrews); Mr Matt Birney; Acting Speaker; Ms Sue Walker; The Acting Speaker (mr D.A. Templeman); Mr Norm Marlborough

prices in the 34 suburbs across the metropolitan region shows an increase in stamp duty. Since 2000 it has increased to \$652 in Armadale, in Wanneroo to \$1 187, in Perth to \$2 087.50, in Mindarie it is \$3 122.50 and in Nedlands it is \$8 268.25. I will cite the increases in conveyancing rates based upon median house prices in December 2003. In Claremont the median house price last year was \$540 000. The stamp duty in 2000 would have been \$21 480; in June of this year it would be \$26 925, an increase in four years of 25.35 per cent; in July of this year it would be \$25 579, an increase of 19.08 per cent. In Crawley the median house price last year was \$335 200. The stamp duty in 2000 would have been \$11 547 and in June of this year it would be \$14 681, an increase in four years of 27.14 per cent. In Daglish the median house price last year was \$480 000. The stamp duty in 2000 would have been \$18 145 and in June of this year it would be \$23 225, an increase of 28 per cent. In Dalkeith the median house price last year was \$1 077 500 -

Mr R.C. Kucera: That is the median price!

Ms S.E. WALKER: Yes. How much is the minister's house worth?

Mr R.C. Kucera: Not as much as that, I can tell you.

Ms S.E. WALKER: I bet the Minister for Tourism's house is worth a lot more than the houses of most other people in Western Australia.

Mr R.C. Kucera: I do not think so, dear.

Ms S.E. WALKER: I think it might be. There will always be somebody better off and there will always be somebody worse off. If the minister remembers that -

Mr J.R. Quigley interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Order, member for Innaloo.

Ms S.E. WALKER: In Dalkeith the stamp duty in June of this year would be \$60 787, an increase of 40.37 per cent. In Jolimont the median house price last year was \$423 750. The stamp duty in 2000 would have been \$15 415 and in June of this year it would be \$19 906, an increase of 29.13 per cent. I could go on. In Shenton Park the average median house price last year was \$479 250. The stamp duty in 2000 would have been \$18 145 and in June of this year it would be \$23 180, a 27.75 per cent increase.

The figures are staggering. Where is the ladder of opportunity in Western Australia? I have seen this in my family and in other people's families. People start in the outer suburbs. They buy a home, improve it and move to another suburb. They want to improve their lifestyle. Everybody wants to improve their lifestyle and accumulate wealth. We are told these days that we must accumulate our own money so that we can live on it when we retire. The way for some people to do that is through property.

Ms M.M. Quirk interjected.

Ms S.E. WALKER: Did the member say practise streetwalking? Is that what she said? Does she think it funny? Hers is the Government that brought in the prostitution Bill and wanted to give our kids prostitution as a career option. When I asked members on that side whether they wanted their sons and daughters to do that, there was silence. They do not mind other people's kids doing it.

Mr J.R. Quigley: The Liberal Party introduced the containment policy. There was prostitution everywhere.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Order, member for Innaloo.

Ms S.E. WALKER: The Gallop Government has aimed a concession at first home buyers, but two problems have emerged. Government members are not long-term thinkers; they do not think things out. So many times the great legal minds on the other side have brought Bills into the House, where they have been knocked out because members on that side of the House do not think things through.

I have received some correspondence on this. Since the release of the state budget in May two issues have emerged resulting from a stakeholder receiving inquiries from the public. Firstly, home buyers who wish to enter into contracts for the sale of land or a strata title appear to be delaying the signing of contracts until at least 1 July 2004. Additionally, some first home buyers who entered into contracts prior to the release of the state budget are now taking steps to cancel their contracts to avoid the current stamp duty obligations. The second issue is that buyers who are not first home buyers are postponing entering into a contract for the sale of land or a strata title. We know that. To be honest, if any of my children wanted to buy a house, I would tell them to wait. Because of the short-term thinking of this Government, people who have entered into these contracts no longer want to pursue them. These are some of the problems that are being created by this budget policy.

Mr Dan Barron-Sullivan; Deputy Speaker; Mr Mike Board; Mr John D'Orazio; Ms Jaye Radisich; The Acting Speaker (mr P.W. Andrews); Mr Matt Birney; Acting Speaker; Ms Sue Walker; The Acting Speaker (mr D.A. Templeman); Mr Norm Marlborough

I will now talk about my electorate. I put the CD-ROM for the budget 2004-05 into my computer. I pressed Nedlands. Nothing came up. I pressed Jolimont. Zero! I pressed Daglish. Zero! I pressed Dalkeith. Zero! I pressed West Perth. Zero! Nothing!

Mr J.R. Quigley interjected.

Ms S.E. WALKER: I am not talking about what is between the member for Innaloo's ears. I am talking about what is in the budget papers for my electorate.

Mr J.R. Quigley: Zero!

Ms S.E. WALKER: Absolutely! That is the attitude this Government has taken towards my electorate.

The Government said it would save Sunset Hospital and look after the heritage sites in Western Australia. However, what is it doing? The Government wants to come into the electorate and rape, pillage and plunder the Sunset site. It wants to sell off 35 blocks of A-class reserve land. This is the Government that promised it would never sell off that site! That flies in the face of what the Government said when it was in opposition, when it pledged to oppose any scheme that involved selling off land at the site. However, when Dr Gallop came to government and was asked about the Sunset site, he said, "Well, there has been a change of policy since we came to power."

Mr J.R. Quigley interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr D.A. Templeman): Order, member for Innaloo! I have been very patient, but if the member for Innaloo interjects again, I will need to call him to order formally.

Ms S.E. WALKER: Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker. I have spent a lot of time on the Sunset issue. It is an issue that this Government could have solved when it first came to office if it had been genuine about community consultation. However, it was not. It set up a steering committee with the local mayor, who has since been dumped, because the community knew that he was not looking after their interests. Part of what the local government had to do was come up with \$15 million. The only way it was ever going to be able to do that from that site was by selling it. It was a betrayal of the people in my electorate. I talked in my maiden speech about how the Sunset hospital site was an ideal location for an aged care facility. I said that with Melvista Nursing Home, which is in my electorate south of Stirling Highway, being on only a short-term lease, and with Sunset hospital having always been an aged care facility, it would be good to build a new aged care facility on that site that could also be used as a community centre. However, this Government ignored the wishes of the community. It did not consult with the community. The Sunset site is a wonderful site. It is one of the State's significant heritage assets. It is an uncommon and intact example of a historic public health care facility associated with the care of the aged and infirm. It is prominently located on the Swan River, in the south-east area of Dalkeith, and it is significant for its landscape values. The setting, which includes remnant vegetation and open spaces, and the historical values associated with the buildings, combine to present one of the State's significant cultural heritage sites. It is this site that the state Labor Government wants to sell off. This site was declared an A-class reserve in 1890. The Liberal Party proposes to retain the site. It will not sell the site or support the steering committee's plans. It recognises the unique heritage values of the reserve and will continue to oppose the Labor Government's proposal to sell 35 blocks of land at the Sunset Hospital site. I conducted a survey of that area, which indicated strong community opposition to the sale of the land and a desire for the site to be conserved for future generations. We have vision on our side, unlike the other side. When future generations look back on this site, we would like them to appreciate the fact that we had forethought, as did Lord John Forrest, a former Premier of this State. I read some of the debates on the purchase of parts of Bellevue Avenue to keep them in Kings Park. If the Government is going to sell off the Sunset Hospital site, it may as well sell off Kings Park. The Liberal Party is supporting the community's call to protect the site's heritage values. If elected, we will actively resolve the issue through genuine community consultation, because that is the only way on a divisive issue such as this to get the community to come up with and look for a resolution. They want to feel respected. However, they feel betrayed by this Government.

There is nothing for the Nedlands electorate in this budget. Frankly, quite a lot of stakeholders do not see anything in this budget for them. However, it is not all bad news, because everyone sees the commonwealth budget in a positive light. I will be interested in whether any member could come in here and give me 10 press releases on different topics on the state budget that would say something good about it. That is a challenge for members. I would like to see something positive, but there is nothing positive in this budget for my electorate or the people of Western Australia.

MR N.R. MARLBOROUGH (Peel - Parliamentary Secretary) [9.06 pm]: If ever a part of the State was ready and primed to grow from the budget announced by the Treasurer on Tuesday, it is my electorate of Peel. This is

Mr Dan Barron-Sullivan; Deputy Speaker; Mr Mike Board; Mr John D'Orazio; Ms Jaye Radisich; The Acting Speaker (mr P.W. Andrews); Mr Matt Birney; Acting Speaker; Ms Sue Walker; The Acting Speaker (mr D.A. Templeman); Mr Norm Marlborough

the fourth AAA-rating budget under this Government. One thing that has impacted on the budget today was the announcement that the State now has the lowest unemployment rate in the whole of Australia at five per cent, although it is fair to say that we cannot take full credit for that. There is no doubt that a responsible Treasury and Government is working hard to make sure that we retain our AAA rating and that we have in this budget some \$240 million worth of surplus.

It is time to see how that budget will impact on the Peel area. I will paint a picture of what is happening in my electorate. Only last week it was announced that Rockingham is now the fastest growing area of the State. For years the south of the metropolitan area watched as the northern suburbs grew, because the truth is that that is where all the attention had been; the focus had been on the expansion of the railway and freeway to the northern suburbs. What we have seen over the past 10 or so years is a massive turnaround in where the population wants to go. Populations in metropolitan areas throughout Australia are attracted by lifestyle. Being on the ocean is a great attraction for anybody. One downside of Australia's love of the ocean is that it continues to take hundreds of thousands of people out of the rural sector, and sees us today as a State, as with many other States, that is battling to fill the gaps left by those people. One of the pluses is that it brings with it new opportunities with many new young families.

The great thing about the Peel area is that, by design of history, in 1954 our forefathers had the foresight to put in place the State's heavy industrial arena. It is cute these days, and sometimes it is more than cute, for some people to take a swipe at the heavy industrial area of Kwinana. However, the truth is that we have to manage the environmental standards that are so important to control those industries. We must make sure that the health standards of the municipalities that surround them can be maintained. We must make sure that the health standards of the people who work there can be maintained. Although those matters must be taken into consideration, the fact is that the heavy industrial areas drive a massive part of this State's economy. The State has never had a manufacturing base similar in size to Sydney or Melbourne. However, over the past 40 years the State's resource sector has grown and has become recognised throughout the world as the most progressive and efficient resource sector. Coupled with that is the democratic underpinning of safety, which is so important today. When the world trading arms look at where they ought to place their future investment dollars, Western Australia sits at the top of the list. It has all the demographics that are necessary. It has the resources, the skills, the security and the democracy of which we are all so proud. Western Australia is situated near Asia, and the Middle East is not very far away. Many soldiers and naval personnel who live in my electorate are presently representing us in the Middle East. Compared with many other nations, this great State of ours and this great nation provides a level of democracy that those countries can only dream about. That makes Western Australia a desirable place in which to invest.

The investment in the Kwinana heavy industrial area provides a cauldron of work opportunities for the types of men and women whom I represent in my electorate. It supplies thousands of jobs directly between Alcoa, Western Mining Corporation Pty Ltd, Tyco Pty Ltd, Hismelt Corporation Pty Ltd, CSBP Ltd, CBH Ltd, and the BP refinery. Attached to that is a minimum fivefold multiplier effect on jobs.

I see the opportunity for massive urban growth to occur along the freeway - the proposed railway route - that will benefit from that industrial heartland, unlike the northern suburbs. In the northern suburbs people must migrate at least down to the city centre before they find jobs, which is a real problem for planners. Planners around the world know that to plan properly, people must be able to live within 10 or 15 minutes of where they work. That is how cities are planned. Equally, cities are planned to have suburbs located on the main transport routes, whether they are railways or major freeways. Today the areas of Peel and south of the Swan River are test tubes; they are laboratories of all that planning coming together. A AAA budget is needed to make it work so that the infrastructure that is required to underpin this growth can continue.

I will refer to the types of things in my electorate that have been underpinned by this budget. In 17 years in Parliament, I have been fortunate to sit on a number of committees as a representative of the Government. One of those committees is involved in the planning of the new Fremantle port. Although there is not great deal of money in this budget to support that project, it is an indication of how this Government is planning the State. The technocrats tell us that over the next 10 years the sorts and sizes of vessels that will come across the oceans to bring containers into the port of Fremantle will be in excess of 100 000 tonnes, which is far too big for the existing port. Therefore, there is a need to build a new, modern facility, which is being planned in my electorate, around Alcoa and the existing Kwinana power station. It is a 10-year plan that is being worked on now. Budget considerations must be given to it. That 10-year plan must include a massive transit route and a plan of the industrial land that will surround that port.

I sat for a number of years with my colleagues the member for Cockburn, in particular, and the member for Rockingham on the Fremantle Rockingham Industrial Area Regional Strategy group. The FRIARS group, under

Mr Dan Barron-Sullivan; Deputy Speaker; Mr Mike Board; Mr John D'Orazio; Ms Jaye Radisich; The Acting Speaker (mr P.W. Andrews); Mr Matt Birney; Acting Speaker; Ms Sue Walker; The Acting Speaker (mr D.A. Templeman); Mr Norm Marlborough

LandCorp and the then Minister for Planning, created Australia's largest general industrial estate. It is an estate of 840 hectares. It stretches from Hope Valley in the south to Cockburn Cement Ltd on Russell Road in the north. It basically goes from Stock Road and Wattleup townsite through to the freeway. Within that 840 hectares are numerous environmental reserves, which will be protected as industrial growth expands. As a result of the impact of growth, and the knowledge that industry has of what is likely to happen with the port and urban growth, I, as the local member, have already been approached by a number of national and multinational companies that want to move into the FRIARS area. Those companies are connected with the export industry and port development. Urban growth is starting to happen, even with the port development 10 years away. Major companies want to move into the land now. Urban growth is taking place.

I know that you, Mr Speaker, spend a fair bit of time in my electorate when you are not on your busy schedule in the Pilbara. A new suburb - not a new house - appears to be mushrooming every week. Along the freeway, from South Street all the way south to Mandurah, suburb after suburb is growing. Hundreds and thousands of houses are being built, predominantly - not always - by young families starting off in life who fit into the first home buyer category. This budget is absolutely magnificent for those people. It will give them a real start in life. The people in the suburbs I represent know they can acquire a house package comprising a four by two brick and tile home on a 650 to 700 square metre block of land for under \$230 000. That is the sort of impact this budget will have on those people. It will not only underpin the building industry and continue to support it through its giddy times, but also support young families starting off in life who want to grow with the community.

In relation to urban growth, for example, one of the benefits I have in representing the Government is to sit on a planning committee with Peet and Co Ltd and LandCorp on the new village at Wellard in Kwinana. That village is a 3 000-block subdivision, the first blocks of which go on sale on the twenty-second of this month. It was anticipated in a meeting with Peet and Co last Friday that people will be camping days in advance to buy those blocks, which will go on the market at a very reasonable price. However, what excites me about that suburban subdivision is that for the first time a suburb will be designed around a railway line and a railway station. The Wellard station will be in the middle of the Wellard village.

To add to the news of that development I will tell the House about one of the exciting spin-offs from it. Think Kwinana! Think about the image of Kwinana that has often been painted in the media - dirty, grimy, low-income, blue-collar worker, unskilled. That is changing rapidly. It has been changing for many years. It was a slow change throughout the 1990s, but now it is rapidly changing. Far more professional people are coming into the town. However, the exciting spin-off is that those people who decry the railway line ought to have a really close look at themselves. As a result of the Wellard village and the railway line, the Anglican Church is within weeks of signing off on a deal with Peet and Co to put a K-12 Anglican school on the corner of Gilmore Avenue and Wellard Road, Kwinana. The Anglican Church told Peet and Co only last week that the reasons it is able to consider using that land in Kwinana for a school are twofold: firstly, it is a lot cheaper than Rockingham, where it was contemplating going; and, secondly, because it is so close to a designed village with a railway station within 200 to 300 metres of its front gate, the railway will deliver students to its school. That is why those people who shortsightedly say that the State cannot afford this \$1.4 billion infrastructure are, to put it plainly, stupid. How can we shrug off that sort of infrastructure on the basis of it costing \$1.4 billion without considering the significant advantages that it will bring to the community? That is just one of them. Young people from my community - many of whom work in the central business district - will be able to catch a train at Wellard station in Kwinana and beat straight up the freeway, rather than along the Kenwick route supported by the Opposition. The route from Mandurah to Perth via Kenwick is akin to me driving from Geraldton to Perth via Northam. That is the sort of nonsense they were talking about. The southern rail link will allow young people starting their working life, and young families wanting to watch a footie game at Subiaco oval or to shop as a family, to catch a train at Wellard village and be in Perth within 28 to 30 minutes. On the way they will stop at Thomas Road, another station in the town of Kwinana.

When that section of the freeway was being built, the previous Government had the foresight to put the railway tunnel under Thomas Road. A major Park 'n' Ride station will be built there. The railway station is already starting to pay for itself in community benefits and spin offs. It will go from Thomas Road station, through Wellard station to Ennis Avenue in Rockingham. From there, there will be a major Park 'n' Ride and bus transit system to feed commuters onto the train, and it will turn and head down to Mandurah. Since that line has been put on the map and the Government announced that it would run the line straight up the Kwinana Freeway to the city, developers have been rushing to develop along that major transit route. If people have difficulty offsetting the \$1.5 billion cost of a railway line, I suggest they think in terms of simple maths: compare the value of properties three years ago in that region when we announced this railway line with the value of properties today. Although property values have increased throughout the metropolitan area, they have increased significantly along that railway route because of the proposed rail line. Why would anyone who lives in a house today in

Mr Dan Barron-Sullivan; Deputy Speaker; Mr Mike Board; Mr John D'Orazio; Ms Jaye Radisich; The Acting Speaker (mr P.W. Andrews); Mr Matt Birney; Acting Speaker; Ms Sue Walker; The Acting Speaker (mr D.A. Templeman); Mr Norm Marlborough

Kwinana, Rockingham or Mandurah, when a Government is going to pay for \$1.5 billion worth of transport infrastructure, not want to live there and why would people not want to invest there? The budget for the southern rail link is tremendous.

Other significant areas, such as education, are important to my electorate. My electorate has been fortunate in this budget because of the growth in that area. I think I can say safely that the Minister for Education and Training has thanked me for the work I have contributed towards the establishment of a new \$28 million senior campus in Kwinana.

Mr J.C. Kobelke: Congratulations.

Mr N.R. MARLBOROUGH: That sort of development was unheard of in Kwinana. That money will be invested in the most important group in our community - young children. They are where our future lies. It will help to get rid of the stigma that, rightly or wrongly, is attached to the existing high school. It will encourage teachers to come to Kwinana who have traditionally turned their back on it in light of the difficult social problems there. I acknowledge that bricks and mortar will not fix that, but that campus will provide the beginning of changes to an education culture and new opportunities for youngsters who will go there. It will encourage the right sort of teachers into the region.

The Minister for Education and Training and I announced four months ago when we visited Settlers Hill that a new primary school would be built there, to be opened in 2005. It is a joint venture. The developers have put in some \$2 million with the Department of Education and Training to bring that new primary school on early. The third school I want to mention is the new middle school in Secret Harbour, which is intended to be opened for the beginning of 2006. The Minister for Education and Training and I announced that at a meeting of the community at Secret Harbour some six months ago.

Health is, of course, important to all of us, and as we get older and suffer from more physical ailments, it becomes important in a very personal way. With a mother who is now aged 80, and in-laws who lived into their 90s, I have been a frequent user of Fremantle Hospital, taking my family to the emergency department. Thankfully, I lived only two minutes from the front door. I am acutely aware of the need to upgrade our hospital emergency system and to put extra beds in place. I want to take this opportunity of personally thanking the Minister for Health, and putting on record his magnificent job. I have been in this Parliament for 17 years and, with the greatest respect for the previous Minister for Health, I have never seen a minister grasp a portfolio and place it on an even keel as quickly as the present Minister for Health. Everybody would agree that health is probably the most difficult portfolio in any State in Australia. It is always an argument between what the federal Government will not give and what the States are trying hard to find to put into the system. We have a Minister for Health who has immediately started to put in place a balance that moves the thing forward and in doing so he has given people the feeling of security. That has been reflected, in particular, in my electorate, where I have seen the building under way - it is nearly finished - of a \$10 million emergency centre, and this budget contains a commitment to increase the number of beds at the Rockingham-Kwinana District Hospital from 69 to 217. Over the next three years, some \$54 million will be spent at the Rockingham-Kwinana District Hospital on achieving that growth. It is growth that is much needed. Having been around as long as I have, I was here when the previous Government ripped beds and services out of Rockingham-Kwinana District Hospital to create its private-government model at Joondalup and Peel. The previous Government did not create extra beds in the private-government system; it ripped beds away from the public and placed them into those hospitals. Although the electorate of my colleague from Mandurah is a beneficiary of that policy, it meant that the area where the population was - 90 000 compared with 40 000 - missed out. That is now being redressed. To me, it was always absolutely stupid health politics to put the health dollar down in an area with a population of 40 000 and say to the population of 90 000 that they must go down there, rather than putting the health dollar with the 90 000 and telling the 40 000 to make their way up to Rockingham. However, it is being redressed, and I am delighted that the minister, under the Reid review, is ticking off Rockingham as a major centre.

I could talk about other areas of the budget for some time, but I will just touch on one area that is very close to me - the whole area of disabilities. For many years families have come to me, many of them with parents in their 60s and 70s, who are looking after 30-year-old severely disabled sons and daughters still at home. Bill and Karen Spanbroek, who are dear friends of mine, are in their 60s. Their son is 29 years of age. They have looked after their son all his life while the department has continually told them to put him in permanent care. They have refused, saying, with the greatest respect to the permanent carers, that they want to continue giving their son their love, and as normal a lifestyle as they can. They need assistance from government to do that. If the Minister for Disability Services were here, she would know. I have been to see the Minister for Disability Services, particularly over that family's problems, two or three times in the past 14 months. It has been a battle, but each time the Minister for Disability Services and the Cabinet have found a way of getting extra money to

Mr Dan Barron-Sullivan; Deputy Speaker; Mr Mike Board; Mr John D'Orazio; Ms Jaye Radisich; The Acting Speaker (mr P.W. Andrews); Mr Matt Birney; Acting Speaker; Ms Sue Walker; The Acting Speaker (mr D.A. Templeman); Mr Norm Marlborough

the Spanbroeks. I deal with that family on a regular basis. There are many other examples in my electorate, as I am sure there are in other electorates. To see that develop into a commitment of some \$68 million extra in the area of disabilities, which will result in 126 new places and a greater number of families being able to help care for their youngsters in their homes, is simply fantastic.

On top of that, there will be 50 more protection and care workers. Rightly or wrongly, my electorate cries out for that sort of service. Low-income families and single-parent families need assistance from government all the time. If we cannot assist at that level, we must question whether we have got it right. Although we could pour buckets of money into this area and never come up with enough, I congratulate the Treasurer, the Cabinet and the Government for their decision and foresight to put extra funding into that area.

I will close by saying that I believe this budget will give the area of Rockingham, which is now recognised as the largest growth area in the State, the opportunity to put in place the massive infrastructure that will continue to be needed over the next four years for the sort of growth that has taken place in the past four years. I thank the Government for its budget. On balance, it is a fair and reasonable budget. It highlights the key elements of assistance that we need to give to low-income families, to first home buyers and to disability services, while keeping service payments in check, such as those for electricity. We will see no increases in electricity prices after eight years of this Government, and electricity prices for people living in caravan parks will be halved. This budget comes together in a way that any good mix that is placed in an oven comes together. We sit back and watch it grow, with the correct flame and with the correct nurturing, and we benefit from that. When it is finally cooked, we open the door, take it out, put it on a plate, cut off a slice and enjoy it. I believe we have a budget for my area that we will enjoy a great deal over the next four years.

Question put and passed.

Bill (Appropriation (Consolidated Fund) Bill (No. 1) 2004) read a second time.

Pursuant to Standing Order No 222, Bill and estimates referred to Estimates Committees A and B.