

INDO-PACIFIC REGION — BILATERAL RELATIONS

Motion

HON DAN CADDY (North Metropolitan) [11.35 am] — without notice: I move —

That the Legislative Council —

- (a) acknowledges the importance of the Indo-Pacific region to the state;
- (b) recognises the opportunities that exist in the near and long-term future; and
- (c) commends the Cook government for its proactive agenda in this space, exemplified by the recent delegation to Indonesia and the Premier's visit to Korea.

We are in the Asian century. This is apparent not just because it has been so labelled by people who are far more knowledgeable than I am, but because events in our region, with many of our neighbours in our time zone, have made it patently obvious that it is so. Hon Wilson Tucker made this point in his speech this morning on the Daylight Saving Bill, not that I think daylight saving would help in this regard. As everyone in this chamber would know, international relations in a general sense, both trade and security, are really the remit of the federal government. On that note, the federal government has been making large strides in the Indo-Pacific region. Our attendance at all major summits in the region this year is testament to that. The fact that the Prime Minister was invited to the G7 meeting in Hiroshima shows the importance that other major Indo-Pacific nations put on Australia's involvement in this multilateral forum and, indeed, other multilateral forums. Of course, two of the four agenda priorities were critical minerals and regional security, so Australia being there was a logical choice, a logical invitation and a logical conclusion. It also allowed the leaders of the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue, the Quad, to meet informally off to the side, after the Quad meeting that was to go ahead in Australia was cancelled due to internal issues in the United States.

I will highlight today the role of Western Australia in direct engagement in the Indo-Pacific region, what is being done, and why it is important for Western Australia, arguably more so than any other state, to take a lead in pursuing bilateral relations with our closest neighbours and important regional trading partners. As more than one of us in this chamber has said before, Western Australia is a trading state. That is a fact. I hope we will move towards being more of a manufacturing and production state in the future, especially when it comes to the lithium and hydrogen industries, but that is a discussion for another day, although I note that hydrogen is very much on the Indo-Pacific agenda as well. Western Australia is a trading state. There is no better indication of that than the fact that three per cent of the nation's GDP goes through Port Hedland. Agriculture is more than just grains; it is also wine, truffles, crayfish, avocados—the list is endless. Agriculture is critically important for Western Australia and our trading neighbours. I am sure that the Minister for Agriculture and Food will mention some of that shortly. Of course, Western Australia is more exposed than any other state, given the percentage of our exports that go to the Indo-Pacific region. The US is our seventh-biggest trading partner, but the other 11 of the top 12 are all in the Indo-Pacific region. The flip side of this exposure, the other side of the coin, is opportunity, and no state in Australia is better placed to do business in the region than Western Australia. It is a simple matter of geography. Perth and Western Australia are in the most populist time zone in the world. When we consider that the bulk of the second-most populous time zone is made up of the population of India, it is evident that Western Australia must be proactive in this space, on top of the good work that is also being done by the federal government.

Although it is good and general practice in this chamber and at this level of government to not reflect on international relations and negotiations between nation states, it is incumbent on me to make some observations about what has happened over the last 10 years in our region, the Indo-Pacific region. It will provide the framework for some of the points that I will make about the importance of the bilateral relationships that Western Australia has with its trading partners. The past 10 years has seen a rollercoaster of “events” in our region, some of which have had drastic consequences for some industries in Western Australia. Of course, at the core of everything that happens in the Indo-Pacific region is the relationship between the United States and China. Although this is a lens through which most Australian bilateral and multilateral agreements need to be viewed, we have an opportunity as a state to pursue trade and create personal relationships to strengthen those important ties without directly having to engage in regional security issues at the same time. Trade embargoes as a by-product of US–Chinese tensions invariably affect Western Australia more than any other state. None of this has been helped in the past decade with the Trump administration all but refusing to actively participate in multilateral forums in the Indo-Pacific region. The refusal from day one of the Trump administration to participate in the trans-Pacific partnership was an exemplar of this, despite the US having been one of the major architects of the TPP. It was an incredible decision.

We are now living and trading in a multipolar world. There has been the rise of India, the continued acceleration of the Indonesian and Vietnamese economies, as well as the presence of already strong economies such as Japan and Korea. That all means that the future is in bilateral and multilateral agreements in our region. As a nation, 30 per cent of our trade is with China. This is just a fact. However, nearly 80 per cent of our trade is with our Indo-Pacific neighbours. That means that 50 per cent of our trade as a nation is with Indo-Pacific countries other than China.

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Western Australia remains a massive proportion of that. Our future as a state is in our region. This is evident even to the most casual observer. This government is stepping up to the plate where this is concerned.

That takes me to the final limb of my motion that I really wanted to get to. That is, I wanted to commend the Cook government for its proactive agenda in this space, exemplified by the recent delegation to Indonesia and the Premier's visit to Korea. Under the former Premier, we released the state's first-ever Asian engagement strategy. The *Western Australia's Asian engagement strategy 2019-2030: Government of Western Australia: Our future with Asia* is a 10-year plan that outlines the priorities for Western Australia as a state in the Indo-Pacific region. There are four pillars to this strategy, including maximising trade and investment, supporting Asian literacy and capability and enhancing people-to-people links. People-to-people links are critical. It has always been the fact that commerce between nations is transacted by people. Supporting business networks and communities is the fourth pillar.

In the opening months of the tenure of the new Premier, he led a delegation of 130 prominent Western Australians to the ASEAN Business Summit in Indonesia. He subsequently visited Korea before coming home. This was in addition to other direct conversations with other governments. The recent trip that the Premier led to the ASEAN Business Summit in Indonesia was a watershed moment in Western Australia's trading history. It was no accident that the new Premier's first overseas voyage was a trade delegation held by our nearest major trading partner. This was a deliberate decision and sends a very strong message about the priorities of this government. The delegation had 130 leaders and government officials across numerous sectors including energy transition, creative industries and the arts, digital economy, international education, primary industries and, of course, tourism.

I will briefly touch on Indonesia for a bit because that is obviously where the summit was held. Western Australia's relationship with Indonesia is a key economic driver for the state. In 2022, WA exported \$3.8 billion worth of goods to Indonesia. This is well above the 10-year annual average of \$2.3 billion. WA accounted for a quarter of Australia's total trading goods with Indonesia. We accounted for 30 per cent of Australia's goods exported to Indonesia in 2022. Indonesia is a significant trading partner with Western Australia. In 2022, the total trade was \$4.6 billion. The state's petroleum exports to Indonesia rose 16 per cent, to \$1.2 billion in 2022. The Premier recognises the importance of Indonesia and the other ASEAN nations to our future. This government and cabinet realises that importance as well. We are leading the way in the history of Western Australian governments in this place.

I was reminded of the outstanding Minister for Mines and Petroleum, Bill Johnston, when talking about petroleum exports. He was there as well. Members would know that Bill is fluent in Indonesian. One should never underestimate the power of relationships that can be built when we take the time not just to learn the language of our partners, but to gain a deeper appreciation of their culture, which is ordinarily an inevitable by-product of mastering, as Bill has done, a foreign language. To that end, I will just do a quick shout-out. We have increased Indonesian understanding in our caucus with the election of the new member for Rockingham, Magenta Marshall, who is also highly proficient in Indonesian.

Hon Kate Doust: The member for Cockburn is on his way.

Hon DAN CADDY: I hear that he is learning. That is a good step as well.

I referred earlier to the Premier's visit to Korea following the success of the delegation to Indonesia. Members will be aware that Korea is Western Australia's third largest trading partner. Premier Cook was there to attend the forty-fourth Australia–Korea Business Council joint meeting, which brings together key decision-makers in government and industry from both nations. The focus of the event was strengthening economic ties in sectors including energy, critical minerals, hydrogen—which I was glad to see—financial services, defence, education, food and agriculture. Of those eight focus areas that I just mentioned, there is not one that Western Australia does not have a major stake in.

Obviously, the other major announcement to come out of the meeting was the announcement that Western Australia will host the forty-fifth Australia–Korea Business Council forum. This is a great win for Western Australia. Members should not underestimate its significance: it is no small signal from our state's third biggest trading partner that we have been chosen to host this event. Now, more than ever, we need to engage directly with our Indo-Pacific neighbours and partners. Under the backdrop of security concerns in the region, every new relationship and friendship we forge as a state strengthens our position should other relationships in the region begin to deteriorate or if there are other security concerns. As I said, we are a trading nation and within that nation, Western Australia is a trading state. It is incumbent on government to do all it can to enhance and protect this. The Premier, Cabinet and government understand this.

I would just quickly mention a footnote to everything I have been saying. I wanted to briefly shout-out the US–Asia Institute based here in Perth run by Professor Gordon Flake. Many members of this and the other chamber would have been fortunate enough to attend the lunchtime seminars that have occurred here at Parliament House, facilitated by Professor Flake and his team. I thank the President and the Speaker for allowing that, and, indeed, the members who reached out and made that happen. The Perth USAsia Centre is one of the leading think tanks on Australia's

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place in the Indo-Pacific region, but what makes it even more valuable, what makes it critically valuable to Western Australia, is that many of the other institutes, the thought leaders in this space in Australia, are based on the east coast. The Perth USAsia Centre is based here in Perth and, we might say, in our time zone. The centre has made a very significant contribution to how Western Australia sees itself not just in the Indo-Pacific region but in this time zone—this critical advantage we have over other states. That is something well understood and often articulated by Gordon and his team. I highly recommend that all members, as well as getting along to some of the sessions facilitated here by the USAsia Centre, follow the papers and publications offered by the centre. They are fantastic. They make for excellent reading, and they will absolutely help any members gain a deeper understanding of our region and our place in it.

HON TJORN SIBMA (North Metropolitan) [11.50 am]: I will speak very briefly because I know there is a degree of enthusiasm on the other side of the chamber, and I certainly do not want to obstruct the exercise of that enthusiasm. In large part, this is one of Hon Dan Caddy's better motions, better forms of business, that he has brought before the house.

Several members interjected.

Hon TJORN SIBMA: He is damned by faint praise!

There is an identification here of a very, very important matter, and Western Australia and Australia's place in the world are central to our considerations, both as a responsible chamber and state. The member is quite right to acknowledge the importance of the Indo-Pacific region, and I think sometimes it can be overlooked by focusing on other issues. The member is absolutely right to recognise the opportunities in the present day and in the medium to long term.

I will not rebuke the third limb of the motion, which commends the government. I think it is very reasonable to acknowledge the efforts of this government and its predecessor in maintaining important trading relationships with our neighbours and, in partnership with the business committee and other sectors important in Western Australia, to identify areas of unmet need or growing markets in jurisdictions close to our shores, particularly the opportunity presented in Indonesia. I use this opportunity to acknowledge the very good work undertaken by the Legislative Assembly committee—I forget its nomenclature—led by Peter Tinley in its report into the relationship between Western Australia and Indonesia. Along with a number of colleagues of this chamber from all parties, I attended a function very recently to mark the tabling of that report and to identify the opportunities that have existed, exist now and are presently unexplored between Western Australia and Indonesia. It was an absolutely excellent event. Again, I commend the members of Parliament responsible for tabling, effectively, known knowns but probably things that are not given enough attention or focus.

I also concur with Hon Dan Caddy on the importance of the relationship between Western Australia and Korea, which, indeed, is our third-largest trading partner. Strangely, in my estimation it is a relationship that seems to be overlooked in some way by the size and scale of the relationship that we have with China and possibly the more historic one we have with another North Asian state in Japan. The Korean economic story is a miraculous one, and it is worth reflecting upon by any jurisdiction that wants to take its own future into its own hands. Seventy years ago, after the armistice of the Korean conflict was declared, the nature of that society, its infrastructure and its economy was essentially devastated, but in the last 70 years Korea has dragged itself up by its own bootlaces to be about the eleventh or twelfth international economy on the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development scale. To give some measure of comparison, Korea and Australia are largely neck and neck year in, year out. The dedication and focus, the dedication to innovation and, in particular, policy decisions made in Korea concerning the energy system, the phasing out of combustible engines and the like obviously open up opportunities for a jurisdiction like Western Australia.

I acknowledge and congratulate the Premier on his travel there. The forty-fifth Western Australia–Korea Business Forum being hosted in Western Australia is a marquee event and is worth drawing attention to. To provide another addition to reflecting upon the importance of this relationship, Hon Dan Caddy has mentioned previously, as have I, the unveiling of the memorial to the Korean War in the grounds of Kings Park. The significance of that event was more than just a commemoration of a conflict or the addition of another memorial in a park full of memorials; it was a very significant righting of a historical oversight and a very, very significant expression of respect, dignity and commonality of purpose with our friends in Korea. I think it was interpreted in ways akin to that construction.

I will also reflect upon the fact that the member has mentioned a friend and ex-colleague of mine, Professor Gordon Flake. He does an excellent job on behalf of the Western Australia community at large—its academic community, its business community, media and institutions like the Parliament—in bringing together a nerve centre of very contemporary and deep thinking on Australia's place in the world and, in particular, Western Australia's place in the world. It is very accessible, very professional and very well qualified. If members have not made use of that institution, I encourage them to absolutely do so.

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I fundamentally agree with Hon Dan Caddy, yet again. I am sorry if I am damning the member with faint praise; I do not know whether it does his preselection any good, but he is a very sensible person and I hope his party retains his services, if only because he can identify key strategic issues such as this. Western Australia is a trading economy. Western Australia is a fundamentally outward facing economy. Western Australia's disposition and approach to the rest of the world was well put by the previous Premier, Hon Colin Barnett, particularly in terms of the way Western Australian policymakers should think, which is not necessarily over the Nullarbor but over the horizon. In that direction is where our future lies, irrespective of our ties to the Federation as it exists today. I thought the McGowan government was on to something in creating the ministerial portfolio for Asian engagement. I know that has disappeared from view, but I do not think it is such a bad idea to reconstruct it. I think the minister who largely had charge that portfolio for a significant period, Hon Peter Tinley, was doing an excellent job. If our future lies in the Indo-Pacific, which it obviously does, perhaps it would not be such a bad idea to reconstitute that portfolio or embed it in a more specialised sense within the broader Department of Jobs, Tourism, Science and Innovation.

I thank the member. He has moved an excellent motion. I overlook the self-congratulatory aspect, but this is an imperative in every government member's private members' business. Well done. It behoves us all to work together to ensure that Western Australia engages constructively, proactively and consistently with the rest of the world.

The ACTING PRESIDENT: I give the call to the Minister for Agriculture and Food.

HON JACKIE JARVIS (South West — Minister for Agriculture and Food) [12 noon]: Thank you, Acting Speaker. Sorry; Acting President! I had a mental blank there. I have been watching too much of what goes on in that other place!

Hon Tjorn Sibma: Don't do that!

Hon JACKIE JARVIS: It is another excellent motion brought by Hon Dan Caddy. I have to disagree with Hon Tjorn Sibma when he said that only some of the motions brought by Hon Dan Caddy are worthy.

Hon Tjorn Sibma: I said it's one of his better ones!

Hon JACKIE JARVIS: They are all excellent. We are feeling the love in the chamber today. We are in furious agreement. Hon Tjorn Sibma said he felt the Indo-Pacific region was sometimes overlooked. I can assure him: not by this government.

It was an absolute honour to have my first official overseas visit as a minister as part of Western Australia's largest ever trade delegation. The delegation was 130 businesses and government representatives across primary industries, energy transition, international education, tourism, creative industries and the digital economy, which all went to Indonesia. I visited three cities. Some of the ministers came and went but I was delighted to join my colleagues the Premier, Minister Bill Johnston and Minister David Templeman. We travelled to Jakarta, then to Surabaya in East Java and then on to Denpasar in Bali. It was a fantastic delegation and a huge opportunity for businesses across a wide range of industries to learn from each other. It was excellent.

One of the things I was particularly excited about outside my portfolio was that the Premier, while in Jakarta, presented at the inaugural high-level dialogue on cooperation in critical minerals. That was in partnership with the Indonesian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, known as Kadin. The dialogue with Kadin follows a plan of action that was signed during President Widodo's visit to Australia in July. The critical minerals sector is incredibly important to Indonesia. For those who do not know, Indonesia is setting itself up to be a real player in building electric vehicles. Hyundai has a plant in Indonesia that was opened in March 2022. Anyone who has spent time in any part of Indonesia will know that scooters are a big part of their mode of transport. Indonesia is really gearing up to enter the electric vehicle space, for both vehicles and scooters. Members who have been to Jakarta will know there is a bit of a smog issue. They are really committed to decarbonising their economy, as we are. Western Australian critical minerals play an important role in that. That was fantastic.

Obviously, I was there with my Minister for Agriculture and Food hat on. It is a tough gig sometimes, all the eating and drinking I have to do in this job!

Hon Tjorn Sibma: Can I volunteer to assist in any way?

Hon JACKIE JARVIS: Thank you!

Hon Pierre Yang: There's a long line!

Hon Stephen Dawson: How 'bout the Bertie Beetles; have you fixed that yet?

Hon JACKIE JARVIS: I have not fixed the Bertie Beetle situation; my apologies.

Hon Sue Ellery: What have you been doing!

Hon JACKIE JARVIS: What I have been doing, Leader of the House, is talking up the Indo-Pacific region! The Indo-Pacific region accounts for 62 per cent of Western Australia's agrifood exports. One of the first things we

did was to visit the Bogasari flour mill. It is huge. It produces one million bags of flour a day. I am talking about one million 25-kilogram bags of flour a day. We got to drive around the mill in a little golf cart. While I was there, there was literally a ship unloading Western Australian wheat. It is a really important market. Their focus on food security was also really interesting. Obviously, Indonesia does not grow grain. It does not have the right climate to grow large amounts of grain. They were really interested—local media, local business people, flour mills—in food security. With global uncertainty around grain from Ukraine, they were really interested in the food security aspect. They talked about the value of Western Australian wheat not only because the protein content makes it amazing for their noodles, but also for the short shipping lines. There was a ship sitting in port, being unloaded directly to the flour mill while we were there. I think it had a six-day turnaround. That was fantastic. The Bogasari flour mill was an eye-opener. We had a media delegation with us who are the normal cohort of political journalists. Let us be honest; they do not really pay a lot of attention to agriculture as a portfolio. Their reaction was really interesting when the Perth media learnt things such as that most of the Mi Goreng brand of noodles that we eat in Australia are from Western Australian wheat. Everyone had a story about being a student and living off noodles. That really captured their imagination. It was interesting to have a Perth news crew that normally report on matters of political interest be at a flour mill watching wheat be milled. When we are very involved in our own industries, we sometimes forget that people in the metro area are really fascinated by this stuff.

We had the opportunity to host a red meat round table. That was interesting because we were grappling with the concerns that the Indonesian buyers had expressed around lumpy skin disease. We are free of lumpy skin disease and I am very pleased to say that the Indonesian government has accepted the evidence put forward by Australia's chief vet on lumpy skin disease. We talked to red meat buyers—boxed beef, boxed sheepmeat, and live cattle importers—and I asked them whether they were concerned about not getting cattle from Australia. Their response was that they were but that India has buffalo it wants to export to them. It highlighted to me the idea that we need to have close working relationships and we need to keep those relationships because we are in a global market. If we cannot supply the products, someone else will.

I met with a regional government, a regency, that was really keen to talk to Western Australia about exporting dairy cows to rebuild their stock after they were decimated by foot-and-mouth disease. We had conversations about what we can do to support the rebuilding of essentially subsistence farmers in East Java. I went to one of the largest feed mills in East Java—Japfa Comfeed. Japfa Comfeed is a massive business. It is vertically integrated so they have fish farms, poultry farms and Wagyu beef production. They also make processed foods. If you get yourself a crumbed crab stick in the supermarket, it may well have come from that company. What I mean by vertically integrated is that it makes its own stockfeed to use in its fish farms. Again, these are global commodities. Our corn and maize is competing with America. We are sending them our wheat and protein-based lupins and things like that. It is a fantastic business—a massive business. Everyone really learnt a lot by taking the delegation there.

On the delegation, we had honey producers, meat processors, grain growers, premium food producers, a winery, a brewery and horticulturalists. One of the other really exciting visits was when we met with one of the largest importers of horticultural products. We saw strawberries grown up in Wanneroo that were destined for the shelves in Indonesia. We compete on price with strawberries from Queensland but again the benefit we have with Indonesia is the fact that we are so close. The buyer talked about the fact that they can get strawberries into Indonesia while they are still firm and not mushy, like the terrible Queensland ones! On Bravo apples, the Western Australian government of all persuasions has invested 25 years in apple breeding. That scene has developed the Pink Lady apple and now the Bravo apple. Of course, we are very proud of the Bravo apple and when people go to supermarkets they see the Bravo apple, but New Zealanders are equally proud of their apples and the Chinese are equally proud of their apples. Again, we have to keep doing things we have done really well. We have to keep investing in research and development, whether it is in grain or horticulture. I am really proud to be part of a government that understands the importance of our Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development in partnership with the private sector.

As I said, it was a fantastic opportunity. I was delighted to finish the trip in Bali where I got to see Atlas Pearls. It is a Western Australian company working very closely with Indonesia. Unfortunately, it did not have a retail outlet so I was not able to partake of any retail therapy at Atlas Pearls. At one stage I did have a massive handful of pearls, but none made it into my pocket despite the thought that it could happen! It was a fantastic event. I think every business that went got something out of it. I am incredibly proud that it was my first overseas trade mission.

HON KATE DOUST (South Metropolitan) [12.09 pm]: I congratulate Hon Dan Caddy for this motion today. We have already seen the level of bipartisan support for the nature of the motion and for the themes being canvassed. That is good to see because the issue of trade in the Indo-Pacific region for the Western Australian government, regardless of the colour of the government, is extremely significant. It has always been and will continue to be significant. Having listened to the Minister for Agriculture and Food about the recent visit, I think the issue will become more so. I will talk also about some of the other issues aside from agriculture.

I certainly acknowledge the first tranche of Hon Dan Caddy's motion. I would say that it is a no-brainer, colleague, in acknowledging the importance of our placement in this part of the world and our connection looking north to the

40-odd economies that look down upon us and our interactions. Hopefully, our improved interaction in more recent times with a range of those countries in terms of how we connect opens up a variety of opportunities with them. It is something that has always intrigued me, particularly with a country such as Indonesia. As the member has already reflected, the Minister for Energy, whom I have a close association with, has always had a very strong connection to Indonesia, having been a student there, and he has maintained a very strong link to his Indonesian family. He was fortunate to spend time with his brothers in Jakarta on his most recent trip. In fact, one of his brothers, Titan, was invited to attend the formal function. It was really important that Titan and his wife were able to come to that event. That reinforces the significance of our people-to-people connections in Indonesia, which are at the core of how we engage with any of those countries to grow our relationships on that personal level, our diplomatic level and our trade level. It is about how we treat and engage people. Part of that goes to some of the other issues that I think are important.

Agriculture, mining, resources and energy, all the things we have traditionally been involved with in the export industry, both to and fro, are significant. However, in terms of how we engage with people, we also need to look at other growth areas. These are highlighted in the report on the state's bilateral trade and investment relationships with Indonesia that has been referred to that looks at how we promote our services sector in Western Australia. How do we better improve our engagement in education and health and other areas to become more significant—they are huge growth areas for us—as well as the arts and entertainment areas? The minister reflected on the retail area and I will come to that shortly.

A huge piece of work has been done by the Western Australian government in the international education zone. The Leader of the House, who has previously been involved with that, might comment on that in due course; I am not too sure. The Indonesian market, given that it is right on our doorstep, will become more and more important. Having been involved on the board of Canning College for over 20 years—I have recently come off that board—I know that the Indonesian market was very important and a lot of work went into how we attracted those students or provided a different connection to students, certainly during the COVID period, to not only build that relationship, but sustain it and grow the market for Western Australia, and try to draw those students away from the glittering lights of Sydney and Melbourne back to Perth, using our proximity and safety and educational opportunities as the best core. One of the ways of doing that has been the direct engagement with the schools and students, and ministers have been involved there. Sometimes it is not through traditional means to promote how we engage with people. Sport is a huge engagement factor in Indonesia. Although we might think that having a few thousand followers on Facebook is amazing, it is a few million in the Indonesian context, and whether we want to promote a sport or promote and market a product such as international education, we need to think about how we go about doing that. There have been opportunities when sporting teams have been brought out to Western Australia with young students and we talk about the opportunities and try to engage those sporting clubs with our educational providers here, be they secondary schools or tertiary institutions. We need to think about doing things a little outside our normal model.

Another area that comes back to retail is how we market our state. We want to have not just the two-way trade, but the two-way tourism, the education and all those good things. Sometimes we have to think outside the square. When I was in London earlier this year I saw huge advertisements promoting Western Australia. Sometimes the touchy-feely stuff is really good as well. We have excellent staff working in our trade offices and various commissions who are public servants and who do the job they are meant to do and are really good on policy and negotiation, but if we want to get out and promote Western Australia and all the great things we have and can do with other countries, the idea is to get retail outlets into big shopping centres—and they are big shopping centres in those cities—and marketing what we have with retailers essentially running the show, because they rise to the opportunities. Having people who are skilled in display and in selling the opportunities—marketing our produce, marketing our education and marketing the employment and study opportunities here and the opportunities to engage in business in Western Australia—and having those one-stop WA shopfronts is worth consideration. I hope the government will look at some of those things down the track.

I come back to a recent report that was tabled in the Legislative Assembly by the Economics and Industry Standing Committee. The committee made a number of very good recommendations. I think the first couple are very positive. One of them talks about Indonesian language programs. I have always thought that is something we should bolster. Como Secondary College in South Metropolitan Region is one of the few schools that offers studies in the Indonesian language. Wilson Primary School is another. I certainly hope my grandchildren who attend learn Indonesian, as their mother did. All my children had the Indonesian nationalist song *Halo, Halo Bandung* sung to them from birth as their lullaby at night. If it is sung in the appropriate way, it is a much more stirring song than the way my husband sang it to his children!

It is about people-to-people relationships. If we build up opportunities around language, it makes it easier to communicate. Whether it is Mandarin, Indonesian or Vietnamese, making any of those languages available to our children, building up their skill sets for the future, avails them of many more opportunities. There is the New Colombo Plan and we have referred to the Perth USAsia Centre, and the Aceh program used to be run out of Murdoch University to promote exchange arrangements for students from both countries. All those things are

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valuable and need to be promoted, encouraged and endorsed in terms of where we go. I am pretty sure that those matters would have all been canvassed by a range of ministers during that recent period of travel.

Sometimes we assume that in this area we know best or we are doing things better, but countries coming out of COVID, particularly in the Indonesian context, have really stepped up and diversified in their tech areas in the digital space and are doing a lot in e-commerce. We have talked about how we diversify away from our traditional markets. They are delivering on that. The report that has been tabled focuses a lot on that country. I am sure Vietnam would be another we could look to. It is not only about what can we do for those countries in terms of trade and engagement. It should be what can we learn from them. What can we pick up from them about how to do business better and how to provide for our own community and economy. I think that is a valuable lesson for us. I encourage members to read the report. The other thing to remember is we are not the only state competing for the market with those countries. There is strong competition, and I congratulate the Labor government on the work it has done in that space.

HON PIERRE YANG (North Metropolitan — Parliamentary Secretary) [12.20 pm]: I understand my colleague Hon Shelley Payne would like to make a contribution so I will endeavour not to take the full time. I support the motion from my very good friend Hon Dan Caddy. It is important for Australia and Western Australia to realise and capitalise on the region we live in, for the benefit of the people of Western Australia.

I wish to report to the house that moments ago I was with Hon Simone McGurk, the Minister for Water; Training. We had a meeting with a visiting delegation from the Malaysian state of Sarawak. The minister for utility and telecommunication for the state of Sarawak, Hon Datuk Julaihi Narawi, led the delegation to visit Western Australia and the water utilities in our state. He was joined by the Consul General of Malaysia in Perth, Mr Ahmad Fikri Zakian, who is a good friend of mine who I have met on a number of occasions at different community events.

I think we, the Australian Labor Party, have always had an international outlook, from Prime Minister Bob Hawke, who was instrumental in the early stages of APAC. Prime Minister Paul Keating supported APAC to make it a truly influential regional forum in the 1990s and early 2000s. The Western Australian government's Asian engagement strategy was part of the McGowan Labor team going into the 2017 election. I was fortunate to be part of former Premier Mark McGowan's delegation to China, along with Hon Sue Ellery, Hon Bill Johnston and Hon Paul Papalia.

I hasten to add, a good friend of mine, Mr Kris Doherty, was doing his part for Asian engagement when he visited Singapore last week and spent four days at the F1 Grand Prix. Good on him for doing his part on Western Australia's behalf.

Hon Darren West: In the fast lane.

Hon PIERRE YANG: In the fast lane. Thank you very much.

I will add a few comments about the importance of learning another language. Research released a couple of years ago suggested that the learning of the Bahasa Indonesia plummeted 63 per cent from its peak in 1992 until 2019. That is an unfortunate trend. I hope the rapid growth of Indonesian economic activities spurs more interest in our communities so that people learn Indonesian. It is an important language for people-to-people connection between Australia and the great state and nation of Indonesia.

We heard that the member for Cockburn is learning Bahasa. The member for Cannington, my local member, is a fluent speaker of Bahasa Indonesia, as is the new member for Rockingham, Magenta Marshall. I thought I was doing my bit from the upper house perspective. I have been spending five minutes of my day, every day, doing a tiny bit of Bahasa. I am getting to a stage at which I look at my booklet and I can say a few words —

[*Words spoken in Bahasa Indonesia —*

Senang bertemu dengan Anda.]

That means, "Nice to meet you."

[*Words spoken in Bahasa Indonesia —*

Selamat siang.]

That means, "Good afternoon."

The problem I have is when I speak face to face with a Bahasa Indonesia speaker, my brain goes blank. I do not know whether any other second-language learners share that problem, but it is something that I experience and that is why I have my little booklet with me. If I have to rely on my little bible on Bahasa Indonesia, I will do that.

To conclude my remarks, when I was in my first year of a political science degree at the University of Western Australia in 2003, the size of the Indonesian economy was no larger than the size of the economy of New South Wales. Today the Indonesian economy is well over \$1 trillion. It is ranked 16th in the world in terms of nominal GDP, according to Wikipedia. Australia is ranked 13th with \$1.7 trillion. Indonesia has grown rapidly over the

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past 20 years. That is a huge opportunity for Australia and Western Australia. I think with the attitude of the federal government and the state government in enhancing the relationship we have with Indonesia, the future is bright.

HON SHELLEY PAYNE (Agricultural) [12.27 pm]: Thank you, Hon Dan Caddy, for bringing the motion for today and giving us the opportunity to acknowledge the importance of the Indo-Pacific region to the state. Members have talked about our relationship with Indonesia; I will spend the last couple of minutes I have talking about the Pacific Islands and the contribution their workers have made, and some of the people in Western Australia who are working to help support those workers. There are over 35 000 Pacific Islander workers in Australia. Although the Pacific labour scheme started in 2018, it was not until the COVID pandemic and the need for workers that the state government stepped in and provided support to the agriculture industry to get workers.

I have spoken before about workers in Katanning and Esperance from the Pacific Islands, who help out with our abattoirs in particular, and the support that those communities have given the workers. I will mention a couple of people, particularly Matilda Martin and Jo Kaitani, who work as volunteers helping to support those workers. I am going to Matilda's house tonight. She is having a dinner for Pacific Islanders from Fiji who are moving from Esperance to new work locations in the eastern states due to the closure of the abattoir.

Today, I am having lunch with Talaiasi Tuli Tangifua, who has recently been voted in as President of the new Pacific Islands Council of Western Australia. Western Australia is the last state to have a Pacific Islands Council.

Isireli Talemaitonga, who was employed under the Pacific labour scheme to support the workers here, was originally employed through the Pacific Islands Council of South Australia. On 12 September, workers were able to come here under the Pacific Islands Council of Western Australia to support our workers from all the Pacific Islands. I want to shout-out to all the people who came together to start up the Pacific Islands Council of WA. No doubt it will do some great work in Western Australia to support the workers here.

In the last couple of minutes that I have, I want to take note of Hon Jackie Jarvis's comments on the global market in which we operate. I am very pleased with the Cook government's support for Indonesia. I think it is important to reflect on our place.

I was doing a bit of googling last night and I came across a statement of Canada's view of the Indo-Pacific region. It states —

The Indo-Pacific is rapidly becoming the global centre of economic dynamism and strategic challenge. Every issue that matters to Canadians—including our national security, economic prosperity, respect for international law, democratic values, public health, protecting our environment, the rights of women and girls and human rights—will be shaped by the relationships Canada and its allies and partners have with Indo-Pacific countries.

The ACTING PRESIDENT (Hon Dr Sally Talbot): Member, I am going to interrupt you there to offer the mover of the motion five minutes in reply.

[Interruption.]

The ACTING PRESIDENT: Right. Hon Shelley Payne, you still have the call.

Hon SHELLEY PAYNE: Thank you. I will just finish that.

Hon Stephen Dawson: Because he doesn't get five minutes until the end of this session.

Hon Sue Ellery: So relax.

The ACTING PRESIDENT: I am sorry; that was a miscall on my part, Hon Shelley Payne. I have a note here saying that Hon Dan Caddy wanted his five minutes; he is not "allowed" to have five minutes under the standing orders. The floor is yours, Hon Shelley Payne.

Hon SHELLEY PAYNE: Thank you. I will continue the quote of Canada's view —

Our ability to maintain open skies, open trading systems and open societies, as well as to effectively address climate change, will depend in part on what happens over the next several decades in the Indo-Pacific region.

I wanted to read that statement because I think it is important. I am really pleased that in Western Australia we are acknowledging the importance of the Indo-Pacific region and the work that we are doing to build these strong partnerships, which will really help us influence what happens in the region over the next couple of decades in a positive manner for our global future. Hon Jackie Jarvis talked about us working within that global marketplace. I will leave it there and give others the opportunity to have their say.

HON DAN CADDY (North Metropolitan) [12.32 pm] — in reply: I want to thank all members who spoke on the motion, and address a few things. I will go in order of who spoke. Hon Tjorn Sibma praised the motion, I think. It was either high praise or a backhanded compliment—I cannot work it out. His contribution really shows how

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critical bipartisanship is to this area. I also acknowledge his interest and indeed knowledge of Korea and his advocacy for that relationship within an Asian engagement context.

I acknowledge that Hon Jackie Jarvis is part of the delegation, and it was fantastic to hear firsthand about her experience and her report back, if you like, to the chamber of what happened. I notice that she spoke about food security. This is a real issue for some Indo-Pacific nations, even those more established nations. Malaysia, for example, gets about 80 per cent of its protein from fish. It manages its fisheries extremely well, but at the moment it is dealing with incursions of fishing boats from other nations, which threatens the whole balance there. It may not be an issue now, but it may indeed be in the future if that is not sorted out.

I thank Hon Kate Doust for her contribution, and acknowledge her long-term and continuing interest and efforts in the Asian engagement area, not least of which when she had fairly major import in the Asian engagement strategy that the McGowan government released in the last term of government.

My very good friend for so many years, Hon Pierre Yang, reflected on the importance of learning languages and the way that enhances the people-to-people connections, and I had already spoken about that earlier. I would also like to thank Hon Shelley Payne for her contribution and for the acknowledgement of the Pacific Islands and the people from the Pacific Islands who now call Australia home.

I want to address one omission. I started to run out of time when I was speaking previously. I want to thank the hardworking officers, the public servants and officials from the Department of Jobs, Tourism, Science and Innovation, the Department of the Premier and Cabinet, the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development, and many of the other government departments for the work they do. None of this would happen at the political level without the hard work of the departmental officials who are the cogs who make all of this work so that we as a government are ready and prepared to engage with our regional neighbours.

Motion lapsed, pursuant to standing orders.