

Following the election, we heard the shadow Treasurer on talkback radio being very critical. However, it was put to him that it was his former government's proposal. He was asked how his government would have implemented it. Specifically, he was told that if his government took one per cent off one agency, it would have to take five per cent off another to make up the average. He was asked where it would come from, because if he were to follow the line that education, health, police and disability services were to be quarantined from that process, he would have to take not 10 per cent but probably 30 or 40 per cent off some of the other government agencies. Where would an agency such as the Department of Sport and Recreation go with that sort of process to make up the difference? I suggest that the whole department would have to close down to meet the opposition's objectives. They are not our objectives and it is not the way we are going to go about business. We will find areas across the board in the public sector that are not specifically critical to front-line services but that can deliver on the government's outcome. That needs to be given some time. It is pretty clear that the community can see through this, as evidenced by the editorial in *The West Australian* of 30 October after the Labor spokesman started to demand that the government release its details. It is headed "Labor must learn it's not enough to carp" and states —

One of the lessons WA Labor must learn is that it has to show it can be an effective Opposition before it can convince people it deserves to govern again.

It's not enough to level criticism or accusations at the Government.

Labor's performance on the proposed 3 per cent spending cuts across the public service has been substandard: plenty of criticism but a glaring lack of specifics on what it planned to do.

Shadow Treasurer Ben Wyatt was happy to denounce the Government's moves but came up with nothing about which departments should face further cuts or be protected.

He either didn't know or wouldn't say, and that's nowhere near good enough.

This is a pretty general analysis and reflection of the community's view of where the opposition is coming from. This motion to establish a select committee is —

Hon Kim Chance: Part of the answer.

Hon BARRY HOUSE: We will provide the answer—then the opposition can analyse it. That is how it works. The government will provide the answer when the details are finalised. They are not finalised yet. How can a government table something when it is not finalised? Opposition members have been close enough to government to know that. How can the government table exact expenditure details when they are not even finalised and the analysis is still happening in every public sector organisation across the state? Let us not deny that new governments have a role and an obligation to review expenditure. We have that role and we are undertaking that review. That is par for the course after a change of government. Even if the Labor government had been returned after the last election, it would have been doing the same thing. We would have expected it to do the same thing from opposition. I assure members that we would have analysed next year's May budget very critically. The process demands the right time and place to do these things.

The other point I want to make relates to the financial climate at the time the government changed.

Debate interrupted, pursuant to standing orders.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY

Motion

Resumed from 12 November.

HON LJILJANNA RAVLICH (East Metropolitan) [12.04 pm]: I rise to support the motion, to thank Hon Helen Morton and also to take the opportunity to thank and congratulate His Excellency Dr Ken Michael, AC, the Governor of Western Australia, for his speech on the occasion of the opening of the thirty-eighth Parliament. I would also like to thank and compliment the Governor for the outstanding role that he performs as Governor. I will miss meeting with the Governor during the Executive Council meetings. Sometimes Hon Kim Chance would accompany me to those meetings and sometimes I would go with Hon Jon Ford. The Governor was always a delight to deal with, not only in the formal sense but also in the less formal and social sense. I thank him and Mrs Michael for their hospitality and the way they go about representing the people of this great state.

I welcome our two new members in Hon Carolyn Burton and Hon Shelley Eaton to this place. Albeit that we will be sitting for only a short period this year, unfortunately, I am confident that they will make a significant contribution on behalf of the people who have elected them to represent them in this place. I know both individuals; they are not shy and retiring, and I am sure that they will make a significant contribution.

I wish the government well. I am a very fair-minded person. We went to a poll. The result of that poll was that we now have a minority Liberal government. At the end of the day, we just accept the results and get on with business, and that is exactly what we will do. There are already some very worrying signs from the government.

There are worrying signs that key promises are in the process of being broken, and there are signs of tension around the place. After speaking to a range of people, there is a sense of disappointment. I suppose we would expect these worrying signs when something is cobbled together with haste and uncertainty, given the set of circumstances following the election.

There is already a view in the community that this government is tricky, it is not transparent and it is not prepared to be accountable for its actions. Whilst government members talk the talk, they do not walk the walk. The Premier made so much of the fact that he was different and he had this 100-day plan for his first days of government. He waved it around on television, put it into the papers and so forth. I think we are at week seven of the new government. A couple of weeks ago the Premier had to go to the people of this state and say, "Sorry, but I can't deliver." I do not know why he cannot deliver, because he seemed so confident a number of weeks earlier. All of a sudden, all that confidence is gone and he can no longer deliver. I do not know whether his ministers are not up to the task. I do not know whether his relationship with his ministers is such that he cannot direct them to do anything, so they are not pulling their weight. They all need to be pulling together as a team in the same direction if the government is going to get the results it wants. Clearly, the Premier has not been able to deliver. He was only three or so weeks into government when he had to go to the people and say, "Sorry; cannot do." He made many apologies. Therefore, we have a Liberal plan for the first 100 days of government that is not worth the paper it is written on.

What are some of the things the government will not deliver? There are so many things that will not be delivered. In the area of accountability, it certainly will not be introducing legislation for fixed parliamentary terms. It will not be able to do that in a hurry, because we are not hearing anything about it at the moment. We are also not hearing anything about restoring the independence of the Information Commissioner, to make information available to the public. I will come back to that, because I have put in some freedom of information requests, as members might be aware, and I have received some responses. For all the crowing words about being a more open and accountable government, there are warning signs—danger, danger, this will not happen. All this talk about openness and accountability is just that—talk. There is no action in this area.

The government has also said that it will legislate for a proper register to monitor the activities of political lobbyists. A few weeks ago I looked at the website of the Department of the Premier and Cabinet to check out the Register of Lobbyists. There were about 70 names on the register at that time. A couple of days ago I checked it out again and there are now closer to 90. Twenty new ones have been added during the first seven weeks of government. There has been no monitoring. We do not know who they are, where they are, what they do, to whom they are connected and who works for them. The government certainly will not be delivering on this promise. I wonder when we are to see some progress in this area.

Hon Robyn McSweeney interjected.

Hon LJILJANNA RAVLICH: I will get to the minister later—do not worry; she should just sit there.

The government said that it would appoint a permanent Director General of Health, but would not pay the new director general \$600 000. He would be paid \$50 less than the \$600 000.

Hon George Cash: Fifty dollars?

Hon LJILJANNA RAVLICH: Yes; that is it—about \$50 less. There was absolutely nothing in it. I would love to see the conditions of that contract. That would be a very interesting exercise.

Hon George Cash: Why don't you take a freedom of information action or ask a question?

Hon LJILJANNA RAVLICH: Why do I not? What a wonderful suggestion! It is a shame that Hon George Cash will be leaving us next year, because he will not be able to guide me in my career.

Hon George Cash: I have tried hard from the day you started.

Hon LJILJANNA RAVLICH: I know, the member did his best!

Hon George Cash: I said I tried hard; I didn't say I succeeded.

Hon LJILJANNA RAVLICH: That is true.

I do not want to go through all of this document, because about 75 per cent of everything the government said it would deliver during its first 100 days in office will not be delivered within that time. It is all well and good for the government to give the people false hope and false promises, as it has done, when there is no intention whatsoever to deliver. I wonder whether there was any intention to deliver in the first place. This is just a wish list. I am interested to know whether planning has commenced to deliver the 3 000 additional car parking spaces at the railway stations along the southern and northern rail lines. I have not heard anything about that, and I do not know whether anybody else has heard anything about it. The Minister for Education is very silent about what she intends to do about outcomes-based education, given that the Liberal Party went on and on about outcomes when it was in opposition. I copped it day in, day out. When it first came up, I thought I was getting the Order of

the British Empire! I had not realised that it would just be a giant noose around my neck. It does not really matter. It is entirely up to the government what it does about policy, but I would have thought that if it was so anti-something while in opposition, why on earth would it not take the opportunity when elected to government to change it to exactly what it wanted? We asked the new Minister for Education, Dr Constable, with the alphabet behind her name that she insisted on having—she is a great mate of Hon Peter Collier—what she would do about the curriculum, and she replied that she was the minister and did not have a role in setting the curriculum. I find that absolutely unbelievable.

His Excellency Dr Ken Michael spoke in his speech to Parliament about the Liberal-National government, recognising that it is a minority government. In doing so, the Governor may have been alluding to the fact that this is an exceptional circumstance in the way that governments have historically operated in the state. It is no doubt that having a minority government will make it much harder and problematic for the way that government runs. From what we have seen so far, we know that there will be many things that simply will not be delivered.

On the question of accountability, I am amazed that the Premier has been engulfed in a range of conflict of interest issues. There is no doubt that Hon Donna Faragher had a conflict of interest. Her husband is in the public relations area at Woodside. The Premier's own daughter-in-law heads the public relations unit at Woodside. Hon Donna Faragher's husband has been moved to work offshore, but he is still an employee of Woodside. As I understand it, employees of mining companies such as Woodside often hold shares as part of their contract of employment. There is no reference to that in Hon Donna Faragher's annual return. I could be jumping at shadows here; it could be no big issue.

Hon Robyn McSweeney: You are drawing a long bow.

Hon LJILJANNA RAVLICH: I should keep jumping—if I keep moving, I am less likely to be a target, so I will just keep jumping! I am just making the point that this is an interesting issue. Over the past week we have had the question about Hon Norman Moore being a trustee of the N.F and L. Moore superannuation fund, which holds BHP Billiton and Woodside Petroleum shares. We have spent some time discussing that, but it still really is not clear to me whether Hon Norman Moore advised the Premier before being appointed as Minister for Mines and Petroleum that he owned the shares through this fund. If he did, did the Premier then say that that was all right and appoint him as Minister for Mines and Petroleum, or did Hon Norman Moore say nothing to the Premier about the shares and the Premier say that, as Hon Norman Moore had been the mines minister before and had done such a good job, he should hold the portfolio again? It is certainly not clear to me which of those two circumstances is correct. It is fair to ask the Premier whether he was aware that the N.F and L. Moore superannuation fund held BHP Billiton and Woodside shares, and whether Hon Norman Moore advised him of that. If so, what was the nature of discussions that occurred between Hon Norman Moore and the Premier prior to the Premier allocating his best friend the mining and petroleum portfolio? Quite a number of issues surround this issue, which lead me to the conclusion that there is something not quite right about this matter.

Another point is that Hon Norman Moore is a former minister for mines and energy. He crows on all the time about how he was a minister for eight years, what a wonderful minister he was and all the rest of it. It seems to me, however, that as a former minister he would have known what is expected of a minister in a conflict of interest question. It beggars belief that somebody with Hon Norman Moore's experience would seek advice from the State Solicitor on a "possible" conflict of interest. I cannot get my head around that—a "possible" conflict of interest. What happened the last time Hon Norman Moore was minister for mines? I do not know. I expect it was a long time ago, as he has been in this place a long time. I do not know whether the Parliament had the same standards of accountability back then that it has now. However, given his years of experience as a minister of the Crown, it is an interesting question that he sought the advice of the State Solicitor on a "possible" conflict of interest. The State Solicitor might have said, "Well, I don't think there's a possible conflict of interest here, Hon Norman Moore; there is a conflict of interest here, and, yes, you do have a problem." An interesting question is: how many other ministers had to seek that advice from the State Solicitor and did they seek that advice verbally or in writing?

Nothing surprises members of this place who have been here a while. I have been a member this place for eleven and a half years. However, I was surprised yesterday—on the questions of conflict of interest, shares, who works for whom, who is related to whom and what sorts of interest they might have—at Hon Donna Faragher's response to a very reasonable question. Hon Donna Faragher was asked a straightforward question by Hon Adele Farina, a wonderful member of this place. It was a very intelligent, well thought-out, precise and to-the-point question. The response for somebody operating at a ministerial level such as Hon Donna Faragher should have been a piece of cake and should have flowed off her tongue. Instead, the body language said it all: folded arms, stiff from head to toe, totally offended and insulted.

Hon Donna Faragher: Quite correctly so.

Hon LJILJANNA RAVLICH: I am sorry but Hon Donna Faragher is a minister of the Crown. She might think the question was offensive but the people of this state would argue that it was a reasonable question for her to

answer. I will repeat the question because I think it is worth repeating. For goodness sake, this is just amazing! Hon Adele Farina asked —

My question relates to the minister's conflict of interest arising from her husband's employment with Woodside ... BHP Billiton, Chevron, Shell, ConocoPhillips and BP?

That is fine; they are all partners of Woodside. It continues —

How does the minister propose to address the public perception that these major companies now have an insider working at the highest level of government?

There is no doubt that the companies' activities are inter-related. Am I right, Hon Jon Ford? A decision made by Woodside in its boardroom might have an impact on BHP; likewise a relationship with Chevron might have an impact on BHP; BHP's decision in relation to something else might impact on Shell; and so on and so forth. It was a very reasonable question. Hon Donna Faragher's response was —

My husband works for Woodside.

Hon Donna Faragher: Well, that's right.

Hon Barbara Scott: She never said it like that!

Hon LJILJANNA RAVLICH: I will get to Hon Barbara Scott later.

Hon Barbara Scott: That's okay; I expect that.

Hon George Cash: Are you going to work your way around in a particular order?

Hon LJILJANNA RAVLICH: No.

Hon George Cash: Because if you are, ultimately it'll be my turn.

Hon LJILJANNA RAVLICH: That is fine. I am just making my speech in the Address-in-Reply motion and Hon George Cash can make his. How he makes his, when he does and what he wants to say is entirely up to him. I am just going back to yesterday because it was an interesting day and I have never seen this sort of behaviour in this place before.

Several members interjected.

Hon LJILJANNA RAVLICH: I truly have not.

Several members interjected.

Hon LJILJANNA RAVLICH: Hon Donna Faragher's response was —

My husband works for Woodside. He does not work for Woodside's partners ...

That was not an answer to the question asked. Hon Adele Farina did not say, "Does your husband work for any of the Woodside partners?" I did not hear that. Did any member hear that? No. No-one heard that because it was not asked. Why did Hon Donna Faragher answer a question that was not asked? Her response continued —

... and he does not work for Woodside customers.

Hon Adele Farina did not ask that either. Hon Donna Faragher therefore did not answer the question. The response continued —

If it is the member's implication that I would be biased either for or against an individual or a company, as has now been suggested, I not only find that a question on my integrity and my husband's integrity; I actually find that offensive.

Many questions are asked in this place that one might find offensive; it does not mean that a minister should not answer the question. If that is Hon Donna Faragher's attitude, she should not be a minister. It is as simple as that, because she is the person accountable for answering the question in this place. If she does not want to answer the question, she should speak to the Premier. She should say to him, "I find it all a bit too hard. It's all a bit too probing. It's all a bit too personal", and ask the Premier to take her to the Governor to be decommissioned, just like an old ship, because, quite frankly, she is not going to cut the mustard. If she is going to get sensitive and worked up about and misunderstand what is asked of her in a simple question —

Several members interjected.

Hon LJILJANNA RAVLICH: I answered every question that was put to me; Hon Bruce Donaldson knows that. As bad as it got, I never stormed out of this place and said, "I actually find that offensive." I am sorry, but I did not.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT (Hon Sheila Mills): Members, settle down!

Hon LJILJANNA RAVLICH: Clearly, questions still need to be answered.

Hon Bruce Donaldson: Will we get those today?

Hon LJILJANNA RAVLICH: I do not know when the government will get them, but there are plenty there, I can assure Hon Bruce Donaldson. I do not necessarily want this to be an attack on the individual.

Hon Barbara Scott: Come off it! What do you reckon it is?

Hon LJILJANNA RAVLICH: There is no point getting all stony faced about it, as the issues I have raised are legitimate issues. This is a place of the people. The people have the right to have their questions answered. Hon Adele Farina, one of the experienced members of this place, has every right to ask the question she asked. If Hon Donna Faragher does not want to answer questions, she should not be a minister.

Hon Robyn McSweeney: She has the right to answer questions how she wants to.

Hon LJILJANNA RAVLICH: Yes, but members can only get away with this sort of stuff for so long. Is the member saying that Hon Donna Faragher should say that she finds every question asked of her to be offensive?

Hon Robyn McSweeney: She probably learnt it from you!

Hon LJILJANNA RAVLICH: No; sorry, but I did not do that.

Hon Donna Faragher: To suggest that I am an insider is offensive—it is offensive!

Hon LJILJANNA RAVLICH: No-one suggested the member was an insider —

Hon Donna Faragher: That is exactly what that question was.

Hon LJILJANNA RAVLICH: They are asking the member —

Hon Jon Ford: They are asking you about a perception.

Hon Donna Faragher: That is exactly what that question was.

Hon Jon Ford: They are asking you about a perception.

Hon LJILJANNA RAVLICH: They are asking the member about a possible perception, and they were also asking the member how she was going to deal with that. That is really a question about process. It is about how the member and the officers that work for her within her ministerial office will deal with this whole question. The member has to be careful—less defensive—because that was really not the question. She should give herself a bit of time to process what is being asked of her, and if she does, I think she will do much better in the longer term.

Several members interjected.

Hon LJILJANNA RAVLICH: I have a lot to get through, and I am only up to about the second bit, because there are so many areas I have found to be in total disarray—total disarray. This is only week seven, so can members imagine what things will be like seven months into this government?

Moving on, but on the same theme of accountability, I will make some points about the Freedom of Information Act 1992. One of the promises made by this government in its accountability policy and its 100-day plan—actually, it was everywhere—was about the FOI act. When the government was in opposition, it seemed to have a view that the FOI act was not working very well, for whatever reason. It must have held a view that it was not getting what it wanted to get from departments through the FOI process. As a part of its policy on government accountability of public sector management, this government stated that it would —

Review the manner in which Departments are administering the FOI process to ensure that Government is accountable and open in accordance with the spirit of the FOI Act.

That statement does not mention anything about ministers' offices, which is a problem in itself. It is one thing for the departments to have their processes reviewed, but it is important that we also look at how ministers' offices deal with the FOI process.

Hon Barbara Scott: Do you know which government was responsible for introducing that?

Hon LJILJANNA RAVLICH: Oh dear! I actually submitted a number of freedom of information requests —

Hon Peter Collier: I put in a few.

Hon LJILJANNA RAVLICH: I am still waiting for Hon Peter Collier's. He can tell his mates I am waiting for all of them!

Hon Peter Collier: Yes, I'll tell you what you'll get back!

Hon LJILJANNA RAVLICH: I got one freedom of information reply about some documentation that has occurred between ministers since 23 September. It was a reasonable request. I paid my money, sent it off, and in this case it was Hon Brendon Grylls, and that is fine. The interesting thing is that, apparently, in seven weeks he

has only written two letters to his colleagues, and received one from the Premier. Now, that does not seem like much correspondence to me. It does not seem like a government that is full-on active.

He sent a letter dated 25 September to the Premier concerning a contract for service. That contract for service is interesting, because we all know about the royalties for regions plan and promises. I will spend a bit of time going through some of those promises. However, this particular letter is about a contract for service for a Mr Derek Carew-Hopkins, and states —

Further to my discussion with Mr Mal Wauchope, Director General of the Department of the Premier and Cabinet, I write to support the appointment of Mr Derek Carew-Hopkins on a ministerial contract for service.

His role will be to assist my office in the establishment of the ... Department for Regional Development ...

We are getting a new department that will be the delivery vehicle for the royalties for regions fund.

Hon Adele Farina: That will make a three per cent saving!

Hon LJILJANNA RAVLICH: That starts to bite into the three per cent saving, so I agree with Hon Adele Farina. Wait until we get to the splitting up of the Department of Industry and Resources! On the one hand there will be a three per cent saving across all government agencies, but on the other hand we are getting a brand-new, you-beaut department for regional development to be the delivery arm for royalties for regions. A number of questions must be asked about this: what is the budget for this; how many full-time equivalents will it have; what will the chief executive officer be paid; will it have to comply with the government's new logo?

Hon Adele Farina: Will it require a larger than three per cent cut?

Hon LJILJANNA RAVLICH: Will it get a cut in the first place? Does the cut apply to this new agency? It is very, very interesting, because it is the first time I heard that there would be a brand-new department. We knew that royalties for regions was part of the agenda and a priority of this government, but I certainly had no idea it was going to create a new government department to manage it.

Hon Barbara Scott: You'd think they would sit down and tell you. How many new departments did you create in government?

Hon LJILJANNA RAVLICH: Hon Barbara Scott will get her chance to respond in reply to the Governor.

There are some interesting issues that build a case for why we need this committee inquiry, because, quite frankly, I do not know. Was Hon Bruce Donaldson aware of this new department for regional development?

Hon Bruce Donaldson: Absolutely. You wrecked the previous Department of Local Government and Regional Development anyway, so we had to revamp it and get it up and running again. That is why.

Hon LJILJANNA RAVLICH: Does Hon Bruce Donaldson know where this new department will be located, and how many people will be in it?

Hon Bruce Donaldson: I don't know how many staff there will be. That's up to the —

Hon LJILJANNA RAVLICH: Will it be a big department?

Hon Bruce Donaldson: It won't be too big, but it will be there to do its job.

Several members interjected.

Hon LJILJANNA RAVLICH: Will it have 50 people in it, or —

Hon Bruce Donaldson: No, we're not talking about a Labor government, we're talking about a Liberal government here!

Hon LJILJANNA RAVLICH: We are getting a you-beaut, big, new department at a time when the government is asking for a three per cent cost saving across the whole of the public sector. That is very, very interesting. I do not want to spend all my time on this; I just flag it because I think it is quite interesting.

I will quickly move to the issue of mining approvals and the need for them to be more efficient, which sort of relates to the issue because it is also a public sector accountability issue. The Auditor General's report refers to the three-way DOIR split. There are now three ministers involved in what is now DOIR and the Department of Consumer and Employment Protection. Firstly there is Hon Norman Moore, who is the Minister for Mines and Petroleum; secondly, the Premier, who is also the Minister for State Development; and, thirdly, Hon Troy Buswell, who is the Minister for Commerce and also the Treasurer. That is interesting. I asked myself why people do what they do, and, after looking at this and the players, I think I know why it is happening. The Auditor General's report of October 2008 did not talk about the splitting up of those agencies—it did not even mention it. However, Mr Moore and the Premier clearly do not have a cosy relationship. I think it is fair to say

that in some ways—Hon Bruce Donaldson might want to throw some light on this one—one could say it probably was not even warm. Could we describe it as cold and frosty? We possibly could describe it as a cold and frosty relationship. Clearly they will not want to be working very closely together. We could hardly describe the relationship between the Premier and Mr Buswell as a lovely, caring, sharing sort of relationship. I do not think so. I do not think that the honourable Premier was very impressed with Hon Troy Buswell when he was up to his antics, shall we say? They probably have a couch for Mr Buswell in cabinet, not a chair. That is not a very good relationship either.

Mr Buswell and Mr Moore might tolerate one another more so than any of the other configurations. It would have to be said that the personal relationships of people involved in this portfolio are probably key drivers of the government's reform. That is so bad and so sad. I do not want to go through the whole press release I have in front of me because it would take a long time; however, it says that the Liberal Party must improve the efficiency of this and that, and it made a promise that the Liberal Party would establish a specialised department for the mining and petroleum industry. The Liberal Party said also that it would restructure this massive organisation. It states at the bottom of the press release —

While the changes will result in the cost of an additional Director General, —

That is all —

the small impost will be significantly offset by the extra revenue to the State generated by a more efficient approvals process.

I do not know how that conclusion can be drawn. Has a cost-benefit analysis been done? This would be the first time in the history of restructuring agencies when it will cost nothing apart from the full-time equivalents—never mind the loss of production while everything is being restructured. It will not be restructured until halfway through the government's term. Frankly, the loss of that efficiency and productivity will be phenomenal. It behoves this place, and certainly me while I am a member, to ask questions about what cost-benefit modelling has been done on this policy decision. Frankly, I think the truth is that none has been done. If the answer to that question is none—I am confident it is none—one can only draw the conclusion that the Department of Industry and Resources restructure is an absolute sham. When the relationship between these three key players is so bad—they are not two-bit players; they are key players—then this government will be a very shaky government. The people of this state are in for a very rough ride. It is fair for them to expect the government to explain why it has chosen to ignore the advice of the Auditor General. It is important also for the government to explain what is the cost-benefit analysis of this decision, and what will be the true cost to taxpayers of the break-up of DOIR. It is important also for the government to put on the public record whether the true reason for the restructure is the poor personal relationship between those players, which is well documented, and whether this restructure is not code for senior ministers not being able to work together, along with the Premier.

It will be interesting to find out whether Hon Norman Moore, the Premier and the Treasurer have met to discuss splitting DOIR. I suspect that they do not get into the same room together, with the exception of the cabinet meeting, and I would say that it would be pretty frosty in there. We can understand people having a frosty relationship; we have all had a frosty relationship with somebody at some time, but members must get over it. If they do not, they will make themselves very ill. Members must get over a frosty relationship and live and let live. They must bury the hatchet. I love Hon Norman Moore! I walk in here and I think, "I still love coming to work." I think of all the happy people I will meet throughout the day, and he springs to mind—smack bang, front and centre! I think to myself, "I can't wait to see Hon Norman Moore today." I love being here for that reason alone. There are other reasons, but he is one of those reasons.

Speaking about personal relationships, I want to tackle the relationship between the people sharing the education and training portfolio. Hon Peter Collier is smiling already. There are some very interesting players, including Mrs Alphabet, who is Dr Constable, and Hon Peter Collier. This news is all over town, but I understand that in week seven of the new government those two ministers are squabbling over who is doing what.

Hon Peter Collier: We do not. Rubbish!

Hon LJILJANNA RAVLICH: That is an admission that there is definitely something wrong. Can members believe that? "We do not", he said. Oh, my goodness; I cannot believe it. There is a real issue. The people in the training sector are very concerned because they do not know who they are working for. They would have reason to be concerned if they did not know who they were working for. We have three players in this; there were three players in the last portfolio area and there are a few players over there. That is how the whole thing is configured. No-one knows who is talking to whom, no-one knows what is going on and everyone is prickly about this, that and the other. They cannot bury the hatchet and be happy like I am in respect of all the things that have been done to me over time. They must learn and move on. People in the training sector are very concerned.

Hon Peter Collier: You're talking to the wrong people.

Hon LJILJANNA RAVLICH: No, no, no. I will now refer to the issue of what makes up the education part of the portfolio. As members know, the committed policy of the previous government was to integrate the areas of

education and training. We saw an enormous amount of merit in doing that and we saw areas of growth in the vocational education and training in schools, school-based traineeships and Aboriginal school-based traineeship programs. As the Minister for Education, Hon Dr Constable would rightly expect to have the education portfolio, and, as the responsible Minister for Training, Hon Peter Collier would rightly expect to have the training portfolio. That makes sense, does it not? There is the added complication about regional education and training and who is responsible for that. However, Hon Peter Collier says that he is responsible for training and for the 26 TAFE colleges, and that, beyond that, everything else such as vocational education and training, Aboriginal traineeships and school-based apprenticeships is the province of the schools. Hon Liz Constable says, "I'm the education minister and I want the whole of education because I am Mrs Alphabet." This issue has still not been sorted out, and we are in week seven.

To complicate matters, we have Mr Redman—the "Mr Region for Education and Training" —

Hon Peter Collier: No, not training; he is just education. He is the minister assisting on country education.

Hon LJILJANNA RAVLICH: Just education. Does Hon Liz Constable get on well with Mr Redman?

Hon Peter Collier: We all get on well.

Hon LJILJANNA RAVLICH: How many times has Hon Peter Collier met with the minister?

Hon Peter Collier: I talk to the education minister regularly.

Hon LJILJANNA RAVLICH: How many times has Hon Peter Collier met with her?

Hon Peter Collier: What do you mean by "met with her"?

Hon LJILJANNA RAVLICH: How many times has Hon Peter Collier met with her personally, either in her office or in his office?

Hon Peter Collier: We talk very regularly.

Hon LJILJANNA RAVLICH: No; that was not the question.

Hon Peter Collier: We talk very, very regularly.

Hon LJILJANNA RAVLICH: No. It is much easier to pick up the phone, especially when we are talking to people we are not particularly fond of, and bellow it out down the other end —

Hon Peter Collier: Where do you get this from? You are so wrong on this!

Hon LJILJANNA RAVLICH: —and say to the minister, "It's me, Hon Liz Constable, it's me, and I want my share of the portfolio—I want my share of VET in schools, school-based traineeships and Aboriginal school-based traineeships." The minister says, of course, "Well, I am truly sorry, Peter, because I have an agreement with the Premier." She continues, "I am sorry, Peter but the Premier has said that I can have whatever I want." The Premier had told her that while they had been sitting together in the corner having dinner on their own for all those years!

Hon Peter Collier: You are so wrong!

Hon LJILJANNA RAVLICH: The member should not tell me I have got it wrong! I know that I have got it right.

Hon Peter Collier: You are so wrong!

Hon LJILJANNA RAVLICH: I know that I have got it right. If I did not have it right, the minister would have granted my FOI request and given me access to all the documents on this matter.

Hon Peter Collier: What have you put a request in for?

Hon LJILJANNA RAVLICH: The minister would have given me the documents quick smart if she had nothing to hide.

Hon Peter Collier: You know what, there is nothing to give! I can save you the time; there is nothing to give. I will expedite the matter for you.

Hon LJILJANNA RAVLICH: The member knows there is a problem and he would dearly love it to be sorted out. As I understand it, it is still not sorted out. We are still in troubled waters and there is some further work that needs to be done.

Hon George Cash: Have you been grazing in the mushroom patch?

Hon LJILJANNA RAVLICH: I am simply relishing the freedom of opposition, to be honest.

Hon Bruce Donaldson: Whatever you are on, I would like to get hold of some!

Hon LJILJANNA RAVLICH: I have only a few minutes left, but I want to turn to the royalties for region scheme.

Hon George Cash: No; we are paying for the lot! We want a good show!

Hon LJILJANNA RAVLICH: I have spent a bit of time looking at this. The first point that I want to make is about the government's commitment to the royalties for regions initiative. There is no doubt in my mind that the commitment required was clearly outlined in black and white in the National Party policy documents. There certainly could not have been any misinterpretation of that policy initiative. All this conjecture by the Premier, over a number of weeks, about what is in the policy and what is out, and what is over and above what has already been committed, and whether it includes existing projects, has been unnecessary. The commitment was over and above any new money—it was clear cut, \$675 million; bang, that is it! No one but no one, apart from someone who wanted to make mischief, cause fuss and confusion and stir the pot—as did the Premier—could have interpreted this policy in any other way. That was a devious act, and it was an intentional act, because anyone who had read that National Party policy would not have made that mistake. I think that what the National Party did was fair. It went out and sold its vision. I think that if we start to add up the money—I will try to do the costings in due course—a lot of this vision will be way over \$675 million. I have no doubt whatsoever about that! At the very best, it will be a hard ask to deliver on the royalties for region scheme because of a whole range of costs, a couple of which I will now highlight.

I think the National Party's housing policy will be one of the biggest challenges. That policy proposes to reduce rental costs for teachers, nurses and police officers to encourage more essential workers to live and work in the regions. That is probably the biggest cost item in this initiative. According to the National's policy, housing costs for essential workers will be phased out, commensurate with their time employed in regional areas. This will include discounting the rental charge by 50 per cent after the first year of service, and by 25 per cent after the second year of service. In the fourth year of service, teachers, nurses and police officers working in regional and rural areas will not be charged any rent for their government-supplied houses. In terms of the costings, I think that will in itself be a huge challenge to implement. If we looked at the number of people across those three service areas who are accommodated or need to be accommodated in regional areas—it would not be hard to do; I simply have not had the time to look at the figures—and did the mathematics, we would know what it will cost. The rental charges for properties in places like Karratha and Port Hedland are phenomenally high, in some cases \$1 000 a week, or \$4 000 a month.

Hon Wendy Duncan interjected.

Hon LJILJANNA RAVLICH: That is all fine, but what I am saying is that the National Party has a housing policy that has not been costed. There is an allocation of \$675 million for the regions. Quite clearly, this housing initiative is a very big promise that will have serious implications for the cost impost.

The other matter that I wish to refer to is the one-off \$25 000 grant for any person or couple who builds or buys a house in a regional bush change town. Ten thousand people will be able to access that money, provided they buy or build in a town that has a population of—I am sorry. It does not refer to 10 000 people. There is no limit on the number of people who can receive this \$25 000 one-off grant. It is available to any person who buys or builds in a town that is defined as a bush change town and that has a population of less than 10 000. Many places in this state have a population of less than 10 000, so a lot of money will be made available through this grant. I guess that is what the government is after for its populate-or-perish initiatives for regional and rural Western Australia. I do not find the policy offensive, but I do find it hard to add up the true cost of delivering these grants. I imagine that unknown cost is probably why the Liberal Party members are very nervous. They are nervous because, firstly, they did not think of it, and, secondly, collectively they will have to come up with the money, and it seems as though a lot more money is being promised than there is fat to trim.

I know that I am running out of town —

Hon Peter Collier: We wish!

Hon LJILJANNA RAVLICH: Running out of time! Perhaps I will want to run out of town after this speech!

Hon George Cash: No; we want more!

Hon LJILJANNA RAVLICH: The member wants more. Oh well, I guess it does liven the place up a little bit!

Hon Matt Benson-Lidholm: People pay good money for this!

Hon LJILJANNA RAVLICH: Yes, they do!

Many more questions need to be answered about a range of other issues, including the Red Bull Air Race, the change of government logo, and the contracting of Peter Conran through Gem Tendering, not to mention questions about the TAFE enterprise bargaining agreement. I am really looking forward to the challenge of being in opposition. I started in opposition. I enjoyed opposition! I enjoyed being in opposition the first time around, and I have a funny feeling that I am going to enjoy opposition even more the second time around!

Hon Bruce Donaldson: For another eight years?

Hon LJILJANNA RAVLICH: This is really the name of the game in this place: that is, the Liberal-National parties have been successful in the election. Under the Westminster system of government, it is now our job to make sure the new government is held to account for its actions.

Sitting suspended from 1.00 to 2.00 pm

Hon LJILJANNA RAVLICH: I was drawing my remarks to a conclusion. By way of conclusion, I wish to put on the public record that clearly this government will need to improve itself in a range of ways so that it can meet the expectations of the people of this great state. One of the first things that need to happen is that there needs to be a cooperative approach to the running of this state. Personally, I find it hard to believe we can work as one government without sorting out the relationships of the players involved.

From the number of comments that I have made and the examples that I have given, it is quite clear that this minority government is in for a hard time unless it does sort out some of those fundamental issues that require sorting out in order to work effectively in the interests of Western Australia. The government has a big job ahead of it because government is hard work in any event, but it must be incredibly hard when the government is cobbled together by a range of factional deals, by competing personal interests, by people who do not get on with each other —

Hon Norman Moore: Hon Ljiljanna Ravlich would know what sort of problems we have; she had the same problems herself!

Hon LJILJANNA RAVLICH: Hon Norman Moore will have his opportunity to respond. No-one has got the problems that he has got and that has been demonstrated by his lack of openness —

Hon Norman Moore: Whose side was the member on? Was it her decision to have the election early?

Hon LJILJANNA RAVLICH: — in dealing with the Premier prior to him giving the minister the portfolio for mining and petroleum. Hon Norman Moore advised him after the event and he knows it! He did not advise him that he was tabling that petition and the honourable member knew that as a minister he had a different obligation —

Hon Norman Moore interjected.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT (Hon Matt Benson-Lidholm): Order, members!

Hon LJILJANNA RAVLICH: The minister is more than aware that the tabling of that petition should have been treated by him differently as a minister than as somebody who might have been tabling it as a backbencher.

Hon Norman Moore: It was tabled as a member of this house.

Hon LJILJANNA RAVLICH: It might have been tabled, but the minister should have done the right thing and should have at least advised the Premier of this state that this is what he was going to do. Hon Norman Moore does not respect the Premier; that is his problem. He does not respect him, he does not like him and he will not work with him! Quite frankly, we are in for a torrid time and the minister knows it.

Hon Norman Moore interjected.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Order, members!

Hon Norman Moore: I have read the petition, you silly woman!

Hon LJILJANNA RAVLICH: I do not think that is called for.

Hon Norman Moore: I will say whatever I like. I am not going to sit here and listen to this rubbish from her.

Hon LJILJANNA RAVLICH: Mr Deputy President, I draw my remarks to a conclusion and I thank members for giving me the time.

Debate adjourned, on motion by **Hon Bruce Donaldson**.

MINERAL SANDS (ENEABBA) AGREEMENT AMENDMENT BILL 2008

Second Reading

Resumed from 12 November.

HON JON FORD (Mining and Pastoral) [2.05 pm]: The opposition supports the Mineral Sands (Eneabba) Agreement Amendment Bill 2008. It is a good bill, for a number of reasons, and it is a technical bill. It will allow the transport of mineral concentrate from South Australia to be processed in Geraldton and as such will allow that business to grow and continue to supply employment opportunities and local investment in the Geraldton area as the Eneabba quarry or mine site draws to the end of its time. It will also give the relevant departments time to work out a way of closing down the agreement act over the next five years or so and all the transitional requirements as it comes to operate as a normal business in Western Australia.