

**Extract from Hansard**

[ASSEMBLY — Tuesday, 20 September 2016]

p6283b-6335a

Mr Chris Tallentire; Mr Fran Logan; Mr Mark McGowan; Mr Rob Johnson; Mrs Michelle Roberts; Mr Peter Watson; Mr David Templeman; Mr Mick Murray; Ms Janine Freeman; Ms Margaret Quirk; Mr Bill Johnston; Mr John Quigley; Dr Mike Nahan

---

**LOAN BILL 2016**

*Second Reading*

Resumed from 15 September.

**MR C.J. TALLENTIRE (Gosnells)** [5.40 pm]: I rise to speak to the Loan Bill 2016. I begin by noting that this is the fourth such loan bill in seven years; in other words, the management of the state's finances by this Barnett Liberal–National government has been such that on four occasions that loan has had to essentially be topped up. The amounts each time have been enormous sums of money. I understand this time we are looking at a loan bill worth \$1.7 billion. That reflects poor management of the state's finances. This is something we all have to communicate back to our electorates—the situation when it comes to the Barnett government's mismanagement of the state's finances. People understand that the state is in serious strife, with the debt level getting to \$40 billion and the budget on an annual deficit. When I talk to my constituents about the Loan Bill and tell them that Parliament will be spending the best part of a week discussing our loan, they find it extraordinary and difficult to comprehend. Of course, they also find it difficult to imagine the sum of money involved—\$1.7 billion. Personally, I find it very useful to talk to my constituents about the sorts of things they have concerns about—the day-to-day issues they want to raise—and then think about those in the context of this financial mismanagement. That is a real strength of our Westminster parliamentary system. We can be in here debating a bill worth \$1.7 billion and the next day or later in the week we can talk to our constituents about the issues that impact on their lives. I think it is a real attribute of the Westminster parliamentary system that we have that very important grounding; that is, we can talk about big budget issues and then go to the reality of people's day-to-day issues. I want to raise some of those issues in this place today in the course of this contribution to the Loan Bill debate.

I start with a very simple issue, and one that will resonate with many members. It is an example that comes from Cori Bradley, who I met at a street-corner meeting in Homestead Park in Gosnells recently. Cori's daughter goes to Seaforth Primary School, one of the primary schools in my electorate. Seaforth is a primary school that looks as if it deserves some extra investment. It desperately needs some additional investment as there is a growing school population. The impression we get when walking onto the school grounds is that there is a need for some additional maintenance money; there is the need for some refurbishment. That is not what the parents, carers and people connected with the school necessarily asked me about. They just want the very basics—the essentials we would imagine any child at a school would receive. That is the message here. I noted the comments that Cori made and I will read them, bearing in mind that this is what impacts on a young girl going to Seaforth Primary School. According to my notes, Cori said the following —

The books in the preprimary library are old books and they are falling apart. I think they are the same books that would have been there when I was at the school. These are the books the children are supposed to learn to read from. They should be quality, attractive books that children want to pick up and look at. Sure, the children like to look at the cows and the kangaroos in the field behind the school. We've got kangaroos, but not proper books. That's not right.

I think that point made by Cori just reflects that we are not funding our schools adequately, as children do not have nice, fresh, current, actual reading material that they can learn to read from. That is just not fair on those kids. It does not encourage them, bearing in mind that there are pockets in my electorate where literacy rates are not strong; they are behind the national average. The National Assessment Program — Literacy and Numeracy score for some schools is worrying. I know there is a whole host of issues we have to tackle to improve that situation, not least of which is doing things like encouraging families and parents to be active readers themselves so that when children get to school, they are eager to emulate what their peers and role models might be doing and they become enthusiastic readers themselves. It would seem like such a basic thing to make sure that a school like Seaforth Primary School is adequately resourced so that students there will be happy to read interesting material that is fresh, and not shabby old books that are falling apart and that make them feel like reading is something that belongs in the most dingy, ramshackle library. That is something we have to turn around.

Looking at this Loan Bill, we have to ask about the figure of \$1.7 billion. I understand that the need has come about because the public service has to be paid, but I look at some of the other items and issues that should be priorities for a government and one of the highest order items in my mind should be the refurbishment of schools in my electorate. Through freedom of information and other mechanisms, we unearthed some plans for the re-establishment of a decent learning environment at both Thornlie Senior High School and Southern River College. We have seen documents stating that an upgrade for Southern River College of \$9 million is needed. We have gleaned these figures from the education minister's own information. The same documents state that Thornlie Senior High School should have at least \$12 million put into it just to bring it up to some semblance of

**Extract from Hansard**

[ASSEMBLY — Tuesday, 20 September 2016]

p6283b-6335a

Mr Chris Tallentire; Mr Fran Logan; Mr Mark McGowan; Mr Rob Johnson; Mrs Michelle Roberts; Mr Peter Watson; Mr David Templeman; Mr Mick Murray; Ms Janine Freeman; Ms Margaret Quirk; Mr Bill Johnston; Mr John Quigley; Dr Mike Nahan

---

modernity so students do not complain about the unsanitary conditions of toilets or have to dodge through corridors or covered areas as they go from one building to the next during a rainy spell. Those sorts of situations are totally wrong. Students having to walk through large puddles as they go from one building to the next and getting themselves and their shoes wet so they are wet when they get to their class is not acceptable. It will not make for good learning if kids get soaked through to the skin as they go from one class to the next. They will not be in a good frame of mind for learning, and perhaps worse, they will catch a cold and then be off sick and unable to participate in lessons. And there we see it: they will fall behind just because the facilities are inadequate. The documents we received suggest that Southern River College is in line for a performing arts and media centre, an extension to the sports hall, a new netball court surface and a science lab—all essential things. The documents reveal that at Thornlie Senior High School there is to be a new dance and media studio, refurbishment of the commercial teaching kitchens and more than \$1 million worth of science laboratory upgrades. But we need to see the colour of the government's money. Where is it? We have been hearing about various promises. During the last election campaign the Liberal Party's education policy was to provide the best possible learning environments to cater for students' needs for education and social development, and there was also a commitment to pay for a refurbishment of any school that was built before 1980. That is certainly the case at Southern River College and Thornlie Senior High School, but we have not seen that revamping.

What is going on when promises are made at one election and nothing happens and we find that the government claims that it is investing in education? Along with other broken promises, we need only look at the transport area. Other members are far more expert than I when it comes to the needs of the Ellenbrook community and the Ellenbrook rail line, a broken promise; the Yanchep rail extension, a broken promise; the 30 per cent increase in bus kilometres, a broken promise; obviously the Metro Area Express light rail; the Ellenbrook bus rapid transit; railcar procurement; airport rail line by 2018, a delayed promise; overtaking lanes between Southern Cross and Kalgoorlie–Boulder; maintaining the tier 3 rail line, a broken promise; and the 100-day plan since 2008, a delayed promise. These are the sorts of day-to-day issues that people want to know about and find it mindboggling that the state government has to ask for more money just to keep the public service going. This \$1.7 billion Loan Bill indicates to people the serious mismanagement of the state's finances. Those day-to-day issues that test and infuriate people are the sorts of problems that people want to see remedied. A very pressing one—I recall raising this issue four years ago—is the illegal use of trail bikes in my electorate.

**Ms L.L. Baker** interjected.

**Mr C.J. TALLENTIRE:** I know it extends to other electorates.

It is a problem that the government has simply not addressed. When we meet with constituents at street corner meetings, it is an issue that is raised. I received a letter from Catherine and Peter Muckett, who also live in Homestead Road, Gosnells. They wrote to me saying —

We did mention the problem of offroad vehicles and the fact that they were causing a nuisance, causing a danger and causing damage to the park.

A local councillor mentioned that the shire knows where some of these children live. It continues —

... and presumably their bikes are housed there. It should not be too hard a problem to pick them up.

I can tell you that the problem is getting worse. Young children, sometimes three on a bike, no helmets, no shoes, unlicensed bikes, unlicensed drivers, probably unroad worthy bikes. The other day I counted bikes going past 16 times.

They have been known to drive right through the middle of people and their dogs on the park.

There is going to be a serious accident if somebody does not change the rules and apprehend these children, confiscate their bikes and bring their parents to account for allowing this dangerous behavior to occur. Are you aware that the fine, in the unlikely event they do get caught, is only \$50.00 ... and the bike cannot be confiscated, and guess what ... if they are underage ... no fine

They also ride up and down the road at night, no lights on imagine the outcry If someone reversing out of their driveway was to hit one of these bikes because it was not visible.

Surely we have a right to live in our homes without the roar of off road vehicles, we should have the freedom to walk safely with our dogs on the park, which is a designated off lead exercise area, families should feel safe to take their children to the park.

I think the Mucketts make an excellent point. They are calling out for help, and calling for government to put its resource—the best resources in the state—towards finding a way of solving this vexed problem. Draft trail bike

Mr Chris Tallentire; Mr Fran Logan; Mr Mark McGowan; Mr Rob Johnson; Mrs Michelle Roberts; Mr Peter Watson; Mr David Templeman; Mr Mick Murray; Ms Janine Freeman; Ms Margaret Quirk; Mr Bill Johnston; Mr John Quigley; Dr Mike Nahan

---

strategies have been discussed at public forums. There has been all sorts of talk about licensing trail bikes but nothing has been done. No progress has been made on this issue at all and people are left frustrated. I do not think this problem is unique to Labor-held electorates; I think it is across a range of electorates.

**Mr P. Abetz** interjected

**Mr C.J. TALLENTIRE:** I imagine members from right across the chamber have an interest in seeing some sort of action on this issue but to date we have seen nothing. Meanwhile we are putting the state further and further into debt. What do people see? They see mounting debt. They see us debating at length loan bills of \$1.7 billion and then they find the issues that are impacting on their day-to-day lives are not being tackled. That is very frustrating for people. This is the sort of thing that probably causes the tendency we are seeing in Australia and around the world for there to be disengagement with what has become termed as the political class. We all know that we are just humble members of Parliament doing our best to represent our electorates, but the public are frustrated when we do not deliver solutions to problems facing our society; when we do not deliver on problem-solving initiatives that the community puts forward; and when we do not honour commitments to things like state trail bike strategies. We are not trying things. Nobody is suggesting there is a silver bullet solution to this vexed problem of trail bikes going through parks in our communities but we should be seen to be trying to find a sensible solution. We do not even appear to be trying at the moment. That is one of the reasons we get this disenfranchisement with the political process—this frustration many people have about politics in Western Australia and, indeed, how it is played out across the western world. When governments are not attempting to solve these vexed problems, people become very frustrated.

I turn now to some other matters. I am particularly concerned about what I am seeing in the public service. When we look at our public service, we see that it is operating at what is often described as a skeleton service. It is a cut down service. I realise a political philosophy embraced by the Liberal Party is all about cutting the size of government.

[Member's time extended.]

**Mr C.J. TALLENTIRE:** The Liberal Party's philosophies are a little bit influenced by the Tea Party idea and no doubt the Trump ideology of small government—getting government out of our lives. The fact is that the public service is often best placed to deliver quality service but if we do not have a public service that is there to anticipate, for example, the arrival of so-called disruptive technology, we have knock-on impacts of a taxi industry thrown into turmoil because we have not done the necessary visioning or restructuring to accommodate something.

I think we might be headed for the same sort of problem in the energy sector. We know we are headed for dramatic change in our energy sector given the possibility of people having home storage batteries for the electricity they produce and that people might then be inclined to switch off from the electricity grid and a declining number of people will pay for their electricity through the grid system. People who remain dependent on the grid, most likely businesses and low-income earners, will have to share a cost burden that is proportionately much higher than the one currently faced. This is called the death spiral. Do we have the expertise in the public service to tackle this sort of issue? Opportunities are there. Do we have the expertise in the public service to contemplate the possibility of a highly distributed electricity storage system when grid-connected devices, otherwise known as electric vehicles, are all around the place? These devices are being charged at certain times of the day, and then they are in a position to discharge at others. Therefore, every single car in the Western Australian car fleet would be, potentially, a storage device providing electricity into the grid at peak times. I am unconvinced that we have the expertise in our public service to anticipate the arrival of that sort of technology. This is what we find when we cut down the public service. Services that people are reliant on are disrupted in many areas. We also have this vexed problem of our public service not looking into the future, not visioning how the technologies of tomorrow should be incorporated. That causes problems like those faced by our taxidriviers with the arrival of Uber. If the transport public service were on the ball, we could have anticipated that and worked out how we would accommodate it without the hardship that many taxidriviers have had to face.

*Sitting suspended from 6.00 to 7.00 pm*

**Mr C.J. TALLENTIRE:** I have had to tear myself away from an excellent presentation by Professor David Blair, not about electromagnetic radiation and waves but about gravitational waves and the gravitational wave spectrum. It was a fascinating presentation, and an example of the sort of scientific research that we should be investing in. That is something we were hearing was not given due priority by previous governments. I understand that the

Mr Chris Tallentire; Mr Fran Logan; Mr Mark McGowan; Mr Rob Johnson; Mrs Michelle Roberts; Mr Peter Watson; Mr David Templeman; Mr Mick Murray; Ms Janine Freeman; Ms Margaret Quirk; Mr Bill Johnston; Mr John Quigley; Dr Mike Nahan

---

CSIRO's facility on gravitational wave spectrum research has tens of millions of dollars of equipment and a beautiful laboratory, but no scientists there to continue it, so it has been cut and cut, and sadly so.

The Loan Bill 2016 seeks \$1.7 billion, which is a massive sum. The fact that the state's finances are in this state is bad news for all Western Australians. It means that there are so many things that people would want to have as services that are going to be jeopardised. What we do need to do, though, is to look at the means of protecting or insulating people from the cost-of-living pressures that will inevitably come about when the state's finances are so badly managed. There is one area of public policy about which I am dismayed by the level of fragmentation that occurs around it.

[Quorum formed.]

**Mr C.J. TALLENTIRE:** I was mentioning the need for us to protect or cushion the community from the impacts of budgetary mismanagement, and noting that there is one area of public policy where we have so much fragmentation of administrative responsibility that it is very hard to see how we could possibly do that—that is, the housing policy. I look at our housing stock. I recognise that many homes are put on the market each year. Sure, the housing market is relatively slow at the moment and property values are not what they perhaps were, but we do not have incentive schemes in place for people to actually renovate a place to make it not just more cosmetically appealing but also more energy efficient, water efficient and waste efficient. That is for the existing housing stock, but what about the 20 000 or so new homes that are built each year? We have a scheme in place known as the six-star household energy efficiency rating scheme, which was brought in by Hon Simon O'Brien when he was Minister for Commerce. I am hearing all sorts of stories about how the detail of that is not being respected and the obligations are not being met. I only have to look around my area to see the quality of housing that is being built—I would be hard-pressed to see anything that would go close to being a six-star rated home, yet, somehow, they get approval to be built. Where does the responsibility for this lie? One would think that the Department of Housing or Minister for Housing would have some responsibility, but, no. In fact, that minister is really more worried about public housing. The Minister for Energy has some interest in this because it is about energy efficiency, but that is not really where the responsibility lies. One would think there would be some responsibility with the Minister for Water concerning water efficiency, or with the Minister for Planning and the Department of Planning on the layout of subdivisions, so that we could have optimum solar access for homes to take in the warming winter sun and keep out the hot summer sun, but that is not really where the responsibility lies. It could be the Minister for Transport, so that people could be well located near transit-oriented developments—that would make sense—or the Minister for Environment, as so much of this is about environmental issues. But, in fact, the best we have at the moment is a Minister for Commerce, who has responsibility for the Building Act. I had this conversation with the executive director of the Housing Industry Association of WA, John Gelavis, and he said to me, "Why don't we have a Minister for Housing who's really responsible for our industry?" This frustration is not felt just by someone like me, who is worried about the cost of living and quality of life impacts on people who are living in dwellings that are ridiculously expensive to heat at this time of the year. Why is it in Western Australia that we have homes where people will be inside at 11 o'clock on a sunny winter's day and the air temperature outside is actually warmer than the temperature inside their home? We are literally forcing people to live in refrigerated blocks because of the poor design of the housing stock. That is something we have to turn around, and that would in turn protect people from the additional costs that go with having to heat or mechanically cool their dwellings so that they are comfortable to live in. It would give people homes that are more comfortable and cost efficient to live in. That is something we really have to do, but, unfortunately, I do not see this government taking any interest in that area at all.

A national housing forum was held a couple of months ago and some really important recommendations came out of that. It was run by the Cooperative Research Centre for Low Carbon Living and the Australian Sustainable Built Environment Council. It is worth me reading these recommendations into *Hansard* because they are very sensible, and I think they should be at the core of government policy right around Australia. They call for a more ambitious building energy regulatory target to be put in place for new housing, matching jurisdictional net zero carbon aspirations. They call for regulation of energy standards for rental properties to protect the most vulnerable from energy poverty. They call for disclosure of energy performance, and that it should be mandated to provide independent information and empower consumers. Further, they state that incentives should be established to drive the market beyond minimum regulations. Finally, they state that greater effort should be made to engage the community through the development and promotion of exemplars, providing tangible examples of low carbon housing.

The industry itself, through various peak bodies, is very aware of the issue that we face and that we have to have improvement in the quality. This gets back to a point I raised earlier in my speech about the depletion of policy capability in our public service. If we have a gutted, shrunk down public service, we do not have the intellectual capability to make sure that this is delivered, that these sorts of cases are argued and that we do not just suffer or

**Extract from Hansard**

[ASSEMBLY — Tuesday, 20 September 2016]

p6283b-6335a

Mr Chris Tallentire; Mr Fran Logan; Mr Mark McGowan; Mr Rob Johnson; Mrs Michelle Roberts; Mr Peter Watson; Mr David Templeman; Mr Mick Murray; Ms Janine Freeman; Ms Margaret Quirk; Mr Bill Johnston; Mr John Quigley; Dr Mike Nahan

---

fall into the trap of having industry players saying, “We want to deliver cheap housing”, which is not actually cheap beyond the moment a person buys the home, but is highly expensive when they actually live in the home and throughout the whole lifetime of a particular property. That is an important policy area that we have to be addressing. It is one that is not being pursued, because we just do not have the capability in the various agencies and, indeed, we have this highly fragmented administrative responsibility. That is letting us down badly.

I have constituents coming to me all the time about the very high gas bills they are receiving at this time of the year. They say, “How can we possibly pay these bills? What is going on when the state government’s finances are so badly managed? If I try to negotiate some sort of delayed payment scheme with Alinta Gas or Kleenheat Gas, I’m going to be really struggling to get what I need to fit in with my budget.” We have a state budget that is already calling for an extra \$1.7 billion because of a sheer lack of good fiscal management. It makes people wonder why we have a state government that is incapable of managing its own finances but at the same time requires individuals to manage their budgets in a way that is quite ruthless and forced upon them. When people are living in homes that are badly insulated or designed, the costs that they face are probably way beyond their means. That is just not reasonable or fair for the people who have to endure that situation. The bill before us represents poor fiscal management in Western Australia.

**MR F.M. LOGAN (Cockburn)** [7.11 pm]: I rise to add my 20 minutes to the debate on the Loan Bill 2016. Tonight I would like to talk about just one of the reasons the government is seeking a loan of up to \$1.7 billion to keep government services rolling along. I refer to the wasteful expenditure of taxpayers’ money on housing in the Pilbara over the past four years. I have spoken at length in this house about the investments that have been made in houses, apartments and work camps in the Pilbara that are now lying empty. I will do so again and I will summarise exactly what has occurred for the members of the house who are here.

If members cast their minds back to 2012—the year before the 2013 state election—Hon Brendon Grylls had announced he would be running for the seat of Pilbara and royalties for regions money was significantly committed to a number of projects in Karratha and Port Hedland. These projects happened to be in the seat of the Pilbara, the seat for which the then Leader of the National Party had just been preselected. In 2012 the state government, led by the National Party, made a commitment to major investment in apartment building, worker intervention, housing purchases and accommodation camps in both Karratha and Port Hedland. That was in the second half of 2012. The decision to invest happened to coincide with the major projects in the resources sector of the Pilbara region, with the exception of Wheatstone, reaching what is called peak workforce. On the construction scale of manning up to extend the facilities of BHP Billiton and Rio Tinto in the iron ore area, build the new LNG plant on Barrow Island and various other projects that were happening in the Pilbara, the work schedule had reached its peak and was beginning to wind down. Peak workforce is the point at which the maximum number of people who would ever be required on a job has been reached and people would start to be laid off as their services were no longer required.

It also coincides with the time when, as has been acknowledged by real estate agents in Karratha and Port Hedland, demand for housing started to drop. We had various National Party members, including the member for Pilbara and the former Leader of the National Party, the member for Warren–Blackwood, argue that with rents at \$2 000 to \$3 000 a week, they had to act; they had to use taxpayers’ money to intervene in the marketplace to bring down the price of accommodation in the Pilbara. There may have been some justification for this expenditure by the government in helping either the private sector or government investment through the Department of Housing or LandCorp to make land and accommodation available to try to address those high rents, but not when the National Party decided to do it—in the second half of 2012—because peak workforce had come and gone on most of the major projects and demand for housing was starting to wind down. It was at that point they started to invest in and sign off on contracts for the construction of major housing projects in the Pilbara. It did not have anything to do with the marketplace; the market was turning down. What did it have to do with? It had to do with the then Leader of the National Party having been preselected for Pilbara for the 2013 election. He needed to have an argument to show the voters in the Pilbara that the Pilbara Cities concept was real and things were going to be happening. That was why he did it.

What did we actually get for the investment? For Osprey, the camp in Port Hedland, there was a \$150 million investment; in Cottier Apartments in Port Hedland, there was a \$25 million investment; and in the Hedland 125 house service worker intervention package, there was a \$93.3 million investment. That was also in Port Hedland. Hamilton stage 1 never actually went ahead, but we paid up anyway—\$25 million for the purchase of the land. The Quarter, which opened only recently, was going to be an office, apartment and hotel complex. At one stage people were even talking about a casino in Karratha! That dropped away pretty quickly. The hotel project that was going to be part of The Quarter also dropped away in line with the drop in demand for

**Extract from Hansard**

[ASSEMBLY — Tuesday, 20 September 2016]

p6283b-6335a

Mr Chris Tallentire; Mr Fran Logan; Mr Mark McGowan; Mr Rob Johnson; Mrs Michelle Roberts; Mr Peter Watson; Mr David Templeman; Mr Mick Murray; Ms Janine Freeman; Ms Margaret Quirk; Mr Bill Johnston; Mr John Quigley; Dr Mike Nahan

---

housing and accommodation across the whole of the Pilbara. Nevertheless, The Quarter's office and apartment complex went ahead at a cost of \$66 million, bringing that little investment package to \$324 million. That figure does not include Pelago, which was the underwriting of the apartments in stage 2 of the Pelago construction program, which would not have gone ahead if the government had not pre-purchased the apartments in that building. That project was not going to go ahead because the developers and the builders had realised that demand was not there to justify the investment. The only reason stage 2 went ahead was that the member for Pilbara, who was running for election to that seat at the time and was Leader of the National Party, was strongly behind this project because it was an apartment complex, and any city supposedly needs high-rise towers to be seen as a city. Taxpayers forked out \$37 million for that little investment as well. That brings the total for just those projects to \$360 million. The National Party is absolutely blatant in the way it spends money. I quote Hon Jacqui Boydell from the *Pilbara News* of 27 January this year, when she said —

Government should absolutely be in the space of leveraging private investment, getting it started and giving it a leg up.

Does the Treasurer agree with that? Does he believe that that is the government's position? Does he believe that the government should be in the space of leveraging private investment, getting it started and giving it a leg up? A representative of his government was using taxpayers' money while we were here discussing a loan bill of \$8 billion. I will not go into it now, because there will be plenty of time to go into what we have got for that \$360 million. How many people occupy this accommodation that has cost \$360 million? What is the value of that accommodation, as it stands now, given the collapsing real estate prices in the Pilbara? I will talk about that at a later stage, and I am sure the Treasurer will be as amazed as I am. Every time I look at the valuations of what we got for that \$360 million, I become more amazed that a bunch of clowns from the National Party chose to use taxpayers' money in the way that they did—investing at the wrong time, when the market was going through its downturn and leaving the government of the day —

**Dr M.D. Nahan:** When was the investment committed to?

**Mr F.M. LOGAN:** It was in the second half of 2012, after the current member for Pilbara was preselected and before the state election in 2013.

**Mr M. McGowan:** The prices were in decline.

**Mr F.M. LOGAN:** The prices were in decline. The real estate agents acknowledged that the prices were coming off, and that is when the government made the investment. At a later stage, Treasurer, I will go through in this house what we have as a result of that foolish squandering of taxpayers' money. It goes to a reflection of the behaviour of government ministers and the National Party in particular. If we go further into the role that they have been playing and look at the questions we have asked in this house about other investments in the Pilbara, and the role of the National Party and its leader in those investments, we see that cavalier approach to not only the way in which taxpayers' money is accounted for, but also the relationship with people in the private sector. I draw to the attention of the house the questions that we have already raised in this house, and articles in the media about the relationship between the Leader of the National Party and Ms Veronica Macpherson of Macro Realty Developments. I am sure members of the house know that Macro Realty and Ms Macpherson have had their assets frozen at the federal level by the Australian Securities and Investments Commission, and at the state level by a decision of the State Administrative Tribunal on behalf of the Consumer Protection Division over the way they marketed the \$100 million Newman Estate, once billed as the Pilbara's biggest property scheme. Nick Evans, in *The West Australian* of 18 August, wrote —

The Federal Court found in May that —

Ms Macpherson and her partner, “the notorious property spruiker, Jamie McIntyre” —

... were jointly operating a misleading, deceptive and unlicensed financial services scheme that procured a contravention of the Corporations Act. The scheme asked investors to set up companies to buy properties from Macro. While the investor would be the sole director of that company, Macro would retain effective control of its affairs, in breach of the Corporations Act.

Members know that we have asked various questions in the house of the Leader of the National Party about his relationship with Macro Realty and Ms Macpherson because of information that has come to our sources and information that has been in *The West Australian*. The Leader of the National Party acknowledged in this house that he has met with Ms Veronica Macpherson on a number of occasions. He has also admitted that he has met with investor groups on their tours of those Macro Realty projects in the Pilbara. In fact, there are photographs of the Leader of the National Party with those investor groups beside the coach in Newman, spruiking the benefits

**Extract from Hansard**

[ASSEMBLY — Tuesday, 20 September 2016]

p6283b-6335a

Mr Chris Tallentire; Mr Fran Logan; Mr Mark McGowan; Mr Rob Johnson; Mrs Michelle Roberts; Mr Peter Watson; Mr David Templeman; Mr Mick Murray; Ms Janine Freeman; Ms Margaret Quirk; Mr Bill Johnston; Mr John Quigley; Dr Mike Nahan

---

of investing in the Pilbara. The Leader of the National Party has acknowledged this, and he is featured on the website of Macro Realty in a corporate video filmed here in Parliament House, when he again spruiked the benefits of investing in the Pilbara. At no stage, I might add, did the Leader of the National Party give any indication of the changing financial and investment environment in the Pilbara during that corporate video. I am sure that he never said that to the investors on the investor bus. I am sure he never said, “By the way, now, in 2016, it is a different financial environment here in the Pilbara. Property prices have fallen by over 50 per cent, and where we were getting rents of \$2 000 to \$3 000 a week, now you will be lucky if you get rent of \$500 a week.” I am sure that the Leader of National Party never mentioned that to the investors in Macro Realty. He certainly did not make any mention of it in the corporate video that he shot here in Parliament House. Despite Ms Macpherson having her assets and those of her company frozen at both federal and state level, and being required to surrender her passport, the member for Pilbara acknowledged that she phoned him, so she obviously had his mobile phone number. He took the phone call and, according to her website, he discussed her new business venture of obtaining visas or migration status for investors. According to Ms Macpherson’s website, that was the discussion that the Leader of the National Party had with her, even after we had asked questions in the house about that relationship.

[Member’s time extended.]

**Mr F.M. LOGAN:** Turning to the issue of the Kurra camp, members in this house would know, and the Leader of the Opposition would know because he has raised this on a number of occasions, that the National Party led an absolute charge against BHP Billiton, demanding that the bed accommodation at that camp be reduced to 600 and that the life of the camp not be extended at the levels of accommodation that it had at the time. Members will remember that. It got to the point at which the then Leader of the National Party, the member for Warren–Blackwood, stood the Premier up over the issue. Despite the Premier saying in this house that that extension of the Kurra camp would be signed off and would go ahead, the Minister for Regional Development; Lands said to the Premier that he would not sign off on that. So it led to a stand-off, as you will remember, Madam Acting Speaker, between the alliance partners of the Liberal Party and the National Party in government.

Given the relationship that I have just described to the house between the current Leader of the National Party and Ms Macpherson and Macro Realty, and although the Leader of the National Party has quite clearly and adamantly said that the relationship is no more than him spruiking the Pilbara, his seat and the whole concept of Pilbara Cities, I remind the house that he has not clearly informed either Macro Realty or its investors about the change in the financial circumstances of the investment in the Pilbara. The question that would then be asked is: why was he so adamant that Kurra camp be closed and was Macro Realty likely to get a benefit from the closure of Kurra camp? According to the Macro Realty website, yes, it was, and, up until very recently, it has been spruiking on its website each step of the way in which the National Party was pushing for the closure of Kurra camp. According to its website, the investors in Macro Realty would benefit from BHP Billiton being forced to relocate its workforce to town, taking up the empty accommodation in town and underpinning the investment that Macro Realty had made in Newman village. That is according to Macro Realty. You will remember, Madam Acting Speaker, that on Thursday, 8 September 2016 in this house, I asked the Leader of the National Party, who had acknowledged that he had had meetings with Ms Macpherson, this question —

- (1) At any of these meetings did either the minister, Ms Veronica Macpherson or any other attendee raise the importance of closing BHP Billiton’s Kurra camp?
- (2) At these meetings did Ms Macpherson or any other attendee suggest that the closure of the BHP Kurra camp might support or help the development of the Newman estate project?

The Leader of the National Party went out of his way not to answer that question. It got to the point at which I had to raise a point of order to ask the Speaker to direct the minister to answer the question, but he did not answer either the main question or the supplementary question. He refused point-blank to answer either of the questions. It would be acceptable for the ordinary person in the street to draw the conclusion that the relationship between the current Leader of the National Party, the National Party itself and Macro Realty is really unhealthy. It is so close that it requires the Leader of the National Party to come clean and tell the general public of Western Australia and this house about his relationship with that company. This company has had its assets frozen and its CEO has had her passport taken away, yet the Leader of the National Party is taking phone calls from her. He is taking phone calls from someone who has been required by the Australian Securities and Investments Commission to surrender her passport. I think he is duty-bound as the leader of a political party to explain to the general public, the constituents of the Pilbara and this house about the true nature of the relationship between him, the National Party and Macro Realty, and whatever business they got up to.

**Extract from Hansard**

[ASSEMBLY — Tuesday, 20 September 2016]

p6283b-6335a

Mr Chris Tallentire; Mr Fran Logan; Mr Mark McGowan; Mr Rob Johnson; Mrs Michelle Roberts; Mr Peter Watson; Mr David Templeman; Mr Mick Murray; Ms Janine Freeman; Ms Margaret Quirk; Mr Bill Johnston; Mr John Quigley; Dr Mike Nahan

---

The Nationals were of the mind that the closure of the Kurra camp would result in thousands of workers being relocated to Newman, thereby, according to the comments on Macro Realty's website, underpinning the investments of its investors in Newman. Because the National Party took it to the level of causing a virtual split in the alliance, I believe, as I am sure does everyone in this house outside the National Party, that it is incumbent on the Leader of the National Party to answer those questions about the relationship between him, his party and Macro Realty. Did the National Party go into bat to try to get the BHP Kurra camp closed in order to underwrite the investments of a company that has now been disgraced? It has been called a Ponzi scheme. Is that what he was doing? Is that what the National Party was doing? There are questions to be answered and so far the Leader of the National Party has run away from them. We are not going to let him get away with this. We are going to keep following him on this one. This has been described as a Ponzi scheme, and his and his party's fingerprints are all over it.

One final issue that I would like to raise goes a little bit to the behaviour of Liberal Party members and their leader and what happened in the Liberal party room today. For the life of me, I cannot understand why the Premier makes life hard for himself, and he does make life hard for himself. We heard the criticism by various former ministers over the weekend and we saw commentary in today's newspaper about the behaviour of the Premier. We have to acknowledge that, in a way, the Premier brings all this upon himself. He certainly does not learn from his lessons. He has been through this before; he has had disagreements with his backbench. You will remember, Madam Acting Speaker, that he was unceremoniously dumped as Leader of the Liberal Party once before. He has a track record of falling out with his backbench, and many times with his frontbench, but he does not seem to learn from it. He has allowed the preselection of Mr Katsambanis for the seat of Hillarys. He has encouraged Mr Katsambanis to be preselected for the seat of Hillarys. What did Mr Katsambanis say in 2005 about the current Leader of the Liberal Party? He said —

*Western Australians face the unenviable choice on 26 February when the state election in our most isolated state is conducted. Current Premier Geoff Gallop will face off against Colin Barnett who is possibly the most bland and boring opposition leader in any state (in what is a very crowded field).*

That is what Mr Katsambanis said!

Several members interjected.

**Mr F.M. LOGAN:** After he lost the election in 2005 when he made those crazy statements about the pipeline, Mr Katsambanis went on to say this about the current Premier —

*Barnett broke the golden rule of campaigning—oppositions don't win elections, governments lose them! He also made a gross miscalculation in turning economic management into a negative for himself and a positive for Labor. He made himself the target and it was easy for government ministers to take cheap shots at his grand plan ...*

As members know, Mr Katsambanis has a very strange record of criticising his leaders. Not as a member of Parliament but as a blogger, he made a shocking attack on his own state leader in Victoria. He attacked him mercilessly. He also said, as I have quoted, various uncomplimentary things about the current Leader of the Liberal Party, yet the leader went in to bat for him and supported his preselection! The Premier could have chosen anybody to run against the member for Hillarys, but who did he choose? He chose somebody who had already undermined his leader in Victoria and been critical of the Premier in Western Australia.

**MR M. McGOWAN (Rockingham — Leader of the Opposition)** [7.41 pm]: I rise to contribute to the Loan Bill 2016. In light of what went on today, it is an interesting day to be making this speech. We have had some debate about today's events that have been really quite amazing, with the Liberal Party, in particular, tearing itself to pieces internally. After the event, the Liberal Party came out with a facade of unity. The Loan Bill shows that underneath all this is another example of major concern by some members of the Liberal Party about the government's direction. Some members of the Liberal Party are concerned about the government's direction and have some policy concerns. As we went over earlier, the member for Alfred Cove had some very, very interesting things to say about the government of Western Australia. In the course of the last three or four days, he said some things about erratic decision-making, a lack of economic leadership, and the fact that the economy is in significant trouble. The member for Alfred Cove is right. There has been a lack of economic leadership, a lack of financial leadership and some real problems with the running of Western Australia over the course of the last eight years. We have been saying this for a long time, Madam Acting Speaker. Week in and week out, the shadow Treasurer, my colleagues and I have been saying it. Back when revenues were strong from a very high iron ore price, we said that we needed a buffer for when prices turned down, because the economic history of the world is such that when prices are high, eventually



**Extract from Hansard**

[ASSEMBLY — Tuesday, 20 September 2016]

p6283b-6335a

Mr Chris Tallentire; Mr Fran Logan; Mr Mark McGowan; Mr Rob Johnson; Mrs Michelle Roberts; Mr Peter Watson; Mr David Templeman; Mr Mick Murray; Ms Janine Freeman; Ms Margaret Quirk; Mr Bill Johnston; Mr John Quigley; Dr Mike Nahan

---

equilibrium is reached and prices come down. We therefore said that this situation—the very enviable position of very high revenues into the state—was going to change. There was absolutely no listening to these warnings by the government. The warnings were out there and times were good, but there was no listening by the government. The Premier, in particular, did not listen. He had his Treasurers—Mr Buswell and Mr Porter—making noises, as they constantly were, that there had to be restraint from the government and it needed to put in place various plans and the like to try to deal with the financial situation that confronted the state, yet they were not listened to. Members can only imagine their frustration; both of them are no longer in the Western Australian Parliament. Both of them left Parliament due to their frustrations.

**Mr F.M. Logan:** One, by the way while the leader is on his feet, said to me, “When you see a train coming, you get out of the way”!

**Mr M. McGOWAN:** There it is. They both left the Western Australian Parliament. Two Treasurers left in rapid succession. Both of them were frustrated by the management of the finances. Christian Porter, of course, fled to the federal Parliament, where he has gone on to bigger and better things, and Mr Buswell left for other reasons, but both of them were very frustrated by the management of the state. Both of them were loyal Liberals. I think they were sort of sending coded messages in their various budgets speeches and in various things that they had to say about how they were going to toughen up and make sure that the finances were under control, but they had no effect. Nothing they did had any effect, so the state’s financial position continued to deteriorate during both their terms as Treasurer—or, in the case of one of them, his multiple terms as Treasurer. They had no effect and there was no action on the government’s part, which the events of the last few days have brought into focus. A senior minister in the government has described the management of the state as erratic, illogical and irrational. Let us think about those words—erratic, illogical and irrational. A senior Liberal member said that about the management of Western Australia. It should send alarm bells to everyone that those words were said about the management of the state. Western Australia is now in a very concerning situation. It makes it even more poignant that we are dealing with this rushed-in fourth Loan Bill today, on the eighth anniversary of the government’s election—eight years of this style of management and debt and deficit hitting the state.

**Mr B.S. Wyatt:** Twenty-three billion dollars.

**Mr M. McGOWAN:** The loan bills total \$23 billion worth of borrowings. The 2009 Loan Bill borrowed an additional \$8.316 billion—exhibit A; the 2012 Loan Bill borrowed the round figure of \$5 billion; the 2015 Loan Bill borrowed \$8 billion; and this Loan Bill will borrow \$1.7 billion. In total, \$23 billion is contained within these loan bills. Liberal and National Parties’ members say that the Labor Party cannot manage the finances, but the totality of the loan bills during the eight years of the Labor government was \$250 million. In the course of this government there has been \$23 billion worth of additional borrowings, and in the course of the Labor government it was \$250 million. That is about a hundred times more borrowings in the course of this government than in the course of the Labor government. Depending on how we want to measure that, we could say that it is a hundred times worse. That is pretty extraordinary by anyone’s measure. What galls me the most is that members opposite were warned and knew, but no-one did anything about it. It just kept happening and happening, and growing and growing, and members opposite made noises. Treasurers fled the scene—two of them—literally. Of course, as the Premier always says, they have had no ministerial scandals. That is except for people fleeing the scene of actual crimes and hiding from police—that sort of thing! There have been no scandals, according to the Premier; that does not count. We are now in a position, after Treasurers have fled the scene and fled the Parliament as well, with all this additional borrowing. In the past few days ministers have actually been prepared to tell it like it is. As I said, the column written by the member for Alfred Cove will certainly be going on my pinboard because it is an example of someone prepared to tell the truth about the economic management of the state over the last eight years. We are now in a position whereby the government is asking the Parliament to pass another loan bill. If this bill does not go through the Parliament within the next 40 or so days, the government of Western Australia will run out of money. If the bill is not passed—if the government does not use its numbers to pass it—the government will be bankrupt.

**Mr F.M. Logan:** It will shut down.

**Mr M. McGOWAN:** The government will shut down. The government has left it so late in the process that in 40 days’ time—that is, by the end of October—the state will run out of money; that is, run out of money literally, and that is not a figurative term. Literally, we will not be able to pay our public servants, teachers, nurses and police, or put petrol in the police car and the rest of it because there will be no authorisation. What is more, because of the deficit situation, we are currently in the position of borrowing to do those things. We are borrowing not for capital, but for recurrent. It is an extraordinary situation that we have not seen in this state for decades. Of course it is a loan bill and if government is going to shut down, there are two alternatives for an opposition. We could act like the Republican Party in the United States—no doubt the Treasurer has close

**Extract from Hansard**

[ASSEMBLY — Tuesday, 20 September 2016]

p6283b-6335a

Mr Chris Tallentire; Mr Fran Logan; Mr Mark McGowan; Mr Rob Johnson; Mrs Michelle Roberts; Mr Peter Watson; Mr David Templeman; Mr Mick Murray; Ms Janine Freeman; Ms Margaret Quirk; Mr Bill Johnston; Mr John Quigley; Dr Mike Nahan

---

affinities there—and say, “That’s a good thing; it’s sending a message. You are stopping it from all happening.” We will not be adopting that approach. We will never adopt an American Republican Party approach on anything. Our approach is responsible; that is, the business of government needs to go on. A better way to deal with the situation confronting this state is to change the government in March next year. That is a better way to deal with the condition of governance in Western Australia. That is the position we are in now; that is the position the Liberal and National Parties have got us into and that is why we are currently debating the Loan Bill before this house.

The economy is in trouble. We only have to look at any single indicator, whether it is rental vacancies, commercial vacancies, the unemployment rate or the condition of the domestic economy in recession, to see that the economy is in trouble. I think the member for Alfred Cove copied some of my language in his article when he said —

The community is clearly rattled by the pace and impact of the post-mining boom downturn. Many have lost their jobs; many more are worried their jobs could be next.

That is true. That is the condition of Western Australia today. As I said the other week, our unemployment rate is roughly the same as Tasmania’s. If that does not ring alarm bells, I do not know what does. It is clear that we need a plan to deal with these things. All I hear from the government is bluster. I hear my good friend the Leader of the National Party’s bluster about how his plan to repair the situation is to add a new tax. Let me start again. His plan is to unilaterally rip up state agreement acts, that have been in place now for decades—they are contracts—and put in place a new tax, from which 90c out of every dollar will be redistributed to the east. He actually admits that is his plan. The second component of the plan is to get Rio Tinto and BHP Billiton to go to the federal government to get the Commonwealth Grants Commission formula changed. Honestly! The distribution formula —

**Mr D.T. Redman** interjected.

**Mr M. McGOWAN:** Sorry?

**Mr D.T. Redman:** Can I ask a question?

**Mr M. McGOWAN:** Before the member does, I want to say one thing: a day or a couple of days after the member for Warren–Blackwood became Leader of the National Party, I asked him a question about this and he did not support it. Anyway, ask the question now.

**Mr D.T. Redman:** The state agreements, back in about 1964, put in place two and six a tonne as its rental fee. That hasn’t changed since then. Do you think at the very least that should be reviewed?

**Mr M. McGOWAN:** I say that the thing about a state agreement act is that the middle word is “agreement”. It is a contract. If the member knows anything about contract law, there are various ways of ending or changing a contract. It can be breached, which involves damages, or by negotiation an alternative position can be reached. That is not what the National Party is putting forward. If the companies want to agree to lift that charge, or whatever, I say fine. Everyone would say fine. It would still be subject to —

**Mr D.T. Redman:** These agreements also don’t have any end dates; they just keep going.

**Mr M. McGOWAN:** I know. Does the member know who negotiated them? It was Sir Charles Court and David Brand.

**Mr D.T. Redman:** I am not worried about that.

**Mr M. McGOWAN:** But the member has to understand that is fine. The National Party’s position, which says, “We would like to get more out of the companies”, is fine, if they agree.

**Mr D.T. Redman:** Based on the fee that was set in 1964, that hasn’t changed since.

**Mr M. McGOWAN:** Seriously, we sign up to state agreements acts. State agreement acts have gone through this Parliament recently. Is the member saying that in whatever year in the future, a government can say that that was five years ago, or 10 years ago or 15 years ago, and we can just rip that up now?

**Mr D.T. Redman:** What you’re saying is that something that was signed 50 years ago is okay and let it go.

**Mr M. McGOWAN:** Is the member saying that we just rip up an agreement?

**Mr D.T. Redman:** No; I’m saying that we need to review it.

**Mr M. McGOWAN:** That is not what the Leader of the National Party is saying. Is the member saying that he has a different position from the Leader of the National Party?

**Mr D.T. Redman:** No, I’m not. I’m making the point that you can’t have something that was signed in 1964 and say that it’s relevant today and hasn’t got any scope within the agreements to be reviewed or looked at or changed.

Mr Chris Tallentire; Mr Fran Logan; Mr Mark McGowan; Mr Rob Johnson; Mrs Michelle Roberts; Mr Peter Watson; Mr David Templeman; Mr Mick Murray; Ms Janine Freeman; Ms Margaret Quirk; Mr Bill Johnston; Mr John Quigley; Dr Mike Nahan

---

**Mr M. McGOWAN:** If it is an agreement, it is a contract. It has to be done by negotiation if we want to change these things. That is the way a contract works. It is also an act of Parliament so it requires legislation to go through this house, so there are actually two phases. The reason a lot of companies want them is that it is a contract, and it has the backing of an act of Parliament as well.

**Mr D.T. Redman:** Security of tenure.

**Mr M. McGOWAN:** That is right, and that is the basis upon which investment in Western Australia has taken place. I am surprised I have to argue this with people. I am surprised I have to explain this to people. The member for Warren–Blackwood might think it was unfair and unjust, but the natural way of dealing with these things is to reach a negotiated outcome. That is not what the National Party has said. The Leader of the National Party has said that these agreements will be changed via unilaterally changing the agreements. That assaults the fundamental basis upon which billions of dollars have been invested in Western Australia. However, what really gets to me is not that. What gets to me is that we will tax Western Australian employers to send money east—to send 90 cents out of every dollar east within three years. That is what gets to me. Then, as the shadow Treasurer said, that will lock in a whole heap of new spending, because that is what the Leader of the National Party has said, and then when the grants commission formula kicks in and we lose that additional revenue, because our GST share goes down, our debt situation will worsen. Honestly, I saw today’s newspaper. I think we need some deeper analysis on these things to make that point. When that point is explained to people, they suddenly get it. Sure, the Commonwealth Grants Commission formula is flawed. Sure, it should be better.

[Member’s time extended.]

**Mr M. McGOWAN:** Let me say this: what incentive do other states have to agree to the Commonwealth Grants Commission formula changing if before we do that, before we seek that outcome, we send them a whole heap of additional revenue? All we are saying to them is: you beauty! The commonwealth gets a whole heap more money out of Western Australia but now we want it to change the formula. What is the incentive to agree to that? There is none. It is just silly. But I think that reflects the state of the government today. It is full of illogical, irrational and erratic decision-making, and I do not think it is only the Premier.

I note that today the Premier said that there will be changes with Western Power. I am interested to know what they are. The Loan Bill asks for significant additional borrowings on the part of the state. The Treasurer has always been saying that Western Power will be sold. He has said it numerous times in here. However, today the Premier went out before the cameras and said something different about that. I would be interested to know whether the Treasurer can let us know the changes that might be in store for Western Power. I am very interested to know the Treasurer’s plans and compare them with what he has said earlier about these issues. I think today’s party room meeting must have been robust and interesting with the debate going on about these things. All those rats and cockroaches were being squashed in there, as one Liberal member indicated.

**Mr P.B. Watson:** What are you, John?

**Mr M. McGOWAN:** No, these guys are not in that camp. I am pretty sure that the member for Kalamunda is not in the camp of the rats and cockroaches. I think she was referring to some others. I thought that commentary, and that members of the government are describing their own colleagues that way, was very telling. That is pretty extraordinary stuff. It goes to show the condition of the government today. No doubt, lots of things were said in this party room meeting. It would be interesting to know the policy outcomes from that party room meeting and, in particular, the outcome for Western Power.

**Ms R. Saffioti:** The Treasurer was not standing as close to the Premier today on the front steps.

**Mr M. McGOWAN:** The Treasurer was down the back having a conversation. When they were all pledging loyalty, the Treasurer was down the back talking to someone. That is pretty interesting.

As is protocol, we support this legislation. But there is a need to point out why we are in this position, and that is what I have sought to do.

**MR R.F. JOHNSON (Hillarys)** [8.02 pm]: As legislators, we are in the extraordinary situation of having to continue to borrow so much money because one man has been allowed to dictate the economic direction of this state without any proper checks and balances. I will get to one of the main reasons we lack those checks and balances later. That problem is systemic and not necessarily of the Premier’s making. Over the past few years I have prepared numerous large savings in this chamber, including having a moratorium on royalties for regions, delaying the airport rail link and selling off public housing. This week we have learned that the former Minister for Transport desperately tried to protect over \$1 billion in commonwealth funding, but the Premier seems to know best—and look at the state’s finances at the moment! Fifteen former Liberal ministers have now had the distinction of serving under the current Premier. I will list them: Hon Norman Moore,

**Extract from Hansard**

[ASSEMBLY — Tuesday, 20 September 2016]

p6283b-6335a

Mr Chris Tallentire; Mr Fran Logan; Mr Mark McGowan; Mr Rob Johnson; Mrs Michelle Roberts; Mr Peter Watson; Mr David Templeman; Mr Mick Murray; Ms Janine Freeman; Ms Margaret Quirk; Mr Bill Johnston; Mr John Quigley; Dr Mike Nahan

---

Hon Dr Kim Hames, Hon Dr Elizabeth Constable, Hon Simon O'Brien, Hon Troy Buswell, me, Hon Christian Porter, Hon Robyn McSweeney, Dr Graham Jacobs, Hon John Castrilli, Hon Helen Morton, Mr Murray Cowper and Hon Ken Baston. Now we add to the list Hon Tony Simpson and Mr Dean Nalder. That is 15 former ministers in that short period.

Those who do not know how things work in this government are probably somewhat bemused about why our Premier has not been able to enjoy a fanfare of celebrations as he achieved the milestone of passing Hon Richard Court as our fifth longest serving Premier, having now surpassed the times served by Sir Charles Court and Hon Richard Court. What distinguishes this Premier from both those gentlemen and Sir David Brand? It is the lack of respect he commands from most of those who have served under him. It is ridiculous to dismiss most of those members as disgruntled. All those former Premiers had ex-ministers and by and large they did not speak as disparagingly of their former leaders. All those Premiers also had to make many tough decisions, but they knew how to take advice.

Two public comments this week have been instructive. One was when the Premier, during his media conference on Sunday, referred to his former Minister for Transport by saying, and I quote, "I gave him extraordinary opportunities." When I last checked, ministries were bestowed by the Crown, not the emperor. Can one imagine our former Liberal Premiers talking in that way? "I gave him this or that." I would have hoped that the job was given to the former minister because he was the most capable person to perform it, not because of some dictator's generosity. This approach was reinforced with the second comment made on 6PR this morning when the government leader in the other place praised the Premier for being authoritarian. That was the exact word used. In doing that, the upper house leader offended, as he often does, the most basic tenets that the Liberal Party was founded on. It highlights why people, such as me, have been forced out. Robert Menzies founded the Liberal Party on principles of democracy and accountability, including an accountable government and local preselections. Former Liberal Premiers adhered to these principles.

Not coincidentally, the government leader in the other place is also a powerbroker in the Liberal Party, as we know from the extraordinary intervention in Hillarys where a failed member of Parliament from Melbourne with no local support has been foisted on the electors. The government leader in the other place holds no regard for democracy in the lay party either. Indeed, the Liberal Party is rotting from within at the mercy of a dominant faction, not because that faction enjoys dominant grassroots support, but because it manipulates the numbers on the party's state council. That is the systemic problem to which I referred earlier. We now have what some would term a perfect storm: the Premier has isolated many of his natural supporters in the party and is now beholden to a faction that firmly pulls the strings of the dozen or so MPs in this Parliament who have delivered the Premier a hollow victory in this week's party room meeting. Talk about doing a deal with the devil!

This faction is predominantly focused on preserving its power and has little interest in the welfare of this state. At the time of a crippling financial situation, when this Parliament is occupied with debating the borrowing of more substantial sums of money, where are these people focused? I can tell members that they are focused on branch stacking. As I speak, the leader and deputy leader of the government in the other place both have staff who trying to transfer into the Woodvale branch, along with a group of others. None of them lives or works in the area. Some of these individuals are moving at the behest of the Minister for Mental Health; Child Protection. Others are from the famed Globalheart sect, with which the Minister for Environment; Heritage and the federal member are intimately involved.

Of the remaining Liberal Party members in the Premier's cabinet, I know that almost half, including the government leader and deputy leader in the other place, are focusing their attention on stacking the Woodvale branch. To what gain? It is not for the retention of government or addressing the state's economic woes. It is merely the preservation of power. No doubt dovetailing into this effort is the federal member's interest in putting his candidate into the seat of Kingsley going forward. He tried to stack every branch in Hillarys without success and had to call on his factional masters at the Liberal state council to intervene when his failed candidate from Melbourne lost the local preselection. We know how badly the federal member behaves when he does not get his way. I know that he was not happy with the choice of candidate in Kingsley in 2005—that was the Liberal candidate—and he confessed to me that he had donated money against the Liberal campaign. Given this current round of branch stacking in the seat and, indeed, the seniority of the people involved, it is an appropriate time to raise that historical issue.

When I was a Liberal Party member I said many times that I felt duty-bound to preserve various confidences. I said many times that if I became an Independent Liberal, I would not feel bound by that protocol. Now a third of the Parliamentary Liberal Party wants to spill the leadership. As I said when I went to the crossbench, I did not want to be on the Premier's *Titanic*. I cannot be blamed for what has transpired. The Premier holds only on to the pleasure of a faction that has little interest in the welfare of Hillarys or WA's economic situation and has a lot of

Mr Chris Tallentire; Mr Fran Logan; Mr Mark McGowan; Mr Rob Johnson; Mrs Michelle Roberts; Mr Peter Watson; Mr David Templeman; Mr Mick Murray; Ms Janine Freeman; Ms Margaret Quirk; Mr Bill Johnston; Mr John Quigley; Dr Mike Nahan

---

interest in preserving its members' positions. If everyone is so confident the Premier will be here at the next election, they can go to Sportsbet now, as I said earlier, and more than double their money because he is odds-on not to be here. If they think this government is going to win the election, they could almost triple their money!

During the matter of public interest debate earlier today, I spoke about the fact that ministers now have an enormous number of staff compared with what they used to. When I was a minister during the first four years of the Liberal–National government, we were allowed 10 staff in our ministerial offices. That was it. They managed quite well. What do we have today? Looking at the list of ministerial offices, some have up to 15 staff; the Premier's office has too many to count. That is at least 50, 60 or 70 extra jobs in ministerial offices, yet we are getting rid of public servants elsewhere. If it is jobs for the boys, they can come in.

In the Treasurer's office, Mr Blair Stratton has just been employed for six months—until the next election. He will be a term-of-government employee. Over the last eight years, that man has gained nearly \$200 000 in settlement figures after leaving. He worked for the then Minister for Energy, now Minister for Education who is in the other place. That minister lost a few hundred million dollars of public money on failed energy proposals. Blair Stratton was his chief of staff at that time. After the furore, Blair Stratton left there and worked for Synergy. He got a top job in Synergy as a government adviser. He was there for three or four years. When he left there, he got another huge payout. Synergy is a government corporation, predominantly. Now he has gone back into the Treasurer's department. Why the hell would the Treasurer want another policy adviser for six months? He already has Robert Taylor, the ex-political reporter, who used to criticise the Liberal government all the time.

**Dr G.G. Jacobs:** He didn't like me much.

**Mr R.F. JOHNSON:** He did not like many people in the Liberal Party, I can tell members.

**Mr D.T. Redman:** He was Max Trenorden's chief of staff.

**Mr R.F. JOHNSON:** Was he? He was always either against the Liberals or he was with the Labor Party or with the Nationals, in my view. He certainly was not with the Liberals. He criticised the Liberals all the time. Now it has the gamekeeper who is also the poacher!

All I am saying is there has been an increase of 50 or 60 jobs in the past nearly four years under this Premier. The first four years he used constraint and every minister had to adhere to the policy of no more than 10 staff.

**Ms M.M. Quirk:** It is also the levels of those staff.

**Mr R.F. JOHNSON:** I know; he has upped the levels so they all get a fortune. I said earlier, the first thing he did when he got back into power in 2013 was to give his chief spin doctor, Dixie Marshall, a rise of \$84 000 a year. A lot of people do not even earn \$84 000 a year!

**Mr P.B. Watson:** It is called a bullying allowance.

**Mr R.F. JOHNSON:** The member is quite right; it is called a bullying allowance. Narelle Cant, the other one, she got almost the same. Two of the most precious people in his department got those two sorts of rises. Oh dear, I have dropped a few papers. Perhaps somebody could pick them up for me, if there are some decent people around here. I know there are one or two.

What did the Premier do? He spent all that money on his own people. That is wrong. I want to share something with members. I do not know whether I should do this. I got an email a few weeks ago. I have always been really concerned about state debt. It is one thing I have highlighted over the last four years. During the address-in-reply four years ago, in every Premier's Statement speech and in every budget speech I have highlighted state debt—four years ago, three years ago, two years ago and this year. I predicted where it would be at this moment in time. I have been pretty much right. I said Western Australia would lose its AAA credit rating. I said our debt would be nearly \$40 billion. It is nearly \$40 billion, but that was supposed to be in the next year or so. We are now looking at nearly \$40 billion. We are nudging \$40 billion right now. I predict that in the next three years or so state debt will get to \$50 billion because there is nothing happening to reduce that debt. Even if this mining tax was to come in, what will the government do with it? It is not going to pay down debt; it is talking about spending more money on infrastructure. Any fool can build infrastructure. If I were given a credit card without a limit and without a settlement date, I would build the most beautiful infrastructure ever in Western Australia. Just give me that. If I can do the same as the Treasurer, or the Premier in this case, I can say, "The kids in the future can pay for it." It will not be our kids in the future who will pay for this debt; it will be our grandchildren's grandchildren. It will be decades before those debts that are mounting up now will be repaid. One should never spend more than one earns. That is a principle. Most good housekeepers would do that. My wife would not spend more money than she gets in her housekeeping budget and I would think most people —

**Mr S.K. L'Estrange:** Pay the mortgage.

**Extract from Hansard**

[ASSEMBLY — Tuesday, 20 September 2016]

p6283b-6335a

Mr Chris Tallentire; Mr Fran Logan; Mr Mark McGowan; Mr Rob Johnson; Mrs Michelle Roberts; Mr Peter Watson; Mr David Templeman; Mr Mick Murray; Ms Janine Freeman; Ms Margaret Quirk; Mr Bill Johnston; Mr John Quigley; Dr Mike Nahan

---

**Mr R.F. JOHNSON:** Mortgage! A mortgage is different—that is buying an asset. We are not buying assets with these debts. We are not buying assets that provide an income. We are buying fancy stuff like Elizabeth Quay and Perth Stadium—things we do not actually need yet. We want them, but we do not need them. The Premier has been building monuments to himself. When this Premier leaves this Parliament, he will not have paid back one cent of the debt he has incurred. You guys over there will be over this side of the house next year, I reckon; those who get through the election. They will not be in government, I am sure, because the people of this state do not want to see the sort of debt level we have at the moment. My good friend Gareth Parker and I think alike very often on this issue. I have done opinion pieces in the paper and I have spoken in this house on budget speeches, addresses-in-reply and Premier's Statements. He and I have said the same thing—only he is not highlighting it to the public, which he should be doing. I do not blame him; I blame the editor for not looking at what is necessary to tell the public. We have to be honest with the public. If we say state debt is nudging \$40 billion, it goes over people's heads. They do not realise; they do not think about it. It is too much to take in. It should be on the front page of *The West Australian* or *The Sunday Times*—please God, let them stay separate papers—that state debt every single day of this year, next year and the year after is going up by \$15 million. Yesterday, state debt went up by \$15 million. Today, state debt has gone up another \$15 million. Tomorrow, it will do the same. People ask me how I have worked that out. It is quite simple. I looked at the state debt from one budget to another and divided that difference by 365, and it came out at roughly \$15 million a day. One does not have to be a science teacher or a maths expert to work that out. People can work it out for themselves. That is what it is—\$15 million every day! People should be told the truth: “If we divide that debt between you all, when it gets to \$40 billion to \$50 billion we are looking at about \$18 000 for every man, woman and child in this state.” That would make people think. That is what I will be telling people in my electorate because I do not want them to vote Liberal; I want them to vote for me. At least I will speak up for them.

**Mrs M.H. Roberts:** We want them to vote for you too.

**Mr R.F. JOHNSON:** I know the member does. We are still talking, are we not, about what could possibly happen in the seat?

I want to share something with members. My good friend the Prime Minister sent me an email about three or four weeks ago. I did not know whether to share it with everybody in this house tonight.

**Mr M.P. Murray:** Go on!

**Mr R.F. JOHNSON:** I did not know whether to, okay, because I like Malcolm and he likes me. I would like to say we are personal friends. I will not read the whole email because some of it is a bit personal. In one part, he talks about the forty-fifth Parliament and what he wants to do and all the rest of it. I promise members I have the email from the Prime Minister here. It is not a forgery; it is from the Prime Minister. It was not done by somebody in the upper house; it was the Prime Minister, okay? I want to read one very short paragraph because it is absolutely salient to what we are talking about today with a \$1.7 billion loan bill—yet another one—and state debt going higher and higher. The email refers to various things, which I will not read out because some of them could be classed as personal. I am happy to share this letter with members.

[Member's time extended.]

**Mr R.F. JOHNSON:** The letter reads —

Rob,

...

How long are we prepared as a nation, to load more and more debt onto the shoulders of our children and grandchildren?

That is what the Prime Minister said. I promise members that that is what the Prime Minister said in an email to me.

**Mr P.B. Watson:** How do you sleep at night, you mob?

**Mr R.F. JOHNSON:** I do not know how they sleep at night. I really do not. They would not spend their own money the way they are spending the people's money—not in a fit!

**Mr J.H.D. Day:** What is your solution to the problem you have identified?

**Mr R.F. JOHNSON:** I have told the Leader of the House many times, but he does not listen. He should open his ears! I said to cancel royalties for regions, or at least put a moratorium on it. I said to cut back on expenditure. At the moment, the government is spending royalties for regions money on things that would not be normal government expenditure. Every cent that is spent on royalties for regions is borrowed money. The Treasurer knows it, and the Nationals know it. Yes, they do!

Mr Chris Tallentire; Mr Fran Logan; Mr Mark McGowan; Mr Rob Johnson; Mrs Michelle Roberts; Mr Peter Watson; Mr David Templeman; Mr Mick Murray; Ms Janine Freeman; Ms Margaret Quirk; Mr Bill Johnston; Mr John Quigley; Dr Mike Nahan

---

**Mr D.T. Redman:** It is legislated; it is the first piece that comes out!

**Mr R.F. JOHNSON:** It is legislated that the regions will get roughly equivalent to a billion dollars a year. We cannot afford it. That is why the Nationals are spending royalties for regions money on normal government expenditure. Royalties for regions builds these great big swimming pools and beautiful community halls and the rest of it. They are lovely, but councils cannot afford the upkeep.

**Mr D.T. Redman:** Rubbish!

**Mr R.F. JOHNSON:** I am telling the member that they cannot continue to do this. Royalties for regions gives them money for all these very expensive apartments and houses up in the north west—great! All these deals are done with these dodgy developers, in my view—these Ponzi schemes. The member for Warren—Blackwood knows it is true that that is what his leader signed him up for. Public money is being spent up there, and the value of those developments has gone down by 50 per cent at least. It is money from the member's electors. It is not his money, his money or even his money! It is not even the emperor's money! It is money that comes from the people in our constituencies. They are the ones who are paying for all this. We have seen increases in taxes, charges and fees throughout the whole state. I have pensioners and self-funded retirees in my area who are screaming because they thought they had put enough money away to see them through. Let us talk about businesses. I can tell members what the growth business is in Western Australia—it is liquidators. They are coming from over east to Western Australia because so many people are going bust from what is happening here. We have record unemployment; in 30 years it has never been as high as it is today. I hope the Treasurer is proud of that, because he simply goes along and does whatever the emperor says.

**Dr M.D. Nahan:** You obviously don't look at data very often.

**Mr R.F. JOHNSON:** Yes, I do look at data very often—I do!

**Dr M.D. Nahan:** If you did, you would not make that statement.

**Mr R.F. JOHNSON:** I look at it all the time, and I make that statement right now. I even look at data!

**Dr M.D. Nahan:** It is absurd.

**Mr R.F. JOHNSON:** The Treasurer can say that it is absurd, but he will get a chance to respond, my friend.

**Dr M.D. Nahan** interjected.

**The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr P. Abetz):** Member for Riverton, I will have to call you if you do not desist.

**Mr R.F. JOHNSON:** The Treasurer used to be respected when he was a genuine economist who would have crucified the Premier.

**Mr M.P. Murray:** That is when the world was flat!

**Mr R.F. JOHNSON:** Exactly, member for Collie—Preston.

That is what the Prime Minister says. Does the Treasurer take any notice of what the Prime Minister says?

**Dr M.D. Nahan** interjected.

**The ACTING SPEAKER:** Member for Riverton!

**Mr R.F. JOHNSON:** The Treasurer can stop spending some money. Look at the money the Treasurer is wasting.

**Dr M.D. Nahan** interjected.

**The ACTING SPEAKER:** Member for Riverton, I call you for the first time.

**Mr R.F. JOHNSON:** He is so vicious, honestly! He is so vicious, I do not know how to take it—goodness me! I am so sensitive; I really am.

**Dr M.D. Nahan** interjected.

**Mr R.F. JOHNSON:** I have only been here 24 years! I have had worse than you, sunshine! I can tell you—much worse than you have had a go at me, and I am sure there will be others who will want to. When I come back after the next election, I am sure there will be more.

My point is that the Prime Minister has said this—the top man said this!

**Dr M.D. Nahan** interjected.

**The ACTING SPEAKER:** Member for Riverton!

Mr Chris Tallentire; Mr Fran Logan; Mr Mark McGowan; Mr Rob Johnson; Mrs Michelle Roberts; Mr Peter Watson; Mr David Templeman; Mr Mick Murray; Ms Janine Freeman; Ms Margaret Quirk; Mr Bill Johnston; Mr John Quigley; Dr Mike Nahan

---

**Mr R.F. JOHNSON:** Mr Acting Speaker, throw him out if he is going to keep on being naughty. Put him in the naughty corner, Mr Acting Speaker. It is where he should go.

**Ms M.M. Quirk:** There's not enough room.

**Mr R.F. JOHNSON:** Exactly, member for Girrawheen!

I am trying to say that when the Prime Minister of our country, the top person in our country, asks, "How long are we prepared as a nation, to load more and more debt onto the shoulders of our children and grandchildren?" then that Prime Minister is really concerned at what is happening not only federally but in Western Australia. He is not a debt person; he is not somebody who likes debt—nobody likes debt. Western Australia's debt has gone up so much in the past years.

I want to touch on a couple of things before I move on to some of the other stuff that I would love to deal with. I have so much stuff here! Our crime rate is spiralling out of control. Unfortunately, the number of deaths on our roads is reaching unacceptable levels. It is because the government is not spending the road trauma trust account money in the areas that it should. The government is cost-shifting so much stuff to other departments. The Treasurer knows this full well. I can tell the Treasurer that that sort of action is costing people's lives. I hope the Treasurer is proud of that!

In an earlier speech I spoke about the Premier's staff. I have to tell members that they think they are an unelected cabinet. They seem to think they can make all the decisions of cabinet. They have not got much time for the ministers and their officers. I have been there as long as the Treasurer has been there.

**Dr M.D. Nahan:** We know you have been there, and you were a disgrace!

**Mr R.F. JOHNSON:** Why was that?

**Dr M.D. Nahan:** You were a disgrace as a minister.

**Mr R.F. JOHNSON:** Why was that?

**Dr M.D. Nahan:** Because you were a disgrace.

**Mr R.F. JOHNSON:** Can the Treasurer tell me why?

**Dr M.D. Nahan:** Incompetent!

**Mr R.F. JOHNSON:** You are the most incompetent Treasurer I have ever come across. You really are! You are totally incompetent!

Several members interjected.

**The ACTING SPEAKER:** Members!

**Mr R.F. JOHNSON:** You are totally incompetent, which is contrary to what you used to be before you came into this place.

**The ACTING SPEAKER:** Members, I remind you to direct your comments to the Chair and that might reduce the number of interjections.

**Mr R.F. JOHNSON:** He makes me so angry; I am so cross with him. He can be so nasty at times; he really can.

As I was saying, we have an enormous rise in crime. I want to go back a little bit. I have said many times what the debt situation was. I predicted it four years ago, and we have reached the level that I predicted. Debt is nudging \$40 billion. We have lost our AAA credit rating. We have seen massive increases in unemployment—the worst in 30 years. Unemployment is rife in some areas. We are losing thousands of jobs. The government says that it has not made anyone redundant. No, it has not, but when somebody leaves they are not being replaced. The government is as good as sacking people, because in certain areas they are not being replaced—except in ministerial offices, where they are getting top money. It is jobs for the boys and girls. This Premier used to be totally against that sort of thing. When the Premier was on this side of the house, I thought he had integrity. He was always complaining when the Labor government did exactly what he is doing now! If we do not learn from history, we are bound to repeat it. Unfortunately, that is what is happening. I really do not think that the Premier will make it to the election—not as the leader.

I read a couple of really good articles from over east, where they watch what goes on in Western Australia. I will quote an article from *The Age* of 18 August this year. It was written by Peter Martin, a highly respected journalist in the economics area. I am sure the Treasurer would know of him. The Treasurer has probably read the article. I am sure one of his staff would have given it to him. The article deals mainly with Christian Porter,



Mr Chris Tallentire; Mr Fran Logan; Mr Mark McGowan; Mr Rob Johnson; Mrs Michelle Roberts; Mr Peter Watson; Mr David Templeman; Mr Mick Murray; Ms Janine Freeman; Ms Margaret Quirk; Mr Bill Johnston; Mr John Quigley; Dr Mike Nahan

---

when he was Treasurer. It is not about the incompetent Treasurer we have now. I will read some of the article, which is referring to Christian Porter. It states —

He spelled out the problem clearly enough. His 2011 budget said GST revenue would “fall dramatically” from \$3.6 billion in 2011–12, to just \$2 billion in 2014–15.

His response was to spend even more. He promised spending growth of 7.9 per cent in 2011–12, and achieved 10.2 per cent. And he borrowed more, boosting state government debt from \$13.2 billion to \$18.4 billion in two years.

He borrowed for a new football stadium, a new purpose-built home for WA Institute of Sport, a new Perth Museum, a new hospital and new schools, and a \$270 million Perth Waterfront Project, all in the middle of a construction boom when the cost of building was soaring.

We were building all this stuff and paying the highest possible cost, when the rates for bricklayers and everybody else in the construction industry was up there. Why did we not put some money aside from the mining boom? If we were able to spend a bit now in a more responsible and moderate way, we would be getting these things built much cheaper. The Treasurer says, “We built Fiona Stanley Hospital.” The government built it, but it did not pay for it! The former Labor Treasurer, Eric Ripper, put \$1.2 billion in a legislated account, which could earn interest, for Fiona Stanley Hospital, but this Treasurer will never accept that.

**Dr M.D. Nahan:** You were a cabinet minister when that data was there—explain your behaviour!

**Mr R.F. JOHNSON:** I can assure the Treasurer that I spoke to Christian Porter on many occasions about the level of state debt.

**Dr M.D. Nahan:** You were a cabinet minister.

**Mr R.F. JOHNSON:** He was really concerned as well, but he left the sinking ship!

**Dr M.D. Nahan:** As a result of that you were partly responsible.

**Mr R.F. JOHNSON:** Why, Treasurer?

**Dr M.D. Nahan:** It is cabinet solidarity. You make decisions collectively.

**Mr R.F. JOHNSON:** That is rubbish! The Treasurer knows that nothing goes to cabinet without the Premier’s approval and nothing comes out of cabinet without his approval. We have a one-man band in the emperor here who runs this government. The Treasurer is insignificant; he just does what he is told to do. I do not think many of those former ministers would have a good word to say about the Treasurer. Dr Doolittle, as somebody from his electorate with whom I spoke called him today, would do anything the Premier asked him. The Leader of the House is the Premier’s most loyal soldier, but what did the Premier do when he made the member for Kalamunda the Leader of the House in 2013? He virtually sat him on the backbench instead of seating him where he is seated today, which is where he should be, because he wanted the now Deputy Premier and his good, good friend and drinking mate, Troy Buswell, to sit next to him. The poor old member for Kalamunda had to sit behind the Premier. The Leader of the House has never sat there—ever.

**Dr M.D. Nahan:** You’re a bitter old man.

**Mr R.F. JOHNSON:** I am not a bitter old man at all. I am angry that the government is wasting so much public money.

*Withdrawal of Remark*

**Dr A.D. BUTI:** I seek clarification from you, Mr Acting Speaker. When members on this side of the aisle interject, you often call them. I wonder why you do not do it when government members interject. The Treasurer has continually interrupted and you have not said a word. When we do it, you always call us. You’re a disgrace.

**The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr P. Abetz):** I have called the member for Riverton. I have ignored the interjections from this side of the house continuously and I have called the member for Riverton.

**Dr A.D. Buti:** You’re a disgrace.

**The ACTING SPEAKER:** Member, withdraw that comment; otherwise you leave the chamber immediately. You do not call into question —

**Dr A.D. Buti:** I will not withdraw, because you are an absolute disgrace as an Acting Speaker.

**The ACTING SPEAKER:** In that case, I ask you to leave the chamber.

**Dr A.D. Buti:** Under what circumstance? You can call me.

Mr Chris Tallentire; Mr Fran Logan; Mr Mark McGowan; Mr Rob Johnson; Mrs Michelle Roberts; Mr Peter Watson; Mr David Templeman; Mr Mick Murray; Ms Janine Freeman; Ms Margaret Quirk; Mr Bill Johnston; Mr John Quigley; Dr Mike Nahan

---

**The ACTING SPEAKER:** You are not allowed to call into question —

**Dr A.D. Buti:** I said that you're a disgrace.

**The ACTING SPEAKER:** You are not allowed to do that.

**Dr A.D. Buti:** You are a disgrace. You can name me. You can call me.

**The ACTING SPEAKER:** Given your conduct, member for Armadale, you are not to remain in the chamber. I have been advised to simply call the member for Armadale to order. I will call you to order and if you persist, I will call you to order every time until it is time to eject you from the chamber. I call to order the member for Armadale.

**Mr J.H.D. DAY:** Point of order. Is the member for Armadale leaving? Mr Acting Speaker, whatever the member for Armadale might think about the issue, he repeatedly called you a disgrace and refused to withdraw.

Several members interjected.

**The ACTING SPEAKER:** Member for Armadale, I am on my feet.

**Dr A.D. Buti:** He's made his ruling.

**The ACTING SPEAKER:** Member for Armadale, I call you for a second time.

Several members interjected.

**The ACTING SPEAKER:** I am on my feet. The member for Armadale kept talking, but the Leader of the House was quiet.

**Mr J.H.D. DAY:** Mr Acting Speaker, I seek clarification.

**Mrs M.H. ROBERTS:** Point of order, Mr Speaker.

**The ACTING SPEAKER:** We already have a point of order. You will have to wait your turn.

**Mrs M.H. Roberts** interjected.

**The ACTING SPEAKER:** Member for Midland, I call you to order. That is unacceptable conduct.

**Mr D.A. Templeman** interjected.

**The ACTING SPEAKER:** Member for Mandurah, I call you to order. Points of order are to be heard in silence, member for Mandurah.

**Mr J.H.D. DAY:** Mr Acting Speaker, this is becoming farcical, I agree. The member for Armadale, regardless of the issue he raised, refused to withdraw from calling you a disgrace on numerous occasions. No member who calls the person in the chair a disgrace, no matter who they are, should be allowed to get away with it. I simply seek clarification about your ruling.

**The ACTING SPEAKER:** Further to that point of order, I take the point of order. I should have asked the member for Armadale to withdraw. The Leader of the House is quite correct. I ask the member for Armadale to withdraw.

**Dr A.D. BUTI:** Mr Acting Speaker, you made a ruling and that was the end of the matter. You then took a point of order from the Leader of the House as to how you should behave. You made your ruling and that should stand as your ruling. You should not try to retrospectively change the ruling after coaching from the Leader of the House. That is not how you should be operating. You made your ruling. You called me and that was it.

**The ACTING SPEAKER:** I do not need a lecture from the member for Armadale. It was pointed out as a point of order that I should have called on you to withdraw. When the Acting Speaker does not hear something and does not take action, any member can call a point of order and ask that a member withdraw the statement. That is what I asked you to do. That is the matter. I ask you to withdraw what you said, member for Armadale.

**Dr A.D. Buti:** Withdraw what?

**The ACTING SPEAKER:** You referred to me as being a disgrace. That is unacceptable conduct. It is unparliamentary, so I ask you to withdraw.

**Dr A.D. BUTI:** Before I accede to your request, why did you not see it necessary to ask me to withdraw earlier but now you see it as necessary to ask me to withdraw?

**The ACTING SPEAKER:** Because there was a point of order and I accepted that point of order.

**Dr A.D. BUTI:** I withdraw.

**Extract from Hansard**

[ASSEMBLY — Tuesday, 20 September 2016]

p6283b-6335a

Mr Chris Tallentire; Mr Fran Logan; Mr Mark McGowan; Mr Rob Johnson; Mrs Michelle Roberts; Mr Peter Watson; Mr David Templeman; Mr Mick Murray; Ms Janine Freeman; Ms Margaret Quirk; Mr Bill Johnston; Mr John Quigley; Dr Mike Nahan

---

*Point of Order*

**Mrs M.H. ROBERTS:** Mr Acting Speaker, you called me to order just now, but the fact of the matter is that I was making a point of order. I was making a legitimate point of order. The reason that the member for Armadale called the point of order in the first place is that there were repeated interjections from the member for Riverton, but he was not being called to order. He was called to order once when there were clearly about 10 opportunities to call him to order. You made a ruling on the member for Armadale and the matter was settled but you then took a point of order from the member for Kalamunda, as Leader of the House, and then you rose to your feet. The practice in this house is that members sit down when you are on your feet. It applies to this side of the house but, again, it does not apply to that side of the house. You allowed the member for Kalamunda to remain on his feet while you were responding to a point of order. It is hardly any wonder that we have disarray. In the process of making a legitimate and correct point of order, you called me to order and named me. It is extraordinary.

**The ACTING SPEAKER:** Please resume your seat. I think I have said enough on this matter. It is very clear — Several members interjected.

**The ACTING SPEAKER:** Members, I am on my feet. I will call anyone to order who continues to speak while I am on my feet. I have heard what the member said, but there were so many interjections from the opposition side of the house that I did not call. I called the member for Riverton.

Several members interjected.

**The ACTING SPEAKER:** Members, I am on my feet.

**Mr P.C. Tinley** interjected.

**The ACTING SPEAKER:** Member for Willagee, I call you to order. Member for Hillarys, you have the call.

*Debate Resumed*

**Mr R.F. JOHNSON:** Mr Acting Speaker —

*Point of Order*

**Mrs M.H. ROBERTS:** I will make my point clearly so that you understand it. I simply ask, Mr Acting Speaker: are you going to call the member for Kalamunda for remaining on his feet while you were on your feet; and, if not, why not?

**The ACTING SPEAKER:** I did not call him to order. He was not speaking, but there was yelling coming from opposition members, including you, member for Midland. I do not accept that. I was looking this way because —

Several members interjected.

*Suspension of Member*

**The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr P. Abetz):** Members, I am on my feet. Member for Armadale, I call you again. That is now the fourth time. I ask you to leave the chamber.

[The member for Armadale left the chamber.]

*Debate Resumed*

**The ACTING SPEAKER:** Member for Hillarys, you have the call.

**Mr R.F. JOHNSON:** Boy, oh boy!

*Point of Order*

**Mrs M.H. ROBERTS:** Mr Acting Speaker, I move dissent from your ruling to eject the member for Armadale.

**The ACTING SPEAKER:** I have just been advised that under standing order 48, the member cannot move dissent from a ruling that is made at the discretion of the Acting Speaker.

*Debate Resumed*

**Mr R.F. JOHNSON:** Mr Acting Speaker, as I said earlier today, it is a great day to be an Independent—it really is! I cannot believe that I have caused this furore. I was quietly going through my budget speech —

**Mr D.T. Redman:** You're a walking disaster.

---

**Extract from Hansard**

[ASSEMBLY — Tuesday, 20 September 2016]

p6283b-6335a

Mr Chris Tallentire; Mr Fran Logan; Mr Mark McGowan; Mr Rob Johnson; Mrs Michelle Roberts; Mr Peter Watson; Mr David Templeman; Mr Mick Murray; Ms Janine Freeman; Ms Margaret Quirk; Mr Bill Johnston; Mr John Quigley; Dr Mike Nahan

---

**Mr R.F. JOHNSON:** Obviously! I have upset a few people and I will upset a few more because I again want to talk about the Premier. He is the worst Premier this state has ever had. He does not know how to appreciate his friends. He talks about loyalty, but he does not know the meaning of loyalty. Look what he did to Hon Liz Constable. He would not have formed government without her help. He was not prepared to be the leader in 2008 unless she agreed to go around with him and be part of his team. He would not accept the leadership under any other circumstances. He won that election with Hon Liz Constable. What did he do to her? Eight months out from the next election, she was doing a great job as Minister for Education, and he stabbed her in the back and got rid of her. I have had coffee with Hon Liz Constable many times, and she has said to me many times, about his behaviour, “You never forget who took you to the dance.” She took him to the dance; she helped him become the Premier, and look at the way he behaved towards her.

And yet we have Troy Buswell, a drunkard who smashes up other people’s cars, leaves the scene of a crime, and the Premier stands up for him and covers it up. They arrange to send his chief of staff to an accounting firm that I believe gives advice to the government on the sale of assets. It is the same with the media adviser they got rid of who was espousing the Leader of the Opposition’s house and where it was. They sent him over to Queensland, paid all his fare and shifted all the stuff out of his apartment.

**MRS M.H. ROBERTS (Midland) [8.41 pm]:** What extraordinary times we have here. We have seen some shambolic displays from the Liberal Party in recent days, and the shambolic relationship between the National Party and the Liberal Party knows no bounds. We are here today debating the Loan Bill 2016 because of the Liberal Party’s mismanagement of the state’s finances. Specifically, this Loan Bill is here because the government has run over budget, not by \$1.7 million, not even \$17 million, but \$1.7 billion. That is the extra money that the government needs by the end of October because, otherwise, it is not that some little building project will not go ahead; it will mean that the state cannot pay its bills. It will not be able to pay teachers, nurses, education assistants and police officers because it has mismanaged the budget. I remind members that it is only September; the budget was brought down in May. In May we were told that the budget would see the government through the next 12 months, but just a few short months later the government has botched the budget to such an extent that it must walk in here with yet another loan bill, for \$1.7 billion. This is the major disgrace of the Barnett government.

The Premier would like to have a legacy of all the projects that he has carried out, such as Elizabeth Quay and so forth, but the biggest legacy that this Premier will leave the state is debt. The member for Hillarys pointed out that it is costing \$15 million a day. We could build a couple of primary schools a day for that. We could build a police station. We could employ goodness knows how many additional nurses, police officers and education assistants. Maybe we could build some proper rehabilitation centres to deal with the drug problems that are out of control in this state. So many worthwhile things could happen. All of us have big wish lists for our electorates, because we have got bugged all over the past eight years of Liberal government. Yes, some areas have been deluxed, including the Premier’s own electorate and the Deputy Premier’s electorate. They have done very well out of this government, but my electorate and other electorates in the East Metropolitan Region have not been so fortunate.

This government has its own priorities, which are not for the ordinary working people of this state. Its priorities have not been for the people in the East Metropolitan Region. Its priorities have not been for pensioners. Household expenses have gone up beyond belief. In my electorate and, I expect, in most other electorates—although not that of the Premier, the member for Scarborough or even the member for Kalamunda—such as your own electorate, Mr Acting Speaker (Mr P. Abetz), people are doing it really tough. They are getting extraordinary water bills every two months and exorbitant electricity bills. Their car licences have gone up and the cost of public transport has gone up. Now the emergency services levy has gone up considerably. There has been no end of pain for ordinary mums and dads.

Even those people whom the government said it would serve when it was first elected are doing it tough. I have had person after person come in and talk to me about land tax bills—not just people living in Midland, but people from the broader region have come in and seen me about their land tax bills. People in the Swan Valley and in the hills and other areas have come to see me. Land tax bills have gone up dramatically, not because the value of people’s properties has gone up in recent years, but simply because of this greedy government.

The various measures the government said it would put in place to reduce costs and reduce red tape or whatever just have not come to fruition at all. However, this bill, for an additional \$1.7 billion, is very light on detail. It means that all the money that people in the community could well do with for really worthwhile projects is not there. It also means that because of this overspend and this colossal, unprecedented interest bill, household charges will continue to go up. It also means that necessary works in a range of electorates cannot take place. It also means that staffing and services in the community have been cut. I have had things cut from the Midland community. The legal aid office, in place in Midland for decades, has been removed, courtesy of a combination

Mr Chris Tallentire; Mr Fran Logan; Mr Mark McGowan; Mr Rob Johnson; Mrs Michelle Roberts; Mr Peter Watson; Mr David Templeman; Mr Mick Murray; Ms Janine Freeman; Ms Margaret Quirk; Mr Bill Johnston; Mr John Quigley; Dr Mike Nahan

---

of state and federal Liberal governments removing legal aid from Midland. A good proportion of the people accessing legal aid in Midland were Indigenous people. We know that the incarceration rate for Indigenous people is high. We also know that someone with good and effective legal representation has a much higher chance of staying out of jail, and their chance of being found not guilty is much higher. However, the problem for a lot of my constituents is that they are reliant on legal aid, and it is now no longer convenient. They somehow have to find the money, the time and inclination to come into the city to avail themselves of those legal aid services. If they want to speak to a legal aid lawyer, and they qualify, they must come into the central business district of Perth. That is crazy. The government says it is interested in decentralisation, but many services are now being centralised in the CBD that used to exist in the suburbs. The disarray of this government starts at the top. What we have seen displayed today is more evidence of the dictator who has run this state for the last eight years—the member for Cottesloe. Long before eight years ago, people in the Liberal Party knew of some of his proclivities and what the likely issues would be in putting him in the top job. That is why members of the Liberal Party avoided it. That is why they were in opposition. They churned through a large number of opposition leaders—there were so many that I cannot remember the order—and at least one of them had more than one go. They included the Premier, Matt Birney, Paul Omodei and Troy Buswell. I think the Liberal Party started the previous term with Colin and it ended up going back to Colin, but for most of the time that it was in opposition, there was a pretty united group called the ABC group—the “Anyone But Colin” group.

**Mr W.J. Johnston:** Led by the Liberal Party president.

**Mrs M.H. ROBERTS:** That is right.

The acrimonious relationship between Hon Norman Moore, now the Liberal Party president, and the current Premier of this state had long been on record, but they were desperate times and they were desperate enough to give Colin a go. It was often remarked on because of the close proximity at that time. They knew full well the issues that the current Premier had had in dealing with his education portfolio and that he had not been able to keep within his spending limits. When he was given the allocation for his education portfolio by the then Treasurer, Hon Richard Court, quite clearly his instruction to his department was: “Just keep spending; don’t bother reining it in. The fact of the matter is if we overspend, they’re just going to have to give us the extra money.” That is what had to occur over and over again, and he got away with it. It was only in sheer frustration that John Langoulant, the then Under Treasurer, penned that letter. He was sick and tired of the situation that the then Minister for Education had placed him in, as the minister continually overspent his education budget. Imagine if every minister in cabinet took that same blasé attitude. It seems that the Premier brought this same blasé attitude to government.

This links in pretty interestingly with the way that the Liberal Party selects its ministers. The Liberal Party has a policy of allowing the Premier to select the ministers. It is his little fiefdom. He chooses who is in and who is out. I think that is pretty unhealthy, because the moment that anyone questions what the emperor wants or questions the emperor’s decisions or does not do what the emperor says, they can be out on their ear. This Premier likes to talk about stability in government. The only stability has been the Premier. He has stayed there for the full eight years, as he has churned through, as pointed out by the member for Hillarys, no fewer than 15 ministers in eight years. Fifteen ministers have been out the door in eight years. I think that could be a record. That is what I call a recipe for instability in government. If my numbers are right, I understand that we have had seven swearing-in ceremonies of Treasurers under this government. We had the former member for Busselton and then we had the Premier, and then it was back to the former member for Busselton and then it was Hon Christian Porter for a time. I think the Premier ended up having another go in the job before we eventually got to the current Treasurer, who I think, as one of my colleagues remarked, might have been a more appropriate choice in the first place. If the current Treasurer had been chosen on day one, he surely would not still be in the job because, one way or another, they would have banged heads, and if someone bangs heads with the Premier, they are out the door.

We have had this autocratic leadership—this dictatorship—by the Premier. He has had absolute power in government. He has dictated what happens in every portfolio. Some really unedifying aspects have been dragged through the media in recent days. Former ministers, many of whom I think are good and honest people, have in total frustration made clear what went on. I do not think Hon Helen Morton, for example, relished the opportunity to effectively air dirty laundry in public. I do not think Hon Tony Simpson relished the opportunity to air dirty laundry in public. They have done that out of total and complete frustration with the way the Premier has run government. He has been a dictator. He has called the shots in just about every portfolio. He goes on radio and has a thought bubble—we have heard it; from day one, we have talked about the Premier’s so-called thought bubbles—and we think to ourselves: I wonder whether that is the first the minister has heard about it. Now we find out that in many cases it was. He announces things on radio and responds to something and

**Extract from Hansard**

[ASSEMBLY — Tuesday, 20 September 2016]

p6283b-6335a

Mr Chris Tallentire; Mr Fran Logan; Mr Mark McGowan; Mr Rob Johnson; Mrs Michelle Roberts; Mr Peter Watson; Mr David Templeman; Mr Mick Murray; Ms Janine Freeman; Ms Margaret Quirk; Mr Bill Johnston; Mr John Quigley; Dr Mike Nahan

---

basically takes the portfolio in a new direction. He has a weird approach to things whereby he says, “Is; isn’t.” He says that two opposite things can be true at the same time. That is what the local government amalgamation process was all about. First, councils had a free choice to amalgamate and then when councils wanted to amalgamate, he said, “No; there is a process.” Then he told some councils that they could not amalgamate with their neighbouring council and they had to amalgamate with another neighbouring council. Then he said that amalgamation was not compulsory. Tell that to the local governments that went through a process for two years. I cannot remember how much money was wasted by local governments, because they were basically snookered into a corner. Probably \$20 million or \$30 million of ratepayers’ money was wasted across the community for a process that ultimately did not come to fruition. Communities such as the Mundaring community were put through hell for a couple of years. Other people can talk about situations south of the river.

[Member’s time extended.]

**Mrs M.H. ROBERTS:** The City of Cockburn was supposed to be amalgamated. It was up in arms at one point. I did not follow the issues south of the river all that closely, but I know there was quite a debacle there. There was certainly a debacle in Mundaring. That council was told that it would be pushed down the path of forced amalgamation. The Shire of Mundaring was going to be forced to amalgamate with the City of Swan and the Shire of Kalamunda was going to be forced to amalgamate with the City of Belmont. None of these councils wanted to amalgamate. At an earlier stage, the Town of Bassendean and the City of Swan had been working on a potential amalgamation, but the Town of Bassendean was told that it had to amalgamate with the City of Bayswater. It did not want to amalgamate with the City of Bayswater but had been amenable to talking through a process with the City of Swan. Amalgamations that could have taken place in a cooperative arrangement were not allowed because the Premier had his own panel, with his hand-picked appointment, Mel Congerton, heading it up, and it came up with what I can only assume were some quite political solutions. Every time members spoke to the councillors and the CEOs about their meetings and discussions with the Minister for Local Government, most of them said that he was a pretty good bloke and a pretty reasonable man. He gave them certain assurances, and I am sure that the Minister for Local Government was quite genuine in those assurances. The minister was then continually overridden by the Premier and he had no choice but to take the Premier’s direction. For about two years, he must not have known whether he was coming or going. The minister is the one at the coalface who constantly goes out to the various occasions, events, meetings and so forth held by local government authorities. He was getting it in the neck from all the local government authorities. The Premier then stood up in Parliament and said that there would be no forced local government amalgamations. The political heat got so strong that the Premier turned around and abandoned the process. He absolutely hung the Minister for Local Government out to dry. This was after the previous Minister for Local Government, the member for Bunbury, went through a similar process in the last couple of years that he was minister. I do not think that he knew whether he was coming or going either. This is the Premier’s kind of autocratic control. I kind of wonder who called the shots when the member for Vasse was Treasurer, as the Premier kept announcing things that suited him that had to be added to the budget. Similarly, when Hon Christian Porter was Treasurer, he would have the budget just about set and then the Premier would announce some new pet project or make some other commitment and suddenly the budget would be off the rails again.

Remember those early years when the newly elected Premier was flying high and he pulled off the remarkable, unexpected win in 2008? Remember those years when he presented state budgets and would announce projects that there was no funding for in the budget? We would say that there was no money on forward estimates, and he would say, “This is the budget, one year at a time.” We all stood here and said that he could not operate like that. Those of us who had been in government under the stewardship of Geoff Gallop and Eric Ripper knew that money had to be put on forward estimates. Hon Eric Ripper would not talk about a spending envelope for the single year we were in; he would talk about the spending envelope of the four years of the forward estimates, and often beyond. He wanted to know what capital expenditure lay in wait for us over the horizon so that he could budget accordingly. If some big, long-term spending commitments were made, they needed to be pencilled in. That is why when we announced capital projects, money was always put on the forward estimates for them. Amusingly enough, if there was not money on the forward estimates for projects that we had not even announced but which people believed would go ahead or had to happen, we would get complaints from the then opposition that we did not have the money on forward estimates. They believed in it when they were in opposition, but not when they got to government. These are just more examples of the kind of never-never spending that the Premier has done. He has not had a proper process.

Members can have a look at what happened with the new Perth Stadium on Burswood Peninsula. Is it not incomprehensible that there are no funding arrangements with the major tenants and the building is just about complete? That does not really put the government in a position of strength. No proper funding arrangement was put in place with the Australian Football League. It made no commitment; the Premier just kind of announced it

**Extract from Hansard**

[ASSEMBLY — Tuesday, 20 September 2016]

p6283b-6335a

Mr Chris Tallentire; Mr Fran Logan; Mr Mark McGowan; Mr Rob Johnson; Mrs Michelle Roberts; Mr Peter Watson; Mr David Templeman; Mr Mick Murray; Ms Janine Freeman; Ms Margaret Quirk; Mr Bill Johnston; Mr John Quigley; Dr Mike Nahan

---

and hoped that people would come along and help him pay the bill afterwards. What was his commitment from the federal government? What was his commitment from the AFL? What long-term arrangement did he have in place with either the West Coast Eagles or the Fremantle Dockers? We now know that it is absolutely nil and nothing. That is just irresponsible. There would have been a significantly lower cost to renovate and build a new stadium at Subiaco—certainly a cheaper option than what the Premier went for. He went for the grand scheme and that is a call that he and his government made—I suspect that largely he made it. There is no doubt that the stadium will be magnificent when it is finished but it will cost, all-up, way more than what the Premier has said. It will be significantly more. The site works around it and the cost of the train station that had to be installed will mean phenomenal costs. Maybe over the next 50 years or something it will prove to be a significant landmark building and people will really enjoy going there, but, it came at a cost. It came at the cost of borrowing. We literally had to borrow to build projects such as the stadium, which was plainly irresponsible.

Meanwhile, in just eight years, state debt has escalated from \$3.6 billion to over \$30 billion, and is heading towards \$40 billion. In the stint I had as shadow Treasurer a few years ago, after the Premier had been in office for about three years, I asked him whether he would put a cap on state debt at \$20 billion. He said that I was talking nonsense and he would not get anywhere near \$20 billion. He said a \$20 billion cap was not needed because it would never happen. It has now gone way, way beyond that. He spent like a drunken sailor and like there was no tomorrow. That means he has now saddled the community with state debt. For an electorate like mine, that means we still do not have a new train station in Midland. In the May 2008 budget, we put some money on budget for the upgrade to Midland station. We never got that upgrade. The money was taken off budget in the first year that Colin Barnett was in office. We are still waiting for a commitment for that. Midland train station should be moved to the new hospital site so it can link in to the town centre and Cale Street, and flow through to the main shopping area at Midland Gate Shopping Centre; that is what should happen. Just as the new train station is going in near the Burswood sports stadium, our new Midland train station should be near the new hospital and feed into the main Midland shopping precinct. After eight years, this government has made no commitment. It is really difficult to make a commitment now because it has absolutely blown the budget. Out of the city, the train-holding yards need to move from an area in East Perth to Bellevue, in my electorate. This, of course, is a fantastic opportunity to commit to a train station at Bellevue and provide new end-of-line facilities there. However, again this government has made no commitment; it will not go ahead, although it is long overdue. It will be difficult to deliver because of the disastrous state finances.

I refer to school bus routes in my electorate in areas that have grown and where thousands of houses have gone in. The school bus route from La Salle College and Governor Stirling Senior High School finishes in, for example, Jane Brook at the start of Dongara Circle. It does not go properly into the housing estate. I would simply like that bus—the community, the kids and the mums and dads would like it too—to go another 500 metres or another half a kilometre to a more central location in the suburb. That is not far to go, but it would make a huge difference. What would it cost to get the bus to go half a kilometre more a day? It might cost \$20 day—\$100 a school week. It is not a lot of money. The response from the Minister for Transport was that the government is trying to cut out school bus services. It wants to remove them, shorten them; it does not want to expand them. That is the sad state of affairs we are facing. It wants to provide a lesser public transport service for kids to get to school. It is just wrong.

Other bus services in my electorate have been curtailed. There is no weekend bus service to Helena Valley, which is one or two kays from Midland town centre. A lot of elderly people live in that area, people are retiring there and more retirement accommodation is being built, but there have been no results in that area.

The much needed link from Lloyd Street through to Abernethy Road would benefit not just my electorate but about six electorates in the vicinity. It is the City of Swan's number one priority and the city cannot get an answer out of the government because the budget has been blown. The money has been spent elsewhere. That extension would increase the productivity for freight and trucks that pass through and it would result in less commuter congestion and so forth. It is an obvious and necessary link, yet we are still waiting for it. Hundreds of thousands of people in the eastern region are still waiting because this Treasurer has blown the budget and spent the money on other priorities. We do not have primary school infrastructure and a range of things we need.

**MR P.B. WATSON (Albany)** [9.12 pm]: It gives me great pleasure to speak on the Loan Bill. I will probably drift away a little from what other people have said and talk more about my electorate. The first thing I want to mention is that Albany has been saddened by the loss of Annette Knight, a freeperson of the city. She was the first woman newsreader and announcer with ABC regional radio and had a career that lasted 27 years. She served three terms as Mayor of Albany from 1978 to 1998. In 1996 she was awarded a Member of the Order of Australia for services to local government, particularly through the then WA Municipal Association, the then Country Urban Councils Association and as Mayor of Albany. She was a WA Citizen of the Year winner in

**Extract from Hansard**

[ASSEMBLY — Tuesday, 20 September 2016]

p6283b-6335a

Mr Chris Tallentire; Mr Fran Logan; Mr Mark McGowan; Mr Rob Johnson; Mrs Michelle Roberts; Mr Peter Watson; Mr David Templeman; Mr Mick Murray; Ms Janine Freeman; Ms Margaret Quirk; Mr Bill Johnston; Mr John Quigley; Dr Mike Nahan

---

1997, and received the Governor's Award for Regional Development in recognition of her commitment, vision, leadership and contribution to the growth, development and prosperity of regional WA. She was a government-appointed delegate to the 1998 Constitutional Convention, was a justice of the peace for 35 years and held the University of Western Australia's vice-chancellor's award for outstanding service to higher education, having been instrumental in establishing Great Southern Grammar and the UWA Albany Centre. Annette was made a commissioner of the WA Tourism Commission in 1995 and was appointed deputy chairperson of the commission's board in 1998. In 2001 she was awarded the Centenary Medal, awarded on the centenary of the Federation of Australia, for her service to the community of Albany, and in March this year was inducted into the WA Women's Hall of Fame.

Those are just some of the things she did, but it does not really explain the gist of who Annette Knight was. Annette Knight and I did a radio show every Saturday morning for over 10 years. It was the highest rating little show all over Australia on the ABC. I was not a member of Parliament then; I was just the manager of the local post office. There was a great understanding between us. I used to call her the "Old Grey Mare" and she called me the "Roo Dog", and people throughout the Great Southern loved hearing our banter on Saturday mornings. Annette, the person, was as comfortable with princes, kings and queens, and the person in the street. She always had time for everyone. She will be a tremendous loss to Albany. We will miss seeing her smiling face. I had the opportunity to see her in the hospice a couple of days before she went and she still gave me a bit of cheek and I gave her cheek back. We gave each other a big hug. I would like to read out something that was said at her funeral service, entitled "For Annette", which states —

May you continue to inspire us:

To enter each day with a generous heart.

To serve the call of courage and love

Until we see your beautiful face again

In that land where there is no more separation,

Where all tears will be wiped from our mind,

And where we will never lose you again.

As I said so some of my friends, Albany has lost a legend and I have lost a very dear friend. Rest in peace, Annette, and I extend my deepest sympathy to Tom and the family.

Turning to something a little lighter, over the weekend the Great Southern Football League had a tremendous grand final in Mt Barker. The league had decided to hold the grand final game at different grounds every year, but even under the old system Mt Barker would have hosted the grand final this year anyway. They were the favourites, but unfortunately for Mt Barker, North Albany got up and won by three points. It was a tremendous game of football. Both the North Albany league and reserves sides won the premiership for the third year in a row. I told the boys I would mention their names in Parliament. The North Albany league team included: Adam Ditchburn, Regan Lloyd, Grant Corcoran, Matt Orzel, Luke Cameron, Nathan Crudeli, Nick Barrow, Jacob Hobbs, Stewart Davies, Alec Haskins, Matt Smith—the Kleeman medallist, which is the fairest and best for the whole competition—Addison Dew, Marcus Trevenen, Graham Ross, Jake Becroft, Elliot Smith, Stefan Ericson, Daniel Parker, Dom Knight, Ray Padfield, Brock Ramsay, Jack McPhee, who was fairest and best on the day —

**Mr P. Abetz** interjected.

**Mr P.B. WATSON:** Would the member for Southern River not interrupt. It is bad enough when he is in the Chair, without interrupting down here.

**Mr P. Abetz** interjected.

**Mr P.B. WATSON:** Madam Acting Speaker, can you call him to order? Jack McPhee was the Alan Barnett medallist, as best and fairest on the day. I mention the coach Craig Dew, who has done a very good job with the juniors; he coached the seniors this year.

I turn now to the North Albany reserves players. The fairest and best was Benjamin Hitchcock. The other players included Jyrin Woods, Michael Martain —

Several members interjected.

*Point of Order*



**Extract from Hansard**

[ASSEMBLY — Tuesday, 20 September 2016]

p6283b-6335a

Mr Chris Tallentire; Mr Fran Logan; Mr Mark McGowan; Mr Rob Johnson; Mrs Michelle Roberts; Mr Peter Watson; Mr David Templeman; Mr Mick Murray; Ms Janine Freeman; Ms Margaret Quirk; Mr Bill Johnston; Mr John Quigley; Dr Mike Nahan

---

**Mr W.J. JOHNSTON:** It would be helpful if the members for Eyre and Southern River did not interject on the member on his feet. This is a general debate. It is clear the member for Albany is trying to advocate on behalf of his community. It seems that he is being constantly interjected on and pilloried by two members who do not appear to intend to speak on behalf of their constituents.

**Mrs G.J. GODFREY:** I cannot see the relevance of two footy teams to the Loan Bill.

**Mr W.J. Johnston:** It's a general debate.

**Mr P.B. Watson:** It's a general debate. If you'd been here for such a long time you'd know.

**The ACTING SPEAKER (Ms J.M. Freeman):** Member for Albany.

**Mrs G.J. Godfrey:** Very nice. Thank you very much!

**The ACTING SPEAKER:** Member for Belmont, I am on my feet.

**Mrs G.J. Godfrey:** My apologies, Madam Acting Speaker.

**The ACTING SPEAKER:** Settle, settle; it is late. We are all good. Take a deep breath. It is a general debate.

A member interjected.

**The ACTING SPEAKER:** You are not in your chair, Treasurer. I think I might call you for that.

A member interjected.

**The ACTING SPEAKER:** Treasurer, you are called. Are we all settled now? The member for Albany has the floor. He has my full attention. We are all good.

*Debate Resumed*

**Mr P.B. WATSON:** I forgot who I mentioned last so I will go through the reserves team again. The players include Benjamin Hitchcock, Jyrin Woods, Michael Martain, Bradley Jetta, Brodie Sumich—who won the Jim Hull medal for fairest and best on the day—Charles Walmsley, Scott Mackenzie, Nathan Dovey, Ryan Roznoczny, Warrick Ellery, Brett Hall, Grant Freeborough, Ryland Galante, Bradley Randall, Alan Maris, Luke Chambers, Nathan Komene, Mitchell Woods, Todd Knuiman, William Mcsweeney, Brendan Selleck and Stuart Ranford. The umpire of the year, which is an award that I do, was won by Ryan Tindale.

We had the hockey grand finals at the weekend. The winners were the Tigers and its players were Brigitte Rockwood-Turner, Bonnie Crook, Phoebe Howard, Hollee Worrell, Sian Turner—good on you, Sian—Alex Keymer, Georgina Lilford—I used to teach her how to umpire basketball—Lauren Hortin, Tamara Lowry, Julie Keymer, Lisa Leonhardt, Cionne Fage, Rebecca Nairn, Georgetta Powis, Renae Hordyk, Mikayla Penn and Bonnie Crook. The men's hockey was won by Manypeaks for the fifth year in a row. That is a tremendous performance by the Manypeaks hockey team. Their players were Kieran Howie, Brett Stevens, Riley Scott, Lachlan Stainton, Tim Pyle, David Pyle, Adam Scott, Daniel Baker, Reece Curwen, Matt Stevens, Hudson Field, Trevor Greay and Andrew van Rooyen.

The fairest and best in the Albany Netball Association was won by Kelly Judd.

**Mrs G.J. Godfrey:** Well done, Kelly.

**Mr P.B. WATSON:** Kelly Judd is the member for Wagin's daughter, so do not take the cheek out of her or the member for Belmont will have to answer to the member for Wagin. The Albany Netball Association's competition was won by Kangas 1: Rani Rawlinson, Marcia Trevenen, Kellie Rogers, Kym Quartermaine, Brooke Baines, Alyssa Perry, Jodi Ferry, Hannah Mackay, Rebecca Ravenhill and Carrie Beeck.

Last Friday night we had the Albany Chamber of Commerce Business Awards. The microbusiness category—less than five employees—was won by HideAway Haven, Becki Shaver and Maggie van Santen. They do a wonderful job in promoting the region. The best business with five to 10 employees was won by Albany Harbourside Apartments and Houses, Mark Wareing and Louisa van Halteren. That is a great place to stay if members are going to Albany. The business achiever category was won by Grande Food Service, Daniel Till. The start-up business category was won by Carlyssa Birkbeck of the Temple Boutique Spa, which is just up the road from my office. The young business person of the year was Daniel Till. The best home-based business was HideAway Haven. Best community business was Southern Aboriginal Corporation, CEO Asha Bhat and chairperson Glen Colbung. The customer service award went to Colette's Curtains and Blinds, Colette Knowlden. Business person of the year was Darren Jerrard from Albany Office Products Depot. Old Slick has been delivering our office products for quite a few years now. Business of the year was HideAway Haven.

**Extract from Hansard**

[ASSEMBLY — Tuesday, 20 September 2016]

p6283b-6335a

Mr Chris Tallentire; Mr Fran Logan; Mr Mark McGowan; Mr Rob Johnson; Mrs Michelle Roberts; Mr Peter Watson; Mr David Templeman; Mr Mick Murray; Ms Janine Freeman; Ms Margaret Quirk; Mr Bill Johnston; Mr John Quigley; Dr Mike Nahan

---

I congratulate the Albany Sea Rescue Squad. It was a finalist for the outstanding group operations award at the recent emergency services conference. The operation in question was a very difficult rescue at night in large seas. Although it did not win the award, the Albany Sea Rescue Squad and, more particularly, the people involved in that rescue received a never-before-given commissioner's commendation. Congratulations to Tim Wilkinson, Jason Shepherd and Chris Johns for their dedication to duty in a difficult situation and to their continued dedication to the Albany Sea Rescue Squad. I must congratulate the government on providing the brand-new sea rescue boat. It is a marvellous boat. It is very difficult because the squad is situated at Emu Point and it takes about 12 or 13 minutes to get from Emu Point out to the Gap where a lot of our tragedies occur. People get washed into the water out there. The squad does a tremendous job. They are all volunteers. Most people, when they go in off the Gap or off the rocks, will try to swim back in. The only way for someone who goes off the rocks at the Gap or Salmon Holes, or anywhere such as that, to survive is to swim out. The south coast is a bit different from the west coast; on the west coast we go into the water and everyone swims around and gets out, but the south coast is completely different; it is sheer rock going down into the water. Once someone gets into the water, they will not get out on the rocks. They have to swim out. The only person who has survived at the Natural Bridge is an American guy who swam out and lay on his back. They rescued him, but the other ones who have gone in have not had as much luck.

The Albany Basketball Association has also done well. I congratulate Colin Davies for winning the Arthur McRobbie Award at the Basketball WA awards night for his dedication to Albany basketball. Colin's efforts have been vital in driving Albany basketball forward and this recognition is well deserved. Colin has not only coached teams but also played and coached umpires. He is the umpire's adviser down there now. Colin does a tremendous job. He is a bit cheeky to me sometimes, but he is a very good person and it is tremendous that he has received that award. To be involved in amateur sports is a thankless task. I know that he has been on the committee. It was a tremendous effort by Colin and I congratulate him on behalf of everyone in Albany.

I refer to the conditions on South Coast Highway. I took the Leader of the Opposition out and we drove from Albany to Bremer Bay. I am sure that the member for Eyre has come down that road a few times when he comes down to Albany to see something decent for a change—a bit of sunshine and nice beaches!

**Dr G.G. Jacobs:** I see you along the cyclepath.

**Mr P.B. WATSON:** Yes, and he tries to run me over. The member for Eyre would know how bad that road is, particularly for trucks. It is not like our normal roads. The roads there drop right away. Someone can drive in the gravel on Albany Highway to Perth and it is not a problem; they hit the gravel and come back on. If someone goes out on that South Coast Highway, it drops right down like that. Many trucks have turned over. It is a real problem. I was glad that the Leader of the Opposition came out and had a look. We will be making some commitments for the next election to look after that road. We will have a very good minister for regional roads, the member for Collie–Wellington —

**Mr M.P. Murray:** Preston.

**Mr P.B. WATSON:** He is the member Collie–Preston—sorry, Mick. I have shared a room with the member for Collie–Preston for eight years so I should know where he is.

When we were out there we looked at a group called 888 Abalone. We met Peter and Craig Kestel out at Bremer Bay and their abalone farm is just magnificent.

**Dr M.D. Nahan:** Member, is that in Augusta?

**Mr P.B. WATSON:** Yes, there is one in Augusta but they also have in one in Bremer Bay. It is the same group. They bought the old one and they are spending a lot of money. Peter has spent a lot of money there. It is just amazing. They get a little spoon; they probably get 100 000 or something and only a small number survive. Then they put them all on these little flat things in the water and there are different stages. They turn them over and shift them to the next thing. It is a tremendous business and I know they want to expand. They want to get more land.

**Dr M.D. Nahan:** Is it the same business that owns both of them?

**Mr P.B. WATSON:** It is the same people. Peter had the one there and then he bought the one there and they have done it up.

**Dr M.D. Nahan:** He was going to expand the Augusta one, and it is tremendous.

**Mr P.B. WATSON:** It is, with the way they have all the different stages. Not only that, he employs people, including marine biologists. They have marine biologists there to make sure that they get everything right.

**Dr M.D. Nahan:** He started off as a diver, you know.

**Extract from Hansard**

[ASSEMBLY — Tuesday, 20 September 2016]

p6283b-6335a

Mr Chris Tallentire; Mr Fran Logan; Mr Mark McGowan; Mr Rob Johnson; Mrs Michelle Roberts; Mr Peter Watson; Mr David Templeman; Mr Mick Murray; Ms Janine Freeman; Ms Margaret Quirk; Mr Bill Johnston; Mr John Quigley; Dr Mike Nahan

---

**Mr P.B. WATSON:** Yes. Pete is a wild man. They are doing a tremendous job down there and they want to expand. It is a great tourism thing. We went there and I remember the Leader of the Opposition asking how long we were going to stay there for. I said we had it for an hour. I had to drag him out after an hour and a half. When we were there we saw the Shire of Jerramungup, which has issues out of Bremer Bay with the tourism side with the Bremer Bay Canyon with the Orca whales; there are all sorts of sea life in the canyon out there.

[Member's time extended.]

**Mr P.B. WATSON:** It is a great biosphere out in that area. It is tremendous. It is a great opportunity not only for business, for tourism and for extra jobs, but also for our region. I hope that it can expand. Peter and Craig are very savvy businessmen and they work really hard. Let us hope we can help them in the future.

A camp event is coming up. I would like to thank the state government for giving \$20 000 to The Big Camp Out, run by The Fathering Project. Wayne Bradshaw is doing a wonderful job as the chief executive. It gives dads the chance to take part in activities with their sons and daughters. Being involved in local sport over a long period, I have seen the same parents come down. Junior sport is just a drop-off point. People come along, drop their kids off and go shopping. It is the same old ones. I coached some boys from primary school right through to high school. I coached them in cricket, footy and basketball. There was probably one person there on a regular basis. Football was not so bad because we got some kids from the regions. I found that kids from Mount Barker and Cranbrook would come and play junior footy. Their parents came all the time but we had a lot of problems with the local parents. We want our kids to go the right way. People keep saying kids are going off track and they are not doing the right thing. We have to get parents involved again. People talk about footballers being role models, but the role models start at home. I feel sorry for a lot of young Noongar boys in Albany who are living with their grandparents or with their aunts and uncles. We have to look at this if we want to stop it happening down the track. I think we have it all arse about. We are putting all the money in later on. We have to put the money in early to get kids on the right track. Tell them about drugs and alcohol in primary schools and let them know. Show them the health effects. Do not just say it is not good for them; say, "This is what happens to people who take drugs. This is what happens to people who smoke." We are too much of a nanny state when we cannot tell little kids because they have enough to worry about. But if they do not learn about it at school, and someone offers them a smoke or a tablet, they will be a lot worse off. Talking about drugs and tablets, the government is very strong on being tough on drugs. Through questions on notice I found out that the great southern has one drug-testing machine. The police can pick up someone and test them for drugs but they have to take another test back at the police station to make sure it is okay. There is one machine for the whole great southern region. When Albany sends it to Williams or to the edge of the wheatbelt, that means there is not one in Albany. The police can pick people up, but if they show up okay on the alcohol test, they have to let them go because they do not have a testing machine there. I do not know how much they cost —

**Mr W.J. Johnston:** It is terrible. It is done in a police car in New South Wales.

**Mr P.B. WATSON:** We have not got the thing. The system here means they have to be taken back to the station. I was down at the station one night on another issue when they brought someone in. The police thought that person was on drugs but they had nothing to test them with.

**Dr M.D. Nahan:** We have invested very heavily in new testing equipment.

**Mr P.B. WATSON:** But the whole great southern police district only has one.

**Dr M.D. Nahan:** They are in individual patrol cars now for testing.

**Mr P.B. WATSON:** They have to bring them back for this machine to test.

**Dr M.D. Nahan:** No.

**Mr P.B. WATSON:** I was down there watching them do it.

**Dr M.D. Nahan:** That was probably the old one; they have new stuff. They take a test and give one to the person tested. They take the other one and bring it back and, if they find something, it goes to the ChemCentre for testing.

**Mr P.B. WATSON:** I do not think it has got to the great southern yet. I found out through a question on notice.

**Dr M.D. Nahan:** Okay; maybe. But they are rolling it out and it is improving.

**Mr P.B. WATSON:** Okay. This is something royalties for regions should be doing.

**Mr M.P. Murray:** The road trauma trust fund.

**Mr P.B. WATSON:** No—that is balancing the budget!

**Extract from Hansard**

[ASSEMBLY — Tuesday, 20 September 2016]

p6283b-6335a

Mr Chris Tallentire; Mr Fran Logan; Mr Mark McGowan; Mr Rob Johnson; Mrs Michelle Roberts; Mr Peter Watson; Mr David Templeman; Mr Mick Murray; Ms Janine Freeman; Ms Margaret Quirk; Mr Bill Johnston; Mr John Quigley; Dr Mike Nahan

---

**Dr M.D. Nahan:** It is going through the road trauma trust account. They are trying to increase the number of them.

**Mr P.B. WATSON:** The member for Collie–Preston has had success already!

**Dr M.D. Nahan:** It costs \$300 a pop.

**Mr P.B. WATSON:** We are now talking about the Loan Bill. I remember when loan bills were \$1 million or \$2 million. Mick and I have been here 16 years. When we get onto the Loan Bill we get up and talk about our electorates—probably \$1 million or \$2 million or something like that. In 2009, it was \$8.3—is that billion?

**Mr W.J. Johnston:** It would be.

**Mr P.B. WATSON:** In 2012 it was \$5 billion, in 2015 it was \$8 billion, and the fourth one, in 2016, is \$1.7 billion. I try to tell people how much it is. Rob Johnson, the member for Hillarys, said today it is \$15 million every single day. We have to tell people how much it is costing. Will the member for Hillarys do my tax return?

A member interjected.

**Mr P.B. WATSON:** I will get onto another thing that has bugged me. I sat back and watched the Olympics recently. I saw all these experts sitting in the studio saying, “This person has failed.” They were very negative. Kitty Chiller came out and said, “We’re going to win all these medals”, as though there is not enough pressure on athletes, when they go away after training for years and years, to peak on that one day. It is not the day before or the day after. I will give an example. When I was in Mexico, I got sick the night before I ran.

**Dr M.D. Nahan:** Was that in 1968?

**Mr P.B. WATSON:** Yes, 1968. We were told not to drink the water. I did not drink the water but I cleaned my teeth in the shower.

**Mr D.A. Templeman:** Did you take them out first?

**Mr P.B. WATSON:** I will be taking someone’s teeth out in a minute and they won’t be mine!

**Dr M.D. Nahan:** Was it difficult when you were running? What did you do when you were running after you cleaned your teeth?

**Mr P.B. WATSON:** I ran a lot, but it was in a very short space. I got sick the night before I ran. Ralph Doubell, who was my roommate, did exactly the same thing. He came out and won a gold medal but got sick the night after.

**Mr M.P. Murray:** Life is nasty, is it not?

**Mr P.B. WATSON:** I am just saying that the people who win gold medals produce it on one day out of 365. Young girls and guys coming through are going through puberty. I had the opportunity to talk to the two girls who are swimmers. I told them what had happened to me. They said one of their coaches was in Mexico and he got crook too. I do not know what event he was in. They were so flat and depressed. They won the relay by breaking the world record and had a gold medal, but they did not want to show it. They had them in these little bags. They did not want to get them out and show them because to show that meant they had failed in the other events. It is a funny way of looking at it. Twenty-four-hour media means stuff has to be produced on a regular basis, but these people will be affected for a long time. They are lucky they have access to psychologists at the Australian Institute of Sport, but people can tell them as much as they like. These kids dedicate their lives to sport. A particular journo—how can I say this without upsetting Basil Zempilas; sorry, did I mention his name!—talks as though he is an expert on anything. I can remember him as a rather average footballer for West Perth. He was very knowledgeable about every event and what people should and should not be doing, saying, “They have let us down.” The guy from the ABC in Melbourne said that was a real choke. The guy was on *AFL 360*. I looked up his résumé. He has never played sport in his life, but there he was saying that this person had choked in the final. She choked, but she probably finished fifth in the world. When I hear stuff like that, I get very frustrated.

I think I have mentioned the name of everybody in Albany. To those whose name I have not mentioned, I apologise. But they will all get a copy of this speech with love.

I was hoping that the Minister for Health would be in the chamber, because we have a situation in that those who participate in the patient assisted travel scheme can claim their money only by cheque and some people have a real problem with that. When one of my constituents went into the Commonwealth Bank the other day, he was

Mr Chris Tallentire; Mr Fran Logan; Mr Mark McGowan; Mr Rob Johnson; Mrs Michelle Roberts; Mr Peter Watson; Mr David Templeman; Mr Mick Murray; Ms Janine Freeman; Ms Margaret Quirk; Mr Bill Johnston; Mr John Quigley; Dr Mike Nahan

---

not allowed to deposit his cheque over the counter. I do not know what the issue is. He said that everything else is paid for by EFTPOS. I will follow that up with the minister.

**Dr M.D. Nahan:** By the way, member, that is a problem with quite a few government accounts. They do not accept EFTPOS or BPAY and they should.

**Mr P.B. WATSON:** Thank you.

Three months ago one of my constituents got a referral to a specialist at Fremantle Hospital. He was told that there is a 12-month wait for an appointment and another possible 12-month wait for surgery. That is not very good for people who live in the country, because they have to travel up and down all the time.

I refer to another gentleman who 20 years ago had throat cancer. He was referred to a speech pathologist who visits Albany and he was told that it could be a 12-month wait before he sees a specialist. This is not good enough for people in regional areas. It is not good enough for people in city areas, but I know that it does not happen in the city. Country people use PATS to go to Perth and they seem to fight a lot with the various departments to get the money. Treasurer, I am disappointed that my children and grandchildren will have this debt hanging over their heads.

**Dr M.D. Nahan:** But you have a hospital and an arts centre.

**Mr P.B. WATSON:** An arts centre?

**Dr M.D. Nahan:** Don't you have a major convention centre.

**Mr P.B. WATSON:** That was paid for by the previous government. You guys opened it, but we put all the money in. I had to screw Eric Ripper to the ground to get that money. I am very disappointed. It is all right saying that we have all these things, but our children and grandchildren will have to pay for them.

**MR D.A. TEMPLEMAN (Mandurah) [9.42 pm]:** It is good to see the member for Albany setting low benchmarks as usual!

I will make a contribution to the Loan Bill 2016. We have heard from the Leader of the Opposition and various members that this is indeed the fourth time in this government's tenure that a loan bill has been presented to this place. As has quite rightfully been pointed out, this loan bill is for \$1.7 billion, and it will once again add to the debt of the state with which this government has burdened the people of Western Australia. It is very sad. It is a poignant point to make that this is the government's fourth loan bill, because in contrast, the previous Labor administration had one loan bill for a mere \$250 million between 2001 and 2008. It is a sad indictment on the state government and on Liberal and National Party alliance members that the state's finances are in this parlous situation. It is very disappointing in an electorate such as mine when things are tight—budgets are tight, employment markets are tight and people are finding it more and more difficult to make ends meet. The government will leave a debt and deficit and a sense of great vulnerability and concern that will cause a lot of problems for people in my area. One of the challenges for the Peel region is that a number of historical aspects of our economy affect our social fabric. The first is that unfortunately we have a significant unemployment problem that was compounded only recently when Mandurah was unfortunately highlighted as having the second highest unemployment rate in the country. If we couple that with the fact there are no major new jobs being created in the region—certainly nothing is being encouraged by government—there is angst in families in the Peel who now very much feel the concerns that are related to job insecurity and unemployment and the impact that that has on people's health and wellbeing. As the member for Mandurah, it is distressing to talk to businesses and to people who have lost their jobs, whether those jobs were in the mining industry or related industries or whether they were professionals who held high paying jobs in engineering or higher professions. Families in numerous suburbs in the Mandurah–Dawesville electorates and the wider Peel region are doing it tough. What they want to hear and see from government is a plan for jobs for the future and a plan to create a greater sense of optimism and hope amongst people. The sad thing is that that has not been demonstrated by this government. I have been doing a bit of doorknocking of late and I need mention only one name to elicit a negative reaction.

**Mr J.R. Quigley:** In my electorate, member, it is the Premier, Mr Barnett.

**Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN:** It is the same when that name is mentioned in my electorate. Mention of the name Barnett creates a strong reaction from people. What do they say? They say things such as —

**Mr S.K. L'Estrange:** Thank you.

**Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN:** Oh mate, I tell you what—they do not say thank you. They do not thank you for the debt that the government has delivered for the state. They do not say thank you for the record debt with which the government has burdened future generations. That interjection is a classic example of how out of touch the member for Churchlands, the Premier and the government are. How absolutely appalling to say that people

**Extract from *Hansard***

[ASSEMBLY — Tuesday, 20 September 2016]

p6283b-6335a

Mr Chris Tallentire; Mr Fran Logan; Mr Mark McGowan; Mr Rob Johnson; Mrs Michelle Roberts; Mr Peter Watson; Mr David Templeman; Mr Mick Murray; Ms Janine Freeman; Ms Margaret Quirk; Mr Bill Johnston; Mr John Quigley; Dr Mike Nahan

---

would say thank you to the government! The member's interjection demonstrates how out of touch he is, and that is the problem we face with this government.

I am going to outline a number of projects and programs that are important to my region because despite the concern, some people are attempting to do some great things to change that lack of optimism because optimism is so important to a region such as mine.

The first is the business community of Mandurah, particularly the Peel Chamber of Commerce and Industry, of which I have been a member for 16 or 17 years. A couple of weeks ago, the Peel chamber held its annual Peel business excellence awards in the City of Mandurah. Over 450 people attended. Donna Cocking, the president of the Peel chamber, rightfully and proudly claimed that it was the biggest chamber event of its kind in Western Australia. I have heard of other chambers around the state holding events, but it seems there is no comparison in attendance numbers. What struck me about the chamber's excellence awards was the absolute commitment to turning things around in the region and doing whatever possible to ensure that local businesses prosper and succeed. The comment made quite often was, "We'll do it without the support or encouragement of the government; we don't trust the government now, so we'll do it on our own." It is interesting to note that a number of the businesses that were nominated for the various categories, and indeed the businesses that were winners in those categories, were run by younger people who are part of start-up businesses. They were start-up businesses that, with a great deal of enthusiasm and some good business planning and business cases, are now succeeding. Businesses that started out as one-person shows are now employing five, six or up to a dozen people. It was tremendous to see them celebrating their success on that night. The chamber's role is particularly important in promoting the importance of small business in the region, encouraging small business and demonstrating support for new start-up businesses.

It was particularly thrilling to see the younger businesspeople, and I want to mention one group in particular—the three Nalder brothers. I do not know whether they are related to the member for Alfred Cove, but they are three young men under the age of 30. I went up and talked to them after they had received their award. The eldest brother decided a number of years ago that he would go into dentistry. I am not going to reflect poorly on the Leader of the House, who, in his former life, was a dentist. Most people's perceptions of dentists would probably fit the mould of the Leader of the House—a mild mannered, quiet, distinguished, solemn and brutal person. These three fellows, the Nalder brothers, were totally different. I have badged them as the Patch Adams of dentistry. Their approach is all about engaging with their patients, particularly as they have set up their practice in the northern part of Mandurah, in the Meadow Springs–Lakelands area, attracting, if you like, a target audience of younger families with children.

Apparently, the eldest brother decided he would become a dentist. I asked whether it was in his genes or his heritage, but he said that he just decided that might be a good thing to do. While he was studying, in his third year, his next brother decided he would try his hand as well, so he started training, and then the youngest brother also decided to take up training. Three of them were all studying at the same time and finished in a staggered formation. The eldest brother decided to set up his practice. They all had an affiliation with Mandurah, having been educated there, so he set up his practice and his brothers came on board. Over the past couple of years they have built up this business of young dentists, under 30, with great staff, and they have created a niche market in attracting younger families. Not a lot of people have fun going to the dentist, but I can just imagine that if there is fun to be had going to the dentist, it would be in going to the Nalder brothers' Meadow Springs dental practice. They would make it a great experience, and that is why I call them the Patch Adams of dentistry. I could almost see them wearing red noses to entertain the kids—honk, honk! For *Hansard*, that is a honking sound. They would be of that sort of nature. When I came home that night, apart from checking my teeth and deciding I did not need a check-up, it made me think what a wonderful thing that these young people have an aspiration to create a business based upon an energetic approach. I think they are going to be very successful. They already have been successful in being acknowledged through the award, but I think they are going to build a great business.

I want to move on to some very important issues. I have spoken about this previously, but I need to acknowledge and wish the very best of luck to the Peel Thunder Football Club, whose West Australian Football League team will contest, for the first time in its nearly 20-year history, the WAFL grand final against Subiaco this Sunday. Last weekend Peel defeated South Fremantle. It was very interesting to see all the South Fremantle supporters, including Bob Maumill and others, whingeing about how the team was all Dockers players and that it was not a real WAFL team. Come on, Bob, you know better than that, son! All the South Fremantle supporters were having a crack at Peel Thunder. I hope Peel Thunder does very well. They are actually playing against Subiaco, the team that I originally supported when I was a little boy, but I am very happy to pin my hopes on Peel Thunder this Sunday, when it takes the field at Domain Stadium to contest its first grand final. I know that

**Extract from Hansard**

[ASSEMBLY — Tuesday, 20 September 2016]

p6283b-6335a

Mr Chris Tallentire; Mr Fran Logan; Mr Mark McGowan; Mr Rob Johnson; Mrs Michelle Roberts; Mr Peter Watson; Mr David Templeman; Mr Mick Murray; Ms Janine Freeman; Ms Margaret Quirk; Mr Bill Johnston; Mr John Quigley; Dr Mike Nahan

---

in Mandurah and the Peel region there will be huge support for the Peel Thunder team, and hopefully it will bring home the bacon.

I also want to acknowledge a young woman who competed in the Rio Olympics, tragically injuring her shoulder throwing the javelin. I refer to Kim Mickle. It was sad to see her injure herself when she went to do her throws in the Rio Olympics a month or so ago. I know Kim well because I taught her in grade 6, when I was teaching in primary school. One thing about Kim Mickle is that she is tough as nails. I notice now that she is thinking of going into the women's football league. She will be trying out for that and if anyone is going to succeed, it will be Kim Mickle. She is a great young woman who was brought up in Mandurah and schooled there for many years. From a very early age she was totally committed to athletics, and she is a wonderful role model for so many young people in Western Australia. When she was interviewed after dislocating a shoulder we could see how painful it was for her on that morning, but her response was beautiful. It was very matter-of-fact: "I'll just get better and keep going." I thought: What a wonderful young woman and what a wonderful role model for young men and women in the community of Mandurah, who can be very proud of her, as can men and women throughout Western Australia and Australia.

I have to have a bit of a slam at the Minister for Police, because she was told some 18 months ago how dumb it was for the decision to be made to relocate the Peel police traffic unit to Forrestdale.

[Member's time extended.]

**Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN:** Now, 18 months later, the government has finally realised it was a dumb decision and is returning the traffic unit to Mandurah. It recognised how stupid it was to take away the seven or eight officers in the unit and put them in Forrestdale, some 50 or 60 kilometres away. What happened? The minister was told by me and others that this was centralising resources away from the region. Now the government has realised that that was a dumb decision and now it has to bring them back. I am pleased that it is bringing them back, but I told it 18 months ago how stupid it was. It demonstrates the complete lack of understanding of the policing needs in the region. Under this government, the Mandurah and Peel region had its autonomy as a policing region taken away when it was absorbed into the south metropolitan policing district. Ultimately, that meant a decline in capacity for the good police men and women in the region, who are wonderful people and do a tremendous job, but their job was made even harder by being absorbed into the south metro policing district and the expectation that when they needed a few extra coppers, they would be sent down from Fremantle or Rockingham. I maintain my view that our district needs to be returned to a policing district in its own right because of the population it currently services, the projected population growth in the region and the geographic challenges that the Peel area delivers to policing in general. I hope that, after the state election, if the Labor Party is elected, we will see the return of a regional policing model for the Peel, with the appropriate resources to cope with the future population.

Under this government, we also have lost autonomy in sport and recreation. I have had a go at the current Minister for Sport and Recreation and the previous Minister for Sport and Recreation about the ridiculous decision that was made about 12 months ago not to replace the outgoing district director of the Peel office of the Department of Sport and Recreation. Previously, like all the nine regions, the Peel had a district office with a district director, and some staff supported him or her. Due to operational matters, the previous manager's tenure was not continued, but rather than simply replace him with a new district director of the Peel office of the Department of Sport and Recreation, it was decided that the position would be shared with the manager in Bunbury, who is responsible for the south west. I am not having a go at him; he is a great young bloke. But, quite frankly, he is now responsible for two regions, the south west and the Peel—the two most highly populated regions of all the regions. That is absolutely ridiculous. The south west needs its manager in the south west. He needs to do his job with his staff and the appropriate resources for the development of sport and recreation in the south west. Now he is responsible also for the Peel. The Peel is the second highest populated region after the south west and now only one person is doing the job. He cannot do it.

That is particularly the case in our region where we have some major issues associated with sport that need to be addressed. I want to highlight some of them. I have been the patron of the Mandurah Netball Association for over 10 years. This year it celebrates its fiftieth year of operation. That is a tremendous achievement by some magnificent women in our region over those five decades. The association needs more space in the future. At the moment it is constrained to a limited number of courts in Thompson Street but it needs to expand. Over 2 000 girls and young women play netball during the netball season in Mandurah every day of the week, and some nights as well, on a facility that it has outgrown. Yet the big promise—the proposed Fiegerts Road facility, for example, near Forrest Highway—remains just a project on the drawing books. No up-to-date planning has been done, no money has been set aside and there is no plan for that facility. That is one area in which netball could grow but we need a commitment from the government. Without a district director who is able to argue for the region's sport and recreation needs unequivocally and not be tied to their other demands of the south west

**Extract from Hansard**

[ASSEMBLY — Tuesday, 20 September 2016]

p6283b-6335a

Mr Chris Tallentire; Mr Fran Logan; Mr Mark McGowan; Mr Rob Johnson; Mrs Michelle Roberts; Mr Peter Watson; Mr David Templeman; Mr Mick Murray; Ms Janine Freeman; Ms Margaret Quirk; Mr Bill Johnston; Mr John Quigley; Dr Mike Nahan

---

region, it cannot work. I will make sure that after the next election the new Minister for Sport and Recreation returns our district director and focuses on that facility at Fiegerts Road as a priority. It is in the Shire of Murray but it is going to be the key sporting and recreational facility for the future population and growth of the region.

That brings me to education. One of our real major concerns is the uncertainty or lack of information that we have about the government's proposed public-private partnership model for our proposed new high school in Lakelands, which is north of the City of Mandurah. I understand that four schools will be subject to this PPP model. Lakelands Senior High School will be one of them. There is a lack of information coming out. This school will open in February 2019. That may seem a while off but planning for these schools has to happen now. We cannot seem to get any clarity on planning issues for that new high school. One of them is for the North Mandurah Junior Football Club, which is currently constrained by its location at the Tindale Oval site of John Tonkin College. It cannot expand there. Its facilities are substandard but it is waiting for the go-ahead of the Lakelands Senior High School site, which will be a co-located partnership between the City of Mandurah and the school. The problem we have is that there seems to be no confirmation that North Mandurah Junior Football Club can go onto that site when it is built because the answers about ownership of assets and, indeed, funding proposals to build things such as change rooms, clubrooms et cetera, have not been clarified. North Mandurah Junior Football Club is in a hiatus. The City of Mandurah cannot give the club firm affirmation that it will be officially located at the new Lakelands Senior High School. There is no certainty about funding for the facility, whether that be for the clubrooms and/or change rooms et cetera. There seems to be no clarification of that. The answer we get back all the time is, "Well, you have to wait until the principal has been appointed." That is all very well but the North Mandurah Junior Football Club, for example, cannot wait much longer to plan for its future. It cannot grow when it does not know exactly where it will be and because of the constraints in its current facility at John Tonkin College.

I want to finish my contribution with a plea, again, to the Minister for Mental Health. It relates to the 3 Tier Youth Mental Health Program. I have mentioned this service to the minister on numerous occasions. It has strong bipartisan support from me as the local Labor member; the member for Dawesville, the local Liberal state member; and Andrew Hastie, the federal Liberal member for Canning. We—and myself in this place—have requested to know when the Mental Health Commission will get over the impasse it seems to be in with this project. For some reason, there is a blockage at the Mental Health Commission about it, despite the fact that this year the Mandurah community and the region raised over \$100 000 towards the program. The ask is simply for about \$400 000 in total over the next three years. It will deliver three tiers of the program in mental health to young people in the region. Despite a tragic number of suicides this year, particularly in the last six months, of nearly one dozen young lives, there seems to be an impasse about supporting this program. Our community has responded. It believes in this program. It has already seen the program's results in the rollout that was able to be delivered by "GP down south" and Eleanor Britton in particular. She is an amazing woman who is absolutely committed to this program. However, we have hit an impasse with the Mental Health Commission. I do not know why. It keeps asking for more information and we have sent it all. We have had meetings with the current minister and we simply cannot get any further. Minister, I will raise a grievance in this place about this program before the end of the year—you have had enough time to respond to this plea on behalf of my community. For the young people of Mandurah and the Peel, the 3 Tier Youth Mental Health Program is a much needed service. It is now time for the minister to fund it.

**MR M.P. MURRAY (Collie-Preston)** [10.12 pm]: It does not give me any joy to stand up to speak to the Loan Bill 2016. People before me have commented on what it is costing us per day—\$15 million. The member for Mandurah is asking for help for a mental health facility, which is something that the Deputy Speaker has also asked for up in her area and is much-needed in many, many other areas around the place. Mental health programs are needed more than what most people think or understand, unless they are close to the action with some of the groups that work so hard to be able to help people with problems. Even today on Facebook, I saw a call from a young girl of 23 years of age. She asked for help and she distinguished herself from drug addiction or anything, but she was diagnosed with bipolar disorder and some other mental health diseases. The cry was loud and it was certainly listened to, but we need the funding that has been put in there. I have been pleased to say that the government has taken some action in the last couple of weeks with the addition of some extra beds and a few other things, but it is still nowhere near what is needed. It is a different society from what we knew before when people with mental health problems were locked away and, in many cases, were left for their lives to just fade away with no stimulation because, at the time, they were thought to be mad. Mental health is something dear to my heart, member for Mandurah and member for Kalgoorlie, and I know in country areas it is far more difficult to place someone with those problems. I certainly support the call for that.



**Extract from Hansard**

[ASSEMBLY — Tuesday, 20 September 2016]

p6283b-6335a

Mr Chris Tallentire; Mr Fran Logan; Mr Mark McGowan; Mr Rob Johnson; Mrs Michelle Roberts; Mr Peter Watson; Mr David Templeman; Mr Mick Murray; Ms Janine Freeman; Ms Margaret Quirk; Mr Bill Johnston; Mr John Quigley; Dr Mike Nahan

---

I move on to some other issues that can cause mental health problems: the way workers are being treated in the Collie region by the overseas-owned mining companies that have bought into the coal companies down there. I do not think many people would understand the threats and the oppressive behaviour of these companies in the community of Collie. People have become scared to talk to their neighbours and scared to put their views about the coal industry out there. They are scared because their wives, husbands or they themselves—the workers—might get the sack for voicing an opinion. It is the most oppressive thing I have seen in my time in any workplace and any community as such, where people are not allowed to speak up and speak about their position. They are afraid because if someone's wife puts a comment about a company on Facebook, they may be counselled for those comments. What an appalling situation. It is supported by this government through a \$50 million loan to the company. It is something that the government has wiped its hands of, but it cannot do that because it is part of the system. The government is in there as much as anyone else to make the company become more efficient, to make sure the jobs are there, but also to make sure that the workers are treated with dignity. Honestly, it appals me. I had an argument with a representative from Premier Coal last Friday. Unfortunately, he was not the boss, but I vented my anger on someone else and I hope he took it back to the company. People do not understand that when the shire president said he did not think the finances put to the workforce were quite right, immediately—the following week—his rights to go to community meetings and be shire president were taken away from him. That made it much more difficult for him to perform his civic duties. That is the type of company we are dealing with. That was Premier Coal. I have no problem with saying that.

There was a community picket line, if you like, or a protest at Griffin Coal, not on the property, but on the road verge. It was held by community people because the workers of the day were told that if they had a picket line themselves—the blokes who were off shift—they would lose their jobs. So the community came out—that is how the town is; people look after each other—and stood on the picket line. Some of those people from the community work at another mine. They did not wear any identifiable clothing; they were not aggressive or disruptive. The police were in attendance and people were able to drive through. These people were going to have a misdemeanour notice put on their file by the company on the other side of the road, Premier Coal. However, I believe there may have been some change of mind about that. In my view, Premier Coal has no right in any shape or form to tell any worker where they can stand and protest peacefully. I think it is just a terrible situation when people cannot support their mates in a private capacity—not as workers, not with shirts on identifying them as miners or union members. That was not done; people were very careful not to do that. They were there to support their mates to get across the road. People were identified to the other company from video footage. There was an industrial problem on one side of the road at Lanco, and on the other side of the road guys who were off shift came over—not even on afternoon or day shift, on their days off—and were supporting their mates. They were threatened that a misdemeanour would be recorded on their files or that their jobs would be terminated. The people in that room did not go so far as to tell me that, only because I cut them off and said, “Don't tell me because I'll just get wild.” I believe it is time for the Australian Council of Trade Unions to take action over what is happening in Collie. I believe it is time the federal government became involved, because this government will not. This government has sat back. We have a gutless energy minister who will not front up in Collie at all. At least the Leader of the National Party came to Collie. He did not meet with the miners, but he came into the community. The Premier and the Minister for Energy do not have the guts to come down and front up to the community. The community in the area has not only been oppressed, but also they are not told what is going to happen to the power stations in the near future and what is going to happen to their jobs. The people coming through my door now are not so much miners, but people who work in the electricity industry. We have a problem.

I now want to take the time to read article 12 from the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which states —

No one shall be subjected to arbitrary interference with his privacy, family, home or correspondence, nor to attacks upon his honour and reputation. Everyone has the right to the protection of the law against such interference or attacks.

That is from the UN. I believe that if we keep going this way, we will have to go to the UN because the government does not have the gumption to come down and sort out the companies that are bashing people into submission, bashing a community into submission and taking away the feeling and goodness of a very hardworking town that has supplied power to the state of WA for nearly 100 years. They are some of the things that really annoy me.

As I said to the company the other day, God help it if we get into government, because we will write the letter of the law in areas such as rehabilitation and the environment. Things have not been done to dispose of tyres and the company is breaking laws hand over fist. The people of Collie have tried to work with the company and now the government and the power companies are kicking them in the guts. Enough is enough! If they do not do it one way, we will do it another way. That may happen after the election, but it could also happen before the

**Extract from Hansard**

[ASSEMBLY — Tuesday, 20 September 2016]

p6283b-6335a

Mr Chris Tallentire; Mr Fran Logan; Mr Mark McGowan; Mr Rob Johnson; Mrs Michelle Roberts; Mr Peter Watson; Mr David Templeman; Mr Mick Murray; Ms Janine Freeman; Ms Margaret Quirk; Mr Bill Johnston; Mr John Quigley; Dr Mike Nahan

---

election. I believe that when it gets to this stage people should take drastic action, such as shutting companies down for a week to let them know that they should not do such things to human beings.

I now read article 20 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights that states —

Everyone has a right to freedom of peaceful assembly and association.

That has not been given to the people of Collie. The police are out there, hounding them. The companies are trying to drive through them with their cars because they are standing in the road. Section 2 of Article 20 states —

No one may be compelled to belong to an association.

That is fine. I do not have any problem with that, but how long will it be before the company says to people, “Because you work for my company, that’s the football team you will be barracking for”? That is what it has come to. It is an appalling situation. It must be dealt with by the government as much as the industry down there. If it does not, it will end up in some bother and people may say, “Maybe we should have done something previously.” I do not want people fighting in the bars. What is happening in Collie is very similar to what happened in Newman and Karratha in the 1980s. People would not drink in the same hotel. It was family against family, friends against friends. That is where it is getting to in the town of Collie. Members may think I am stretching the point, but if they went down there and understood what we are talking about, they would really feel the tension in that community. Women are now running the meetings. Wives are standing up because husbands cannot do it due to fear of losing their jobs. I take my hat off to some of the women who are leading the community—young family women are standing up because their husbands cannot because if they do, they will be sacked. What a disgraceful situation, yet we have a minister who will not deal with it. He sits in this room making smart comments about the power industry and the town, yet this sort of situation is occurring, fuelled by Premier Coal Ltd and Lanco Infratech Ltd. As I say, it is every person’s right to work to their capacity but not to be hounded or pushed around and not to be too frightened to bring up issues at safety meetings.

I have been told that they should go to the top of the tree and talk to the manager. That is fine, but as soon as they come out of there, they are hounded on the job. Small misdemeanours can incur a suspension equal to \$10 000. Those sorts of fines are not handed out even on the street—they are not handed out anywhere on the street for speeding or doing anything illegal—but the company imposes it by standing people down, and the loss of wages amounts to around \$10 000. The company management does not know the position of people’s households. If a person is under financial stress and makes a small mistake, they should be counselled. I have no problem with someone being pulled into gear and told to smarten up or to be more safety conscious. However, when people are stood down and lose wages to the tune of \$10 000, when they have a mortgage and might be having family problems, sooner or later there will be repercussions. I do not want to see that. That is why I am saying to the minister that it is time he sorted it out. If he does not want to come to Collie, we will come and see him in Perth. That offer is to make sure we do not have one of those mental breakdowns that could cause a problem that we will regret for the rest of our lives. I believe that is where the situation is heading.

I put the ball in the minister’s court. If nothing happens there, I will ask people I know such as Bill Shorten and Doug Cameron to come over and stand on the road and see what happens. Then we will see how we go with the Australian Council of Trade Unions. We have seen how Carlton and United Breweries was trying to do something very similar to what is happening at Premier Coal. However, the contractors there have pulled out, although the picket line is still there, supported by all of Australia. I hope that if the situation in Collie keeps going, that will happen in Collie—we will get support from all over Australia to ensure things are sorted out down there. Remember, some of the guys who are back at work have lost \$40 000 a year of their income, but that is not their grizzle; it is the unfriendly roster, which is not conducive to family life. It is a roster from hell. Workers are not only losing \$40 000; they are expected to work seven extra hours a week.

[Member’s time extended.]

**Mr M.P. MURRAY:** It is a diabolical situation. I understand that the company is losing money and I wish it well in its endeavours to sort things out, but there are bloodsuckers on that job—I mean bloodsuckers—on \$300 000 a year walking around. When I asked one of them what they did and what their position was, I was told, “I don’t really have one but I walk around behind the boss.” So I asked, “What do you do when you go into a meeting? Do you have any voting powers?” They said, “No; but if I added my two bobs’ worth, they’d probably tell me to shut up anyway.” They are the things that should be sorted out straightaway. With one stroke of the pen someone can be employed as a “consultant” and earn close to \$300 000 a year, but look at what they are doing to the community.

It is so sad to see in the press this week just gone that the company has stopped payroll deductions for the social club, which shops locally every year and spends around \$70 000 in the local community, mainly on toys and

Mr Chris Tallentire; Mr Fran Logan; Mr Mark McGowan; Mr Rob Johnson; Mrs Michelle Roberts; Mr Peter Watson; Mr David Templeman; Mr Mick Murray; Ms Janine Freeman; Ms Margaret Quirk; Mr Bill Johnston; Mr John Quigley; Dr Mike Nahan

---

those sorts of things for kids. There are no payroll deductions and the company is telling people to do it themselves. What a miserable mob the company is! How miserable can the company be to take action to disrupt the community by stopping payroll deductions for donations to a social club that was used entirely for the social club and no other reason? I think it has about four barbecues a year. Again, all the goods are sourced locally. The club hosts a Christmas event with a very, very big Christmas tree and a lot of the kids sneak in who do not generally get a holiday and get that merry-go-round ride that they normally would not get—I would not say “sneak in”; they come in but they are not policed at all. That is the type of company we are dealing with. This government supports those types of companies. Again, that is an appalling state of affairs.

Now I understand all the disruption in the Liberal Party; it is because its members are miserable. They are a whining, whingeing miserable mob who have turned on themselves. It has bitten people out in the workforce and now its members are turning around and are backbiting themselves. That self-destruction is because the Liberal Party does not have the same spirit that my town has, and its members are unable to look after each other. We will look after each other into the future.

Members wonder what that has to do with the Loan Bill. I refer to a \$50 million grant to Premier Coal, the same company that is kicking the workers and is threatening the workers on the job. Therefore, the government has a say—or it should take the \$50 million back and put it in its broke bank. It could look just that little bit better with \$50 million in —

**Dr M.D. Nahan:** What is the \$50 million?

**Mr M.P. MURRAY:** That is the \$50 million grant that the government gave to Premier Coal.

**Dr M.D. Nahan:** We didn’t give a grant to Premier Coal.

**Mr M.P. MURRAY:** It can be converted to a grant.

**Dr M.D. Nahan:** No.

**Mr M.P. MURRAY:** Yes, it can. That is what the Treasurer told me before.

**Dr M.D. Nahan:** It is not a grant. They pay us. We pay them for coal.

**Mr M.P. MURRAY:** That is right.

**Dr M.D. Nahan:** We can convert some of the payment to equity in the business—not a grant; equity ownership in the business—if we wish, and we have not done it.

**Mr M.P. MURRAY:** My understanding is that \$6 million has been utilised.

**Dr M.D. Nahan:** The latest information I have is that we have not taken equity in the business. It is not a grant.

**Mr M.P. MURRAY:** Where does it sit then? Tell me where it sits.

**Dr M.D. Nahan:** It sits as equity, if we do it; it sits —

**Mr M.P. MURRAY:** The Treasurer is telling me now that nothing has been done.

**Dr M.D. Nahan:** Yes.

**Mr M.P. MURRAY:** That is quite different from what was reported in the press when the Treasurer said it is commercial-in-confidence.

**Dr M.D. Nahan:** We have a right to convert some of the uplift price to equity in the business, if we wish. We did that so if the business goes into receivership, we have rights over it, which was a weakness in the previous contract. That is the only reason we did it—no grants, no payments, except for the purchase of coal. That is it. We did uplift the price of coal because they were going out the door quickly without that.

**Mr M.P. MURRAY:** I am glad to hear the Treasurer’s version of events, because previously he told me that it was commercial confidentiality and he would not say anything.

**Dr M.D. Nahan:** I will inform you; I will check with Synergy to make sure that it has not made a conversion of the price to any equity.

**Mr M.P. MURRAY:** With all due respect, I have been told \$6 million has been converted.

**Dr M.D. Nahan:** I will check and tell you that. My latest advice is that they have the right but they haven’t taken it up. They might take it up, but it does not constitute any additional value to Premier Coal other than we can convert it to equity or we can just pay them money for the coal—that is it.

**Mr M.P. MURRAY:** I will take that point, but can the Treasurer also take my point about what is happening down there on the ground?

Mr Chris Tallentire; Mr Fran Logan; Mr Mark McGowan; Mr Rob Johnson; Mrs Michelle Roberts; Mr Peter Watson; Mr David Templeman; Mr Mick Murray; Ms Janine Freeman; Ms Margaret Quirk; Mr Bill Johnston; Mr John Quigley; Dr Mike Nahan

---

**Dr M.D. Nahan:** Member, I would like to sit down and talk with you on this.

**Mr M.P. MURRAY:** Why has the Treasurer not come to my community and talked to me? The Treasurer has been invited by the shire—by every man and his dog—and now he is saying in here that he would like to talk to me!

**Dr M.D. Nahan:** Yes. Both companies are under the water. Premier Coal is seriously under the water.

**Mr M.P. MURRAY:** I understand that, but it does not mean the Treasurer has to agree with the things that they are doing.

**Dr M.D. Nahan:** They have to improve the productivity of their operations.

**Mr M.P. MURRAY:** I see no problem with that and everyone in the town understands that. But should that mean if someone voices their opinion that they could lose their job, or if someone's wife puts a post on Facebook that they could lose their job?

**Dr M.D. Nahan:** That is inappropriate behaviour, and the Fair Work Commission should operate over that. I am not going to get involved. Unless things have changed, both Lanco and its employees and Premier Coal are before the Fair Work Commission, or they are negotiating EBAs.

**Mr M.P. MURRAY:** They are negotiating enterprise bargaining agreements.

**Dr M.D. Nahan:** That is fair enough; let them negotiate.

**Mr M.P. MURRAY:** That is exactly right; I do not have a problem with that.

**Dr M.D. Nahan:** I am not involved and I am not going to get involved. That is why we have the Fair Work Commission.

**Mr M.P. MURRAY:** The point I am making today is that the Treasurer has an association with a company that is oppressing people in the community to the extent that its employees' wives were told—I asked this question—that if they kept posting things on Facebook that were not in Premier Coal's or Lanco's favour, their husbands could be in trouble at work. That sort of thing occurred in the 1960s—in fact, it occurred before that in the 1950s! I ask the Treasurer to address that problem.

**Dr M.D. Nahan:** How?

**Mr M.P. MURRAY:** The Treasurer should go down and tell them that if they do not pull their finger out and get on with their job of getting the EBAs done —

**Dr M.D. Nahan:** I have not talked to Premier Coal—I will leave that to Synergy; but I have met Lanco. I have told them to get on with improving productivity. I have also told them to talk to Premier Coal to drive a single pit because I have been told that just the efficiencies through that could save \$11 to \$15 a tonne of coal. That would give uplift to that. That is what I have been told.

**Mr M.P. MURRAY:** We will not argue about that. No-one denies that they have got to get their heads above water, but the way they are doing it is not the way to go. The shire president queried their figures and the next week he is moved off shift so he cannot go to a shire meeting. That sort of thing is payback for people who challenge those companies. They are trying to break people's spirits. We do not want a heap of clones going to work, because that is when accidents happen. People are too scared to report an accident or something that is wrong with a vehicle because they might get blamed for it. I want the Treasurer to think about someone who has rolled through a stop sign being put off work and suffering the equivalent of a \$10 000 fine. That is the wages they have lost by being put off work. They could go through five red lights and they could still pocket change. That is the type of thing those companies are doing. The minister has the right to query that, and he should do that. That is what I am asking the Treasurer to do.

**Dr M.D. Nahan:** Have you made these complaints to the fair work commissioners?

**Mr M.P. MURRAY:** The Treasurer knows what happened there the last time. The commissioner got a bit flustered; he threw his hands in the air and walked out the door and said he did not want to see them again. He left them hanging. We got a decision that was not a decision, and it is still not a decision. I am sure the Treasurer would understand that, as would a lot of other people. The decision was that it would think about a decision, and then it was, "We have made a decision not to make a decision." Everyone is left hanging.

**Dr M.D. Nahan:** The firms and the workers have gone back and are negotiating. They are going back to the commission into the future, are they not?

Mr Chris Tallentire; Mr Fran Logan; Mr Mark McGowan; Mr Rob Johnson; Mrs Michelle Roberts; Mr Peter Watson; Mr David Templeman; Mr Mick Murray; Ms Janine Freeman; Ms Margaret Quirk; Mr Bill Johnston; Mr John Quigley; Dr Mike Nahan

---

**Mr M.P. MURRAY:** Talks are still going on at the moment; in the meantime, the guys are feeling the pinch not only in their pocket but also mentally, and it is just awful for them. I cannot put it into words, but it is an awful feeling to be in a town that is oppressed. These are a Chinese and an Indian company. They might do this in their countries, although I do not believe that is the issue. I believe it is the management groups that are in there, because I do not think the boards of these companies would even know what is happening.

**Dr M.D. Nahan:** I cannot say about Lanco, but Premier Coal is run largely by Australians.

**Mr M.P. MURRAY:** They are Queenslanders.

**Dr M.D. Nahan:** Queenslanders are Australians.

**Mr M.P. MURRAY:** Rock jockeys are not dirt jockeys, and that is one of the problems.

**Dr M.D. Nahan:** The Chinese are not involved. They own it —

**Mr M.P. MURRAY:** But do not forget they are still owned. Maybe it is my job to write to that board to explain that this is the sort of management group it has in there and it is not the Australian way.

**Dr M.D. Nahan:** Do so. When the Lanco people come through, it is run to a large extent by a bank in India—ICICI.

**Mr M.P. MURRAY:** And that is the group I am talking about. Some of the people in that group are just bloodsuckers. They wander around with hardly a job to do and are using money.

**Dr M.D. Nahan:** They are also haemorrhaging money. How they can sustain themselves —

**Mr M.P. MURRAY:** Get them out the door to stop the haemorrhaging; it is as simple as that. Anyway, we could argue about that forever.

I have only a couple of minutes left. I do not understand why this government has to borrow money when it has reneged on nearly everything it promised before the state election. One example is Collie high school: \$7 million. It was the lead promise in the run-up to the election. Not done; not going to be done; taken out of the budget. Three million dollars for Lake Kewari is out of the budget, and \$34 million for the Wellington catchment area, which the Minister for Environment should have been right on their toes about. Of that, \$17 million was sent back.

**Mr A.P. Jacob:** That is being delivered.

**Mr M.P. MURRAY:** The job was suspended under Minister Jacob at the time, when there was the fifth study of the area. We could have put a lot of trees in at that time, but it was suspended. Now we are going back to try to do it again through the Water for Food program.

**Mr A.P. Jacob:** That is not my portfolio.

**Mr M.P. MURRAY:** No, but the environment of the river and the salt is. We had a program that removed 20 tonnes of salt in one year. That has now been canned and the money has been sent back to Canberra. What a disgrace that is.

I will move on quickly, because I only have a couple of seconds left. I cannot find the money for Collie River bridge, which is in Eaton. The sum of \$6 million has been removed from the Collie Coal Futures Group. As soon as the government was in, bang, the money was gone. Why is the government bleeding when it is taking more jobs off the book than putting on in many of these country areas? We will hear about royalties for regions. I will always support royalties for regions if it is done fairly. At this time it is not being done fairly. I think it is about time it was looked at by the Treasurer to make sure that the spread of money is done equally and fairly.

**MS J.M. FREEMAN (Mirrabooka)** [10.42 pm]: I, too, rise to speak on the Loan Bill 2016. As we debate this loan bill for \$1.7 billion to pay the wages and other operating costs of government, and the wages of employees in the WA state government, people on the streets know the government is basically disorganised. In his second reading speech, the Treasurer talks about —

Members may recall that the Loan Act 2015 authorised \$8 billion in consolidated account general purpose borrowing.

He went on to say that was supposed to be a buffer to carry us through until the next state election. It is clearly the case that an incapacity to properly budget and manage money has led us here again. I am acutely aware of what this means to the community because people raise it with me. I always know when something has resonated in the community when I am walking along on my morning walk and someone from the neighbourhood—who knows that I am a member of Parliament but generally just has a chat and asks how I am and how the family is—

**Extract from Hansard**

[ASSEMBLY — Tuesday, 20 September 2016]

p6283b-6335a

Mr Chris Tallentire; Mr Fran Logan; Mr Mark McGowan; Mr Rob Johnson; Mrs Michelle Roberts; Mr Peter Watson; Mr David Templeman; Mr Mick Murray; Ms Janine Freeman; Ms Margaret Quirk; Mr Bill Johnston; Mr John Quigley; Dr Mike Nahan

---

is driving past, stops, winds down a window and remarks what a disgrace it is that the government is running out of money. They clearly say, “It is disgraceful that the government will run out of money in 45 days.” That’s when you think, “Wow, that’s really resonated out there in the community”. People are aware of how disorganised and out of control the budget process is with this government. It was 45 days last week; I think it is now down to 40 days.

When the government is facing internal conflict during a period when it is supposed to be managing the books appropriately for the health and wellbeing of our community and when yet another transport minister has departed from the government, one really knows that the government is in disarray and that things are not going well. When the \$1.7 billion that the government needs to borrow is almost the same amount that should have been used to deliver its 2013 Metro Area Express light rail promise to the people of Mirrabooka, which was about \$1.8 billion, we know that this government was arrogant and is now completely out of touch. When one in three Liberal members of Parliament does not support the government in the Liberal party room, we know why this government does not care about making policies to respond to the one in four people in Mirrabooka–Balga who are unemployed. Basically, government members are self-consumed and are unaware of what is going on in the community and how people out there are doing it tough. We are in here just giving the government more money to prop itself up when it is in disarray, disorganised, out of control and arrogant in the way it is delivering things. When we know that in not delivering the MAX light rail to the people of Mirrabooka this government has wasted \$26 million and there is nothing to show for it for the people of Mirrabooka, we know that this government is completely arrogant.

We also have to ask about individual members and their arrogance in all of this. MAX light rail was not delivered to the people of Mirrabooka because it was said to be too expensive and too difficult to deliver, yet in 2013 it was the number one commitment of the Liberal Party to deliver that to the people of Mirrabooka. Instead, the government decided to deliver the airport railway and called it the Forrestfield rail line. It did that ostensibly, I believe, because it wanted to shore up a marginal seat, but in shoring up a marginal seat, all that has been repaid by that member of Parliament is for him to become one of the disaffected. Frankly, a constituent of the Mirrabooka area might think, “Well, you know, they didn’t deliver it to us for political purposes; they delivered it to Forrestfield because that’s how politics works.” Even though government members came to Mirrabooka and said, “Buy land. Come here—it’s going to be fantastic. This is what we’re going to deliver,” maybe the constituents of the Mirrabooka area would start to look at it and say that the political reality is that a government that wins of that political persuasion is always going to shore up its marginal seats. The member for Forrestfield did not even have the gratitude to his constituents to say, “Well, I better stay on board and stay loyal to the people who have delivered this rail line to the community I represent.” The people of Mirrabooka missed out on MAX because priority was given to Forrestfield. My view is that they should feel aggrieved by that.

Here we are debating a loan bill of \$1.7 billion. I again remind members that that amount is only slightly less than what the government committed to before 2013 and took to the people of Mirrabooka with all the bells and whistles, buses and billboards about what MAX would deliver to that community. The Premier now knows how the people of Mirrabooka must have felt now that he has suffered at the hands of the member for Forrestfield and witnessed his lack of gratitude. The people of that area trusted the Premier and the then Minister for Transport when they rolled into Mirrabooka and hyped up all things to do with MAX light rail. They promised an innovative transport solution, one that had not been delivered anywhere else in the city. They said it was coming to Mirrabooka. But the Mirrabooka community was duped by this government and it will not easily forget how duped it was, especially when we stand in this place to debate a bill for another \$1.7 billion to keep the budget going while the people of Mirrabooka sacrificed the \$1.8 billion that they were promised in the 2013 election.

As we know, the \$1.7 billion is in addition to last year’s \$8 billion which, as has already been said, was to get us through to the election. There was also a \$5 billion loan bill in 2012. This is the fourth loan bill totalling \$23 billion that this government has asked the house to pass as we move to \$40.2 billion of state debt in 2020. That figure is based on the *Economic and Fiscal Outlook* overview, which states —

Consequently, total public sector net debt is expected to increase from an estimated \$27.9 billion at 30 June 2016 ... to \$40.2 billion by 30 June 2020.

There has been ongoing mismanagement and debt and all the while that that is happening there is record unemployment, which is what I really want to talk about in the house tonight. Everyone knows that I constantly raise the serious nature of unemployment in the Mirrabooka area, particularly in the suburbs of Mirrabooka and Balga. I will go to this a bit later, but it interested me that Sir Michael Marmot devoted one of his Boyer Lectures to the implications of work and unemployment on the health and wellbeing of a community and the involved social inequity costs.

**Extract from Hansard**

[ASSEMBLY — Tuesday, 20 September 2016]

p6283b-6335a

Mr Chris Tallentire; Mr Fran Logan; Mr Mark McGowan; Mr Rob Johnson; Mrs Michelle Roberts; Mr Peter Watson; Mr David Templeman; Mr Mick Murray; Ms Janine Freeman; Ms Margaret Quirk; Mr Bill Johnston; Mr John Quigley; Dr Mike Nahan

---

Unemployment in Mirrabooka and in the Mirrabooka electorate, particularly in the Mirrabooka and Balga suburbs, is at unsustainable levels with one in every four people unemployed. When government members stood in their party room today, one in three members did not support the Premier. If they multiply that and get up to a constituency of 25 000 people, that is one in four people who are unemployed—a rate of 25 per cent unemployment in the area. Youth unemployment sits at 15.8 per cent in Perth’s north west area, which includes Mirrabooka and Balga but, as I have said in this house before, it also includes Ocean Reef, Hillarys, Joondalup, Osborne Park, Balcatta and Scarborough. It includes a group of areas that has much lower unemployment levels. If the highest youth unemployment rate in the whole of Western Australia sits at 15.8 per cent in Perth’s north west region—unemployment in general is sitting high in the Mirrabooka area—it is clear that that is where a great cohort of unemployed youth live. This issue is serious and needs addressing. This issue is just as serious as coming here to get money to run the budget. It is a social issue that needs to be addressed. It is my strong view that social consequences will be borne by the people of Mirrabooka because of this unemployment rate. Increasingly, there are reports of young, bored, disengaged youth who cause problems around local shops in Balga. As one community worker said to me, when there is nothing else to do, a gidgee and a stone gives them something to do and a bus passing by gives them a target. We have serious issues that I do not want to see escalate, or to suddenly have penalties for antisocial behaviour when there are clear causal factors that the government refuses to address.

This week’s *Eastern Reporter* reported that 15 people had been charged with stealing vehicles and with drug possession in the area. A further nine people are of interest to the police. Reports have illustrated that over the last 12 months there has been a 10.9 per cent increase in crime in Balga. That means that of the 3 837 households in Balga, close to nine per cent have been affected by home burglary, compared with Cottesloe where less than two per cent of households are affected, and Scarborough, where only 2.2 per cent of households have been victims of home burglary.

This affects everyone. There was a chilling situation for a Ms Newman, a teacher, who was home late one evening and heard a rattle at her door as someone tried to break in. She called the police, the police came and she was very pleased with their quick response; she did not come to any harm or lose any property. As a teacher in the area she understands that education, employment and the wellbeing of the community needs to be addressed, as well as community safety. It is my strong view that this government and the Minister for Police, who is also the Minister for Training and Workforce Development, have failed the people of the Mirrabooka electorate. In addition to presiding over the seriously concerning crime figures, the minister has sat on her hands in respect of unemployment figures.

I want to now talk about some of the studies and information around the link between unemployment, social issues, crime and community safety. Sir Michael Marmot in his third Boyer Lecture made reference to the health gap. He is a leading researcher into health inequality and in his lectures has really linked together the issues around health and social inequity and how they illustrate some of the actions we can take to try to address social inequity and health in our communities. He recently carried out an audit in the UK and there have been some quite innovative outcomes in terms of addressing some of his findings. In 2015 he was president-elect of the World Medical Association, so one assumes he is now president. He is used extensively by many governments throughout the world for his public-health knowledge. It is my understanding that many Canadian social policies have been assisted by Sir Michael Marmot. In this third speech on work he said that if a workplace has no social control and decision-making, it can have an impact on stress and other issues around personal health. He points out that unemployment has its own health risks, which are even greater than health impacts. According to an online ABC News article on Sir Michael’s third Boyer Lecture —

He referenced the Indignados of Spain, —

Who, I gather, are the indigenous people of Spain —

protesters on the streets of Madrid who are among the roughly 40 per cent of youth in the country who are unemployed.

“They are angry with good reason. Society’s implied promise to them has been broken,” Sir Michael said.

“Not usually given to hyperbole, I have described this youth unemployment as a public health time bomb.

When we debated the Public Health Bill with the previous Minister for Health, I raised on a number of occasions that I thought that unemployment was a public health issue, and he refused to accept it was a public health issue. He said that it was a separate issue, of other social consequences.

**Extract from *Hansard***

[ASSEMBLY — Tuesday, 20 September 2016]

p6283b-6335a

Mr Chris Tallentire; Mr Fran Logan; Mr Mark McGowan; Mr Rob Johnson; Mrs Michelle Roberts; Mr Peter Watson; Mr David Templeman; Mr Mick Murray; Ms Janine Freeman; Ms Margaret Quirk; Mr Bill Johnston; Mr John Quigley; Dr Mike Nahan

---

[Member's time extended.]

[Quorum formed.]

**Ms J.M. FREEMAN:** Sir Michael goes on to state —

Unemployment is bad for health and it blights lives. Young people who leave school for the scrapheap are in danger of never getting the habit of work—potentially, they face a lifetime on the margin. Bad work may be bad for health; unemployment may be worse.

The member for Mandurah will be interested in this. Sir Michael goes on to talk about the study by Oxford University's David Stuckler, who has shown a direct correlation between the rise in a country's unemployment rate—this is in the United Kingdom—and a rise in a country's suicide rate. I tried to go a bit further and have a look at that study, but I am yet to source it. It is a really interesting position, especially given some of the evidence given to the Education and Health Standing Committee about Aboriginal youth suicides in remote communities, and the sense of feeling that there is nothing to live for. I can understand that. I have never spent any length of time unemployed, but I can imagine how pivotal in our society that whole concept of being employed is, and how much a part of identity it is. Taking away that identity must eat into our resilience to be able to cope with the difficulties we face in other areas of our life, and make us despondent and disillusioned about what it is all worth.

I also refer to the Centre for Independent Studies. The Treasurer may know that it is not a left-wing organisation; it is a relatively conservative organisation. It released a report in November 2015 titled "Youth Unemployment in Australia" by Dr Patrick Carvalho. The summary states —

Youth unemployment has nearly doubled since mid-2008, with around 300,000 youth now unemployed in Australia, accounting for over a third of total unemployment.

Further on, in a section titled "The Scarring Effects", the report quotes some studies about the impact of unemployment on young people in our community. It states, in part —

For instance, Mroz and Savage (2006) show that early youth unemployment affects both future job displacement and earnings for up to 10 years in the US. A similar British study found wage penalties of 9% to 21%, lasting up to 20 years later. Accordingly, an analysis of the Household, Income and Labour Dynamics in Australia (HILDA) survey suggests the likelihood of being unemployed later in life is three times as high if one experienced unemployment spells in their youth, which might give rise to a welfare dependence trap.

He goes on to talk about a study in the United States that shows that people who have had long-term unemployment are less likely to get an interview for a job. He backs up what Sir Michael Marmot has been saying, which is that unemployment has a serious effect on a person's health status. The risk of poor health status doubles if a person is not in employment. Unemployment also has an effect on a person's social inclusion and mental health. So, it is not just me who keeps standing up in this place and saying that the government has to know that unemployment is having an enormous impact on these social indicators.

I want to point out, too, that in his first lecture in the Boyer Lecture Series, Sir Michael Marmot spoke about the link between deprivation of social conditions, ill health and civil unrest. That is my next concern. I represent a community that has a social indicator of unemployment at such a high rate that if we have a situation of social unrest, people will say that is just the area, instead of trying to address the cause so that we can prevent it from happening.

Sir Michael Marmot studied the health inequalities in Baltimore before the civil unrest in April 2015. He found that in the poor parts of Baltimore, where the riots broke out, life expectancy for men was 63 years of age, and in the richer parts of Baltimore, it was 83 years. In Australia, people on a low income lose about six years of life compared with better-off Australians. So, unemployment and ill health are linked when we look at some of the causal factors.

Sir Michael Marmot spoke also about the association between social conditions, ill health and crime, and said that the link is no coincidence. He then spoke about how we need to go beyond the causes of ill health—smoking, drinking, poor diet and lack of exercise—and better understand the causes of the causes. He said, and I quote —

The causes of the causes are the social determinants of health and they influence not only lifestyle, but stress at work and at home, the environment, housing and transport.

He then spoke about how we need to lessen this health gap by addressing those causes.



**Extract from Hansard**

[ASSEMBLY — Tuesday, 20 September 2016]

p6283b-6335a

Mr Chris Tallentire; Mr Fran Logan; Mr Mark McGowan; Mr Rob Johnson; Mrs Michelle Roberts; Mr Peter Watson; Mr David Templeman; Mr Mick Murray; Ms Janine Freeman; Ms Margaret Quirk; Mr Bill Johnston; Mr John Quigley; Dr Mike Nahan

---

The Boyer Lecture Series is named after, I think, the first managing director or general manager of the Australian Broadcasting Corporation. In Sir Richard Marmot's second speech in the Boyer Lecture Series, he focuses on the importance of early childhood education for the development of a community, and also for the person as an individual. I find it interesting that this government has shifted its focus to early childhood development. The government has done relatively well in that space by opening the child development centres that are attached to schools. I am very grateful that I have a number of those centres in my electorate. However, in doing that, the government has shifted money from older education cohorts. I have one educator who says that the shift in education to the focus on early childhood has meant that there is less money for programs to meet the needs of the diverse community of Mirrabooka in terms of educating people in high school.

There has been one pool of money and it has shifted. My understanding is that in the Mirrabooka electorate, there has been an 11 per cent decrease in funding per student from 2009 to 2014 based on 2014 dollars; that is \$1 662 per student. Although I agree that we need to focus on early childhood, we also need to make sure that we focus on those people right across the broad spectrum to ensure that they are fully equipped for ongoing employment.

One thing that I want to mention about employment is that one of the difficulties we face is that the employment figures do not truly reflect unemployment in our community, because there is massive underemployment. People can basically work for one or two hours a week and they are not considered to be unemployed. It is really important to realise that. The Reserve Bank of Australia statement on monetary policy in August 2016 states —

Over the course of 2016, employment growth has been concentrated in part-time jobs ...

I want to finish off by talking about social cohesion. Last Saturday I attended the Eid al-Adha celebrations in Mirrabooka. I want to congratulate the community organisers who were involved in that event. They did a fantastic job and they deserve congratulations. A lot of people were there. It was a great event to celebrate a very significant day for the Muslim community. I get to attend a lot of these events. I joke that my new year starts with Diwali in October and finishes with Songkran in April, with the full gamut of Tet, Australian new year and Christmas, Karen new year, Afghan new year and Hazara new year thrown in. You name it; it happens in that period. For me, that is what it means to be Australian. This inclusive community wants to celebrate its heritage and culture but recognises the richness and privilege of living in Australia. The recent productivity report on migration highlights the contribution of migrants to Australia's prosperity. One of the families at this event was the Aziz family, who came to Australia from Afghanistan 30 years ago. They have contributed to and are part of the social fabric of the community through working in both businesses and community organisations.

I just want to finish with this: freedom of speech means the need to respond to false claims that incite intolerance. I think that everyone in this community should be included for their commitment to being Australian. The Muslim people I work with and the Muslim people who were at the Eid al-Adha celebration on Saturday absolutely embrace being Australian, while they also embrace their faith. They do that because they believe that their faith makes them great contributors to Australia, and it does. When they became Australian citizens, they took the oath and accepted the rights, privileges, responsibilities and democratic beliefs of Australia, and one of those beliefs is to ensure that we do not have hate speech.

**MS M.M. QUIRK (Girrawheen)** [11.13 pm]: Before I begin talking about the Loan Bill 2016, I want to acknowledge the work of Tony Simpson as Minister for Seniors and Volunteering. As a former shadow spokesperson for volunteering and the current shadow spokesperson for seniors, I have had a fair bit to do with him. He was generally very well liked amongst stakeholders. They regarded him as a man of integrity and as being sincere. From a policy perspective, I cannot say that a lot has been achieved in the area of ageing. However, the former minister was certainly prepared to advocate and get the message across about the needs of our seniors. To some extent, he was hampered. There are only a handful of people—maybe one or two—within the Department of Local Government and Communities who do policy work in the seniors area. A framework was done by his predecessor that was never funded. More importantly, I believe that the blueprint of the Community Development and Justice Standing Committee, "Age-friendly WA? A challenge for government", gave him and the rest of the government some guidance as to where they could implement sensible policy changes that would meet the challenges of our ageing community. However, most of those changes were not taken up. To a large extent, I think that experience illustrates the siloed nature of the current government and the fact that there is very little interaction between agencies on these issues that affect the whole community.

As we have heard, this bill seeks a loan authorisation of \$1.7 billion to meet the estimated borrowing requirements of the consolidated account to 30 June next year. We have already heard that \$8 billion was authorised in the Loan Bill 2015 for general purpose borrowing. When that bill was introduced, the Treasurer indicated that it was expected to provide authority for sufficient central borrowings to cover the needs of the

**Extract from Hansard**

[ASSEMBLY — Tuesday, 20 September 2016]

p6283b-6335a

Mr Chris Tallentire; Mr Fran Logan; Mr Mark McGowan; Mr Rob Johnson; Mrs Michelle Roberts; Mr Peter Watson; Mr David Templeman; Mr Mick Murray; Ms Janine Freeman; Ms Margaret Quirk; Mr Bill Johnston; Mr John Quigley; Dr Mike Nahan

---

consolidated account to the end of 2016–17, and that the bill included a \$1.5 billion buffer for any unexpected changes in the borrowing needs of the consolidated account.

In his second reading speech of this bill, the Treasurer reminded the house that loan bills are of an administrative nature, the borrowings had already been authorised in the 2016–17 budget and there were no additional costs in excess of those approved in the forward estimates. Under this bill, proceeds of all loans raise the payment to the consolidated account and then advance to agencies as required by budget appropriations. This bill leaves none of us in any doubt as to who are the worst economic managers. In lay terms, the Treasurer has been saying, as we have seen from his actions in introducing this bill, that the government made provision for expenditure in last year's budget, but as its revenue was less than expected it needs to come cap in hand for some additional funds. Not only is the revenue less than expected, but the Loan Bill 2015, with the additional \$1.5 billion buffer for a rainy day, has also been expended. The Treasurer portrays this as a normal state of affairs in what is a completely unforeseen and extraordinary position that government revenue has contracted significantly. As we have already heard from a number of speakers tonight, the frequency with which this government has come to this house with such bills is far in excess of the preceding Labor government, which I think introduced one such bill.

We know that for every boom there is a corresponding bust. Prudent financial management recognises that there should be provision for the times when revenue may ease and fall from its record highs that we have been experiencing for some time. How is it that in a state like this we have to make special provision for wages for teachers, police officers and nurses? Compare this with how pensioners and even self-funded retirees have to scrupulously manage their finite resources in a climate of record low interest rates. In this regard, this government is no friend of seniors. For example, the cost-of-living allowance for seniors was scrapped in the 2015–16 budget to be replaced by the energy assistance payment that was means-tested and available only to those on a Commonwealth Seniors Health Card. The rationale for this was purely to address the record debt that the state government had irresponsibly incurred. In that same budget, the government decided to impose a cap on local government rate subsidies for pensioners. Originally, I think, it was \$550 but it later changed to \$750 and it was due to commence this year. The government also imposed a similar cap on water services charges for pensioners at \$600. It implemented an increase to the eligibility age to qualify for the WA Seniors Card from 60 to 65 years old by 2023–24. It also scrapped the safety and security rebate. These measures were estimated to save the government \$199 million over four years. They were on top of the decision to halve the seniors' cost-of-living rebate of \$84 for singles and \$126 for couples in June 2014. The issue that the Labor Party has with these cuts is twofold. Firstly, the government disproportionately placed the burden for state debt on our seniors and pensioners compared with other members of the community; and secondly, many of these cuts were arbitrary and made without consultation to seniors groups and advocates that were in a position to provide greater input and advice to ensure more equity, to minimise the impact on the most needy, and to make any such cuts that were needed much more targeted.

Of course, all these cuts were made to concessions within an environment of escalating household taxes and charges that were imposed by the government. These were then reflected in the rising cost of services and goods across the board. Also of note in the context of impacting on seniors and pensioners were the federal Liberal government's decisions, in last year's budget, to reduce eligibility for the Commonwealth Seniors Health Card and to introduce significant changes to the age pension. As we will read in tomorrow's *The West Australian*, the threshold for getting an age pension to assess property values will kick in next year. More than 690 000 people could lose all or part of their age pensions. In light of this environment, pensioners have to soldier on as best they can.

A report released this week illustrates how difficult life can be for older Western Australians, especially those who do not own their own homes. "The adequacy of the age pension in Australia: An assessment of pensioner living standards" is a report authored by Warwick Smith and David Hetherington under the aegis of three organisations: The Benevolent Society, Australia's first charity; The Longevity Innovation Hub, a not-for-profit entity that has undertaken the task of implementing the "Blueprint for an Ageing Australia"; and Per Capita, which is an independent think tank. The report's overview notes —

The Age Pension in Australia is inadequate.

It fails to provide a decent standard of living for approximately 1.5 million older Australians who rely on it as their main source of income. Some pensioners are taking drastic measures in order to make ends meet—they are turning off hot water in summer, blending food because they can't afford a dentist and choosing between food and medication.

The financial wellbeing of age pensioners depends a great deal on their specific circumstances including where they live, whether or not they are single, their gender, and, perhaps most significantly,

**Extract from Hansard**

[ASSEMBLY — Tuesday, 20 September 2016]

p6283b-6335a

Mr Chris Tallentire; Mr Fran Logan; Mr Mark McGowan; Mr Rob Johnson; Mrs Michelle Roberts; Mr Peter Watson; Mr David Templeman; Mr Mick Murray; Ms Janine Freeman; Ms Margaret Quirk; Mr Bill Johnston; Mr John Quigley; Dr Mike Nahan

---

whether or not they own their own home. Home ownership constitutes the single biggest factor contributing to financial hardship among pensioners.

Age pensioners who are renting, in particular those who are single, are the worst off. Many of these are women without superannuation or other savings. Urgent measures are required to redress the profound levels of deprivation experienced by this group of pensioners.

The report's recommendations included —

- Provide nationally standardised Medicare-funded dental care to all full pensioners
- Run an awareness campaign of government schemes that subsidise or reimburse costs associated with non-pharmaceutical health expenses, for example medical disposables associated with diabetes and incontinence.
- Coordinate or replace state-based utilities rebates for pensioners in order to prevent utility costs rising as a proportion of pensioner expenses
- Provide a specific broadband or internet-related supplement or rebate

That last one seems a little strange, but it is in order to ensure that pensioners and seniors are not more socially isolated. Also, access to information is increasingly only available electronically. The report went on to state —

We recognise that advocating for increased government expenditure is difficult in the current fiscal climate. Like our international counterparts, our population is ageing and this places real pressure on the national budget. However within the report we have identified areas where, with political courage, budget savings could be made which would fund any potential increase in the pension.

The fact that many pensioners are suffering substantial deprivation is not acceptable in one of the richest countries in the world. We can and should do better.

Of particular concern are some of the individual responses by those interviewed. They are as follows —

*“Life is not worth living unless it has some quality. Just surviving is not a good life.”*

*“If a fridge or washing machine has to be replaced this is a crisis for which help is needed from family or friends or a charity like the Salvos.”*

*“I only came to this meeting for the free food. We often reach the point of having to decide between food and medication; sometimes we can't afford both.”*

*“...the rent has been going up much faster than the pension and this is making it harder to make ends meet financially. The rent for a couple is \$450/fortnight which is a lot from the pension...”*

As an aside in this context, I note that the calculations of certain allowances such as that for pharmaceuticals is now included as income for those Homeswest tenants. It is simply bloody-minded in the context of the sorts of issues raised in this report. Other interview responses are as follows —

*“...My home is falling to pieces with tree roots blocking the pipes but I just don't have the money to fix it...”*

*“... When the rent goes up, I can make up for it a bit on food because my daughter will bring care packages from church which give you 8 or 9 meals for the freezer...”*

*“...I'm not safe in the kitchen because of my MS—all my knives have to be blunt as a pencil. But that means I have to rely on frozen meals which are over \$100 a week. Lite'n'Easy is \$140–170 a week and I just can't afford that without tradeoffs. Some people I know split one meal into three. One way I get by is to just put aside gold coins when I can until I have a spare \$10...”*

*“... GPs are quick to send you to the specialist and the first visit is a big hit—you need to be saving for that. Health is a big variant. Anything medical outside of the GP is difficult to cope with...”*

*“... Medication that used to be free now costs every time. Including Panadol. I have to take Panadol every day and it is now a big expense in my week...”*

*“... I'm on 15 tablets a day and paying for them every month is very difficult. I'm a high-range diabetic and I have to pay for everything for my diabetes—strips, special needles, the lot...”*

*“... Some of us have poor teeth and cannot afford dentistry so we blend or mash up food so that we don't have to chew...”*

It continues —

**Extract from Hansard**

[ASSEMBLY — Tuesday, 20 September 2016]

p6283b-6335a

Mr Chris Tallentire; Mr Fran Logan; Mr Mark McGowan; Mr Rob Johnson; Mrs Michelle Roberts; Mr Peter Watson; Mr David Templeman; Mr Mick Murray; Ms Janine Freeman; Ms Margaret Quirk; Mr Bill Johnston; Mr John Quigley; Dr Mike Nahan

---

*“...You struggle to manage things that involve upfront cash. The eye specialists told me it was \$140, but it actually cost \$495 luckily, I had that in the bank just then, but who has \$495 sitting in the bank the whole time?...”*

So it goes on —

*“...Gas is very expensive and you need it for the hot water, heating, stove. You need to be saving very carefully for those quarterly bills gas, power, water, rates...”*

...

*“... I find I can manage OK without hot water during the summer months...”*

...

*“We’re very vulnerable on public transport. The violence in society is crippling us.”*

It continues —

*“My wife saved for a year to buy me a birthday present of tickets to a stage show that were \$79 each.”*

[Quorum formed.]

**Ms M.M. QUIRK:** I have quoted from “The Adequacy of the Age Pension in Australia: An assessment of pensioner living standards” report at length because it is important that the voices of seniors are heard as often as they can be in this place. I have also laboured the point that Western Australian pensioners and seniors have to impose on themselves a level of fiscal discipline, which severely restricts their lives and isolates many from the broader community.

[Member’s time extended.]

**Ms M.M. QUIRK:** Western Australians are doing it hard, and that is not limited to seniors. Many middle-aged Western Australians are also doing it hard. The mantra “You have never had it so good” rings hollow for many trying to find employment, especially if they are over 45. Many employers do not consider employing someone that age and many people feel that they are on the scrapheap at too early an age. Rising unemployment, the downturn in mining jobs and hikes to TAFE fees make entry for retraining less financially accessible. The increasing incidence of age discrimination for older but far from elderly workers makes many consider their prospects to be extremely bleak.

History will not view the Barnett government kindly in this context and in the context of the minimal efforts it has made to date to diversify our economy. That is simply inexcusable. I know comparisons are odious, but we need look no further than South Australia in that regard. Without the natural resources and advantages that this state has, South Australia has worked assiduously at diversifying its economy, and it has done so quite successfully. Tourism is very healthy in that state and its aggressive and thorough approach to securing defence naval contracts is in stark contrast to Western Australia’s rather lazy and laissez-faire approach, which has meant we have received only the crumbs of the defence contract work. Likewise, I reflected recently at the seventieth anniversary of Indian Independence Day that South Australia has shown a much more assiduous effort in its trade relationships with India. It has already secured a sister–state relationship with Rajasthan, and Premier Weatherill, himself, recently led a very large delegation to India. In contrast, Western Australia’s trade with India has declined in recent years and, as I understand it, in eight years in government, the Premier has spent only three days on the subcontinent.

In electorates like mine, access to education opens many doors for kids and can give them the tools to overcome all manner of challenges. As we all know only too well, investment in children at an early age can result in positive returns to the community many times over. It is with some concern that I saw in the *Cockburn Gazette* recently a table showing a breakdown of education expenditure by electorate. Despite the proposed Carnaby Rise primary school in my electorate being built and due to open in 2017, the figures indicate a reduction in education expenditure per student. In 2009 it was \$10 087, which translates to \$11 981 in 2014. That decreased by 15.6 per cent to \$10 107 in 2014, or a reduction of \$1 873. Likewise, young people wanting to gain TAFE qualifications are finding it increasingly inaccessible due to cost. Certainly in my experience as a local member, I am getting many more complaints about kids wanting to go to TAFE and finding it inaccessible or that the courses they want to do are not classified as carrying a government subsidy. Certainly in my electorate and that of the member for Mirrabooka and, I suspect, in that of the member for Southern River, for many young job seekers there is the added component of racial discrimination. Last week the Scanlon Foundation released a discussion paper exploring the role of local communities in creating a sense of belonging and unity, particularly in low-socioeconomic, high-immigrant areas. That discussion paper drew attention to key issues for local leaders and organisations to consider in supporting integration and combating discrimination and isolation

Mr Chris Tallentire; Mr Fran Logan; Mr Mark McGowan; Mr Rob Johnson; Mrs Michelle Roberts; Mr Peter Watson; Mr David Templeman; Mr Mick Murray; Ms Janine Freeman; Ms Margaret Quirk; Mr Bill Johnston; Mr John Quigley; Dr Mike Nahan

---

in communities. That report was somewhat disturbing at page 15 where it discusses the experience of discrimination. It states —

The impact that experience of discrimination has on an individual cannot be judged simply by counting the number of incidents. Some individuals may remain relatively unaffected by repeated experience of discrimination, while for others, even just one incident which may seem relatively minor can entrench a lifelong feeling of isolation.

The report refers to a study done in 2015 where respondents were asked —

‘Have you experienced discrimination because of your skin colour, ethnic origin or religion over the past 12 months?’

Of those who live in Australia, who were born in the United Kingdom, 11 per cent had experienced discrimination; Italy, 13 per cent; Turkey, 15 per cent; Iran, 23 per cent; Vietnam, 24 per cent; India, 39 per cent; China, 39 per cent; New Zealand, 50 per cent; Australian Indigenous, 59 per cent; Zimbabwe, 75 per cent and South Sudan, 77 per cent. This research shows that certain segments of our community experience very high levels of discrimination.

Finally, in the context of community cohesion, I concur with the member for Mirrabooka’s comments and congratulate the Islamic community for the various Eid celebrations that took place last week. In particular, the festivities in both Southern River and Mirrabooka were great gatherings. Last week was Eid al-Adha; this festival is a holy day for the Muslim faith and it commemorates the willingness of Ibrahim—Abraham—to perform the sacrifice of his son. Abraham showed that his love for God superseded all others and that he would lay down his life or the lives of those dearest to him in submission to God’s command. However, while Abraham was willing to obey, God ultimately prevented the sacrifice, additionally signifying that one should never sacrifice a human life and especially not in the name of God. I tell this story at length only to demonstrate that it is shared in common with Christianity, Judaism and Islam, as all those religions are part of the Abrahamic tradition.

I also relate that story to reinforce that to look at what we have in common instead of perceived and incorrect differences would do much for community cohesion. Community cohesion is something that we need to work on. We need to be vigilant. We need to defend our fellow Western Australians. If we do not, we may well have the very outcomes that I have described of discrimination, a higher unemployment rate and social isolation.

**MR W.J. JOHNSTON (Cannington)** [11.41 pm]: I join in the general debate on the Loan Bill 2016. I start by noting the birth of my first-ever grandchild on 6 September, in Sydney, which is where I was last week. I went over with Hon Kate Doust, my wife, to spend a week with our brand-new grandchild, Kora Lily Johnston Roche. We had a wonderful week paying attention to our daughter Rebekah, her husband and our beautiful brand-new grandchild. That was quite something for the family and we look forward to sharing the joy of Kora’s life with our daughter and her husband, Liam Roche.

I also note that last Thursday night in the Senate my good friend Senator Stephen Conroy announced his retirement. I would note that some of the coverage in the media of Steve Conroy’s resignation would appear to state that he is dying, but I make the point that all he is doing is retiring from parliamentary life to move on to new ideas. It is remarkable that although Senator Steve Conroy set out in very great detail in his final speech, which he tabled in the Senate last week, why he was leaving politics, all these conspiracy theories seem to be running around in certain media areas to try to explain what he explained in very great detail in his retirement speech.

I note that four of us joined the Labor Party at about the same time. Michael Kerrisk joined first. He encouraged his friend Stephen Booth to join, and then Michael also encouraged Steve Conroy to join because they were all at university together. Steve and I, who had gone to school together, had always intended to join the Labor Party but had not got around to it. Given my mother and my brother were both members of the party at that stage, Steve rang up on the night that he went to join the party and said that they were finally getting it organised and I should go right then. I got in the car and drove off and joined the Canberra city branch, which later split into the Mt Ainslie and Black Mountain branches. I went to the Mt Ainslie branch, which not only had Kerrisk, Booth, Conroy and me in it, but also many other distinguished people. It had the later-to-be the honourable Gary Gray, Craig Emerson, Kevin Rudd, Bob McMullan and Margaret Quirk.

**Dr M.D. Nahan:** What year was that?

**Mr W.J. JOHNSTON:** We joined in June 1983, which is a very long time ago. It was a remarkable time to be involved in the Labor Party.

**Dr M.D. Nahan:** That was when Craig was finishing his PhD, or had he finished?

**Extract from Hansard**

[ASSEMBLY — Tuesday, 20 September 2016]

p6283b-6335a

Mr Chris Tallentire; Mr Fran Logan; Mr Mark McGowan; Mr Rob Johnson; Mrs Michelle Roberts; Mr Peter Watson; Mr David Templeman; Mr Mick Murray; Ms Janine Freeman; Ms Margaret Quirk; Mr Bill Johnston; Mr John Quigley; Dr Mike Nahan

---

**Mr W.J. JOHNSTON:** No; he had already finished. He did not join in 1983; he joined later when he was working for Bob Hawke. Basically, Conroy had gone to work for Ros Kelly, and he encouraged every right-wing rational economics person to join the Mt Ainslie branch of the Labor Party, which was actually dominated by the far left. It was always an interesting branch, because we had people of immense substance to debate with.

I also acknowledge my good friend Craig Shannon, who was also active in ACT Young Labor, although he was not in that branch. It was a great time. It was a period of time when the Labor Party changed Australia for the good. It opened up Australia, which is something that no other political party had been prepared to do. If members read Paul Kelly's book *The End of Certainty* they will understand the ridiculous closed nature of Australia prior to 1983, and the rapid and incredible change that was brought about by those Labor governments. Nobody had ever been prepared to make those changes, and, indeed, the reason Australia is such an open and successful country now is directly because of the decisions taken by the Labor Party in government in the 1980s. Although I was just a young Labor activist and I played no part in those decisions, it was certainly an exciting time to be involved in the Labor Party in Canberra. We met all the people involved at those senior levels and we were encouraged to be involved. I never thought, back in 1983, that I would end up in Parliament, much less the Western Australian Parliament. Of the four of us who joined the party at the same time—"the original four" we used to call ourselves—Michael Kerrisk went on to be the ACT branch secretary of the Labor Party. Members might not realise that when self-government came to the ACT, the government was not dominated by the Labor Party. It was only when Michael Kerrisk became secretary of the ACT Labor Party that he finally bashed the party into shape and led it to government, and fortunately it has been able to continue in government for a long period of time since then. Steve Booth went on to hold senior roles in a range of different unions and was a senior adviser to a range of ministers in Victorian Labor governments over time, including the Premier at one stage. Steve Conroy, of course, became a dominant figure in federal Parliament. I was fortunate enough to be sent to Western Australia, although I must say that when I accepted a job with the Shop, Distributive and Allied Employees' Association I did not realise that I was accepting a job in Perth. I came over here in 1989, which gave me incredible opportunities and led me to the privilege of representing the people of Cannington and working on behalf of the hardworking people of my community. I wish Stephen the best for his future. I note his great achievements and that he sees his greatest as the national broadband network. I also point out that he had an incredible impact on the governance of corporations in Australia. He pursued John Elliott for his improper dealings—I would say corrupt dealings—with Elders IXL and BHP Billiton in the 1980s and 1990s, which led directly to significant changes to corporate regulation in Australia. That is not to be sneezed at.

We are here dealing with \$1.7 billion of additional borrowings by the government. I really have a problem with that because I understand that when the Treasurer introduced the budget in May, he already knew that \$1.7 billion in additional borrowings would be required, and yet it is only now, in September, that we are dealing with the Loan Bill. I am not quite sure why it was not introduced at the same time as the budget bills. If the Treasurer knew that \$1.7 billion was required in May, why did he wait until now to introduce this bill? I also understand there are a couple of authorisations around supplementary appropriation bills from former years. I understand from questioning before that there is no legal reason for those bills to be passed immediately, but I note that at some point either the current Parliament or the next Parliament will have to deal with those supplementary appropriation bills. Quite a number of finance bills have not been brought to Parliament in a timely manner. That surprises me.

At the time we did the last Loan Bill, the Treasurer said that that \$8 billion would last us through until the next financial year. In fact there was a discussion at the time across the chamber during the consideration in detail stage about that. We realised that one of the first bills in the next Parliament would be a loan bill because the government would run out of cash from the previous loan bill. Apparently we have run out of cash quite significantly before that. I look forward to the Treasurer outlining, perhaps not tonight, but maybe in consideration in detail, when the \$1.7 billion that we are authorising in this Loan Bill will run out. I think one issue will be that whoever wins the next election will almost certainly have to come back to Parliament with another loan bill within a relatively short time. I wonder why we are only authorising \$1.7 billion when the last one was \$8 billion, particularly if my supposition is correct that it will not be that much longer, perhaps this time next year, that the government will run out of cash again. I would like to get a picture from the Treasurer about exactly when we will run out of cash again, even after we pass this Loan Bill.

It is interesting to note that a previous Liberal government in the 1990s ran five budget deficits in eight years. It is not as though this is the first time the Liberal Party has run down the finances of the state. One might say it has been done at an Olympic level this time—the destruction of the financial security of the state of Western Australia has been done in overdrive during the last two terms of a Liberal government. As has been pointed out on a number of occasions, our accrual deficit for this year—not cash deficit—is larger than the total stock of net debt bequeathed to the government in 2008. That is clearly nothing for the government to be proud of.

Mr Chris Tallentire; Mr Fran Logan; Mr Mark McGowan; Mr Rob Johnson; Mrs Michelle Roberts; Mr Peter Watson; Mr David Templeman; Mr Mick Murray; Ms Janine Freeman; Ms Margaret Quirk; Mr Bill Johnston; Mr John Quigley; Dr Mike Nahan

---

I want to also draw members' attention to the privatisations that are said by the government to be the answer to our debt position. The Utah Point privatisation legislation is currently being debated in the upper house; as I understand it, the government has amendments to that bill and if they are carried—which we assume they will be, given that the government has the numbers in the upper house—the bill will be returned to this chamber for further consideration before it can be enacted. Given that the government's original time line would have had Utah Point sold on 1 July this year, which is obviously now impossible, we have to ask: when will the Utah Point legislation be ready for any consideration of privatisation? Clearly, it is not going to happen soon; it is not going to happen this calendar year, but it probably will not happen even this financial year. All that money has been spent on preparing the privatisation of Utah Point but there appears to be no actual endgame for that privatisation, so why have we been paying consultants all this money for a privatisation that is not going to happen? Even if it did happen, it would raise only a couple of hundred million dollars. It is just bizarre the way the government has allowed this to take place.

Then we have the Fremantle port privatisation. When the chair of the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission criticises the proposed privatisation of Fremantle port, we know we are not on a winner in supporting that privatisation. Again, there are no circumstances in which that privatisation legislation will be dealt with by this Parliament; my good friends in the National Party say that they would oppose it anyway, and the Labor Party certainly totally opposes both these privatisations —

**Ms M.J. Davies** interjected.

**Mr W.J. JOHNSTON:** I still do not, but I have to be polite! I have no reason to say mean things about you!

**Ms M.M. Quirk** interjected.

**Mr W.J. JOHNSTON:** That is right; absolutely correct.

The Fremantle port privatisation is effectively dead for the current financial year, and it would be a financial disaster if it were to proceed on the basis that has been outlined by the government. It would tie up Western Australia's export infrastructure for decades and slow down the necessary expansion of our export capacity for a generation.

**Dr M.D. Nahan** interjected.

**Mr W.J. JOHNSTON:** No, it is a completely different issue. Seriously, the Treasurer has to start reading some stuff. He actually has to know what he is talking about before he opens his mouth. As everybody in the industry keeps saying to me, no-one in this government can tell them what it is trying to achieve; no-one in the government can tell anybody in industry—exporters using Fremantle port—what the government's intention is with this privatisation. What is it trying to achieve? Is it simply trying to maximise the value, or is it trying to expand export capacity? The government's own sales document, the briefing document it gave to us, does not clearly outline what it is trying to achieve, the same as Utah Point. The Treasurer should go and read the report of the upper house committee inquiry, which points out that the intention of the Treasury officials directly contradicts the purpose of Utah Point, and now the government has an amendment that will guarantee large companies access to Utah Point. For the first time, the government is giving them guaranteed access.

[Member's time extended.]

**Mr W.J. JOHNSTON:** That is ridiculous. Then we have the Western Power privatisation. That is against the interests of Western Australians; the Labor Party is opposed to it and, quite frankly, so are the overwhelming majority of Western Australians. The Western Power privatisation is a negative for the state budget, a negative for electricity consumers and it is certainly a negative for the people who work in the power sector. It is not a plan and it will not generate large amounts of money for future infrastructure because half the value will be in debt, and if the government borrows again to build new infrastructure, it will have to service that debt and it will not have any income with which to service it. By the way, the commonwealth has already closed the asset recycling fund, so there is no bonus from the commonwealth government. Again, that is outlined in the Utah Point upper house inquiry report. Privatisation is negative for Western Australia, if we proceed with selling Western Power. It will mean higher prices and poorer service.

I also point out that there has been no clear direction in the power sector from this government. The legislation is currently before an upper house committee. I must point out that that legislation was referred to the committee by the government. The opposition did not ask the government to look at that legislation; it was referred to the Standing Committee on Uniform Legislation and Statutes Review by the government. When Hon Norman Moore was the leader of the Liberal Party in the upper house, he created a system that requires all uniform legislation to be referred to the Standing Committee on Uniform Legislation and Statutes Review. That is why, when the bill was introduced in the other place, the government itself referred the bill to that committee. I understand that that

Mr Chris Tallentire; Mr Fran Logan; Mr Mark McGowan; Mr Rob Johnson; Mrs Michelle Roberts; Mr Peter Watson; Mr David Templeman; Mr Mick Murray; Ms Janine Freeman; Ms Margaret Quirk; Mr Bill Johnston; Mr John Quigley; Dr Mike Nahan

---

committee will report to the upper house on Thursday. That bill does a number of things, one of which is to move the regulation of the fixed assets from the Economic Regulation Authority of Western Australia to the Australian Energy Regulator. At last year's estimates committee hearings, I asked the minister on a number of occasions about the purpose of moving from the ERA to the AER. The minister could not outline what he was trying to achieve by changing the regulator.

I will draw the chamber's attention to two articles from *The Conversation*. The first one is dated 15 February 2016. It is by Joe Dimasi, professorial fellow in the Department of Economics at Monash University, and Peter Lambert, assistant researcher, Monash Business Policy Forum, Monash University. The authors analyse the AER in its role of regulating the fixed assets on the east coast. They make this point —

The length of regulatory decisions and associated documentation has grown by over 2000% in some cases. Decisions regularly take several years to make and are also more complex and hence less transparent with no clear benefits to customers.

...

Energy network owners appealed the regulator's decision 40% of the time since 2006. Not only does this lead to costs and delays, it also has increased the businesses' allowable revenue by an additional \$3 billion.

...

However, such an approach to regulation is proving to be too difficult and expensive. The information and expertise needed by the regulator is just too great. Utilities network owners (with more information and knowledge than the regulator) have the incentive to get regulatory approval for higher costs. This in turn allows them to charge greater prices.

To capture higher prices, utility network owners can try to game the regulatory system in various ways. For example they can provide excessively lengthy and detailed information backed up by a range of experts, or they can provide it late in the regulatory process. Not only does this slow the whole process down; the regulator can risk being appealed if it does not adequately consider the information put to it as we have seen in the electricity sector.

On the length of the decisions, the next to last paragraph states —

This increase cannot be explained by total electricity transmitted and distributed as this has declined since its peak in 2008. Nor can it be explained by number of customers or growth in peak demand. Some tightening of the reliability standards may have contributed to this expenditure but can hardly explain increased expenditure of this magnitude. Which begs the question—how can this cost be justified to users?

The point I am making is that the Australian Energy Regulator is not a success. We are going from one challenged regulator, the Economic Regulation Authority—there is no question there are challenges to the ERA—to another challenged regulator, the AER. The government cannot describe, ever, what is the advantage of moving from one regulator to another.

I also draw attention to an article in *The Conversation* of 8 March 2016 by Professor Stephen King from the Department of Economics at Monash University. Professor King explains in great detail how complex and difficult the decisions of the AER have become. He goes on to quote from the decision of the Australian Competition Tribunal, which hears matters on appeal from the AER —

*“The hearing of oral submissions by those opposing the AER's decisions and from the AER occupied three weeks. The review-related material which the parties drew on making their submissions was said to extend to more than one million pages. Lengthy written submissions were presented to the Tribunal—on but one issue (the AER's opex allowances) the parties' written submissions were over 460 pages and their oral submissions occupied three and a half days filling over 250 pages of transcript.”*

Professor King goes on —

As the Tribunal notes the AER's original Ausgrid decision “comprised an overview of 66 pages and 20 attachments totalling 1,470 pages”.

The decision of the regulator was over 1 500 pages. He goes on to state —

This problem is well known in regulation. Initially, a regulatory scheme is apparently simple and clear. But there are always loopholes and differences of opinion. These get debated and exploited. The rules



**Extract from Hansard**

[ASSEMBLY — Tuesday, 20 September 2016]

p6283b-6335a

Mr Chris Tallentire; Mr Fran Logan; Mr Mark McGowan; Mr Rob Johnson; Mrs Michelle Roberts; Mr Peter Watson; Mr David Templeman; Mr Mick Murray; Ms Janine Freeman; Ms Margaret Quirk; Mr Bill Johnston; Mr John Quigley; Dr Mike Nahan

---

are expanded to fix up the flaws. But this simply creates more debate and potentially new loopholes. These are exploited, and so on.

We are in danger of picking up a regulatory model that is itself about to be changed. The government has never explained the benefits of going to the AER. I have said before and I will say again that I am neither in favour of nor against the move from the ERA to the AER. However, if the government wants us to support the legislation, I need the government to explain what the advantages will be. The government has never done that. To make a glib statement that there will be a \$300 reduction in electricity costs is ridiculous. The government has never explained the advantages. That is particularly the case when Western Power has said there will be a 15 per cent increase in electricity prices if it moves from the ERA to the AER.

My final point is about renewable energies. There was an article in this weekend's *The Weekend West* about how Horizon Power is using a new approach to buying electricity in the north of the state to enable a more efficient use of renewables. The article states —

Under a strategic revamp, Mr Tudor said Horizon would increasingly offer contracts that enabled it to “retire” fossil fuel-fired power plants if more efficient renewable alternatives emerged.

That is very interesting. On 29 July 2014, the Minister for Energy and the Premier put out a media release announcing how they had signed up for a 150-megawatt power station for a take-or-pay energy contract with TransAlta Corporation. Just two years ago, the government was running in the exact opposite direction to the one it is saying it is going to follow now. In October 2013, the Minister for Energy said at the Energy in Western Australia Conference, in respect of meeting the national renewable energy target obligation —

To build additional capacity on top simply to satisfy the RET ... is a sub-optimal approach and expensive for taxpayers. Western Australia can satisfy its RET requirement by purchasing certificates from projects in the Eastern States.

Now the minister says that he wants to build 500 megawatts of additional large-scale renewable projects. The problem is that the minister has only four years to go until 2020 when the full renewable energy target obligations need to be satisfied. If he had started in 2013, he would have made it easier. I make the point that the minister said on 17 April 2013 —

We are also being forced to buy windmills even if we do not need them ...

In 2013 we did not need windmills; now we do. This is the problem with the minister; he cannot keep to a straight line.

**Dr M.D. Nahan** interjected.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order, Treasurer! The member for Cannington is not taking interjections.

**Mr W.J. JOHNSTON:** In June 2013, the minister said —

The comments related to the Commonwealth Renewable Energy Target requirements that are encouraging development of renewable energy generation facilities in a market that already has significant over-supply ...

On 19 March 2014, he said that he had announced that the Economic Regulation Authority would do a review of renewable energy, which has still not commenced. In 2015, only last year, in respect of the renewable energy target, he said —

This is a statutory obligation imposed by the Federal Government rather than a matter of State Government policy.

That was his excuse for having no policy on the topic. In May last year, he also said —

All I can say is that although we are supporting renewable energy greatly in the state—it is the fastest growing source—it is largely small-scale renewable energy that now exceeds 400 megawatts ...

He went on to say —

The small scale is doing fine and well; we do not need any more capacity in this state whatever the source of energy, whether it be wind, solar—in terms of large scale—or otherwise. Going forward, we have enough existing capacity and I think all additional capacity will be met by small-scale solar.

That was a ridiculous comment. It was technically against the rules in the electricity system and ignored the reality of the renewable energy target.

[Quorum formed.]

Mr Chris Tallentire; Mr Fran Logan; Mr Mark McGowan; Mr Rob Johnson; Mrs Michelle Roberts; Mr Peter Watson; Mr David Templeman; Mr Mick Murray; Ms Janine Freeman; Ms Margaret Quirk; Mr Bill Johnston; Mr John Quigley; Dr Mike Nahan

---

**MR J.R. QUIGLEY (Butler)** [12.12 am]: I rise to call for a public plebiscite on Roe 8. I do this because this government is committing to the most contentious of its infrastructure projects in its eight years of government. According to the former Minister for Transport, the member for Alfred Cove, Mr Nalder, it is committing \$2 billion on the promise of the federal government putting in \$1 billion. It was revealed recently in leaked correspondence that the federal government contribution was contingent upon there being a tunnel from, I think, Stock Road or thereabouts under White Gum Valley, and it is unspecified how the final crossing will be made to North Fremantle. Why I and the people of Butler are calling for a plebiscite on this —

**Mr J.H.D. Day:** Are they? How many of them?

**Mr J.R. QUIGLEY:** Sorry?

**Mr J.H.D. Day:** How many have you asked about it?

**Mr J.R. QUIGLEY:** I am not taking interjections from the monkey cage over there at the moment.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you, member for Butler. You do not have to go into those descriptions.

Several members interjected.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order, members!

**Mr J.R. QUIGLEY:** I am just not taking interjections from the monkey cage; that is all.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Member for Butler!

**Mr J.R. QUIGLEY:** We want a plebiscite. We do not even have a dual carriageway through the electorate of Butler, which—together with Baldivis—is one of the fastest-growing electorates in Perth. We have a series of broken promises by this government. We all remember that in 2012, the Minister for Transport before the last Minister for Transport, Mr Buswell, stood in this Parliament and promised rail through to Yanchep and that money was already being spent on that project out of the 2011–12 budget. Not only that, but also the Minister for Education at the time promised that \$10.5 million would be spent on Yanchep District High School, which remains in a shameful state of disrepair and there are no plans at all to upgrade it. It will remain the primary school for the Yanchep district. That promise was broken straight after the election. As I said, we do not even have a dual carriageway through the electorate. The single lane from Butler up to Yanchep is interspersed with little bits of dual carriageway at the access and egress points to certain subdivisions. With a state election looming less than six months away, it is the ideal time and ideal vehicle in which to vote on this. The government can take a firm promise to the election on this unwanted project—Roe 8.

Several members interjected.

**Mr J.R. QUIGLEY:** The zoo is going off again, Madam Deputy Speaker!

**Mr J.M. Francis** interjected.

**Mr J.R. QUIGLEY:** The zoo is going off, and I am not taking interjections from the monkeys over there!

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order, member!

Several members interjected.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Member for Jandakot! Member for Cannington! The member for Butler has the floor.

**Mr J.R. QUIGLEY:** The ministers are bullying me again!

**Dr M.D. Nahan** interjected.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Treasurer!

**Mr J.R. QUIGLEY:** The ministers are bullying me again, Madam Deputy Speaker, and I seek your protection from these bullying ministers who interject with their untruths and bullying tactics, but, on behalf of the people of Butler, I will not be silenced!

The government cancelled the promised infrastructure in Butler and then came up with the idea of a \$2 billion road through to the harbour, including a tunnel.

**Mr W.J. Johnston:** It doesn't get to the harbour.

**Mr J.R. QUIGLEY:** The member is right; it does not get to the harbour. The \$2 billion gets towards the harbour. We now find out that unless the government signs up for the tunnel, \$1 billion —

**Mr A. Krsticevic** interjected.

Mr Chris Tallentire; Mr Fran Logan; Mr Mark McGowan; Mr Rob Johnson; Mrs Michelle Roberts; Mr Peter Watson; Mr David Templeman; Mr Mick Murray; Ms Janine Freeman; Ms Margaret Quirk; Mr Bill Johnston; Mr John Quigley; Dr Mike Nahan

---

**Mr J.R. QUIGLEY:** I cannot understand the monkey language either, Madam Deputy Speaker, so I can understand the confused look on your face. It is disrespectful to you and quite bullying to me and the people whom I represent. I am absolutely shocked by the behaviour of members opposite.

The Liberal Party has form for signing up to infrastructure projects at the death knock to bind a future government. If a contract is signed before this election, it will be absolutely disgraceful. It will not advance Roe 8 any faster than if the government waited for a vote at a democratic election. It can be put before the people: “If you elect the Liberal government, you’ll have Roe 8; if you don’t want Roe 8, vote against them”!

**Mr J.M. Francis** interjected.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order, member!

**Mr J.R. QUIGLEY:** I understand that there will be people like the contributor to the letters to the editor page this morning on Wednesday, 21 September—a Mark Waters from Willetton. He says to get on with Roe 8. Why would Mr Waters of Willetton not say to get on with Roe 8? He sees the advantage of dual carriageways. He has one in Stock Road down in the southern suburbs. He has Leach Highway. He has the freeway. We do not have these in Butler. We do not even have a dual carriageway running through the electorate. It is an absolute —

Several members interjected.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order!

**Mr J.R. QUIGLEY:** They are bullying me again, Madam Deputy Speaker; can I seek your protection?

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** I am doing my best to protect you, member for Butler. Will you please continue.

**Mr J.R. QUIGLEY:** There is another thing you can do: you can name them if they continue with this bullying, Madam Deputy Speaker. I invite you to do so, in case you had forgotten you have that weapon in your holster.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you; I know how to do my job.

**Mr J.R. QUIGLEY:** In Butler, we look at the budget and what do we see? We see \$1.5 million to buy a block of land for a future high school with nothing in the out years for the building of the high school at north Alkimos—nothing. The only commitment in the budget is \$1.5 million to buy a block of land. The houses of each of the ministers I am looking at across the chamber cost more than \$1.5 million. They came up with a miserable figure.

**Mr J.H.D. Day:** How do you know that?

**Mr J.R. QUIGLEY:** I only look at the cut of a suit and the French silk tie the minister drapes around his neck to know that his house is worth more than \$1.5 million. The total commitment to one of the fastest growing electorates in Western Australia is \$1.5 million. Last week, for this month alone, I sent out 1 790 new electors’ letters. At the redistribution, Butler was to be trimmed back from 34 500 people to the state’s average of about 10 000 or fewer. No infrastructure is delivered by this government to this fast-growing electorate; it is a disgrace. The electorate of Butler, as has been pointed out by the commonwealth statistics, has the highest rate of unemployment in the metropolitan area, because there is very sparse public transport up there. Yes, the government did build rail. The government completed Labor’s task to extend the rail line, but it took it from Clarkson to Butler—seven kilometres. That is less than a kilometre a year. If Labor was that sluggish and derelict in delivery of infrastructure, it would have taken 80 years to build the rail line to Mandurah. That is how long it would have taken if we were doing it at the rate that the Liberals deliver rail infrastructure. The Liberal Party promises it, but it does not believe in it and it cancelled it. If this contract is not signed or if it is signed in a way that has enough of an out for a future Labor government not to proceed with it, there is \$1 billion at least to be spent on heavy rail infrastructure in the City of Perth to deal with congestion. It will cost about \$350 million to get from Butler to Yanchep. As I have said in this chamber before, we know that the Tokyu Corporation, together with Mr Wah Ang’s family—the Yanchep Beach Joint Venture—are ready to proceed with job-producing enterprises in Yanchep, but will not open their pockets until the railhead reaches Yanchep. As I said before, I have been to Tokyu Corporation with Mr Gin Wah Ang and spoken to the chairman, Mr Nomoto. I was with the member for Mandurah and the member for Kingsley, actually, when we went there. Even the member for Kingsley said it was a no-brainer and that it had to happen. Does the member for Mandurah remember that?

**Mr D.A. Templeman:** As she snacked on the hors d’oeuvres.

**Mr J.R. QUIGLEY:** They were nice hors d’oeuvres up there, were they not, on the fifty-second floor of Tokyu’s building? She had the frankness to say that it was a no-brainer with the jobs it would produce up there.

Mr Chris Tallentire; Mr Fran Logan; Mr Mark McGowan; Mr Rob Johnson; Mrs Michelle Roberts; Mr Peter Watson; Mr David Templeman; Mr Mick Murray; Ms Janine Freeman; Ms Margaret Quirk; Mr Bill Johnston; Mr John Quigley; Dr Mike Nahan

---

The government is trying to commit all future funding now so that there will be nothing left to build this necessary infrastructure and so it can commit to Roe 8. This is what it did with the convention centre—probably the worst architectural eyesore in this city. What did the government do? In about November or December 2000, it signed the contract so that Labor had to come in and build this awful-looking building on our foreshore. The government committed to it in an absolute affront to democracy. It knew that it was done like a dinner because of all that was happening during 1999 and 2000 with the absolutely atrocious behaviour of the ministers. It knew that it was going out so it signed it up to make Labor do it, and it is trying to do it again with Roe 8. It is absolutely disgraceful. We are saying that Roe 8 will not be delayed at all if the contract is signed in late March if the Liberal government was ever re-elected, which is what it hopes to happen. If it signs the contract in mid or late March after a vote, it will not delay the project. The government is only doing this now to try to foreclose on Labor's option to deliver heavy rail to this city because for that billion dollars, we could put the rail through to Yanchep and fund the dualling of Marmion Avenue. Then we would have in our electorate what all the other electorates have on their major roads going in and out—a dual carriageway. Whoop-de-do! As the police explained to me, at the moment emergency vehicles, ambulances, police and other emergency services have a devil of a job because there is one lane of heavy traffic and trying to move through that mess for an emergency is nigh on impossible. All the mothers coming out from Amberton and Shorehaven to do the school runs in the morning, trying to turn right onto Marmion Avenue into one lane as traffic is pouring down from Yanchep, are taking their children's lives into their own hands.

It is unconscionable of this government to try to foreclose on the solution for these families in Butler by trying to forward commit the last available money. Why do I say that? Here we are just months out from the budget from which Butler got this absolutely insulting paltry amount of \$1.5 million to buy a block of land for a future school that there is no commitment to build. We are back in this place with the government seeking to borrow \$1.8 billion because it is saying that it will be broke in 40 days and it will not be able to pay the public servants. As the Leader of the Opposition, Mark McGowan, pointed out, in eight years of the fiscally responsible Labor government, a total of \$250 million was borrowed in loan bills. Who will ever forget the night when we debated the first loan bill and the Premier, who was the then Leader of the Opposition, stayed here until two in the morning arguing about the name of the bill, saying it was Eric Ripper's rip-off bill. It was borrowing \$50 million, not \$1.8 billion. The Leader of the Opposition had gone into space land, freaking out over \$50 million; he was doing star jumps and acrobatics in the middle of the chamber, to everyone's astonishment. Then his government comes back to this place, not to borrow \$50 million, which caused him to have a flip-out right in front of the mace. Does the member for Mandurah remember it?

**Mr D.A. Templeman:** Yes, I do.

[Quorum formed.]

**Mr J.R. QUIGLEY:** I was copping interjections even during taking the quorum. I heard the Minister for Corrective Services complain that I had undervalued his house at \$1.5 million after he told the bank it is worth \$2.5 million. He said that I am on the record as writing down his assets. We know what these rich Liberals are like. They have no regard for the working people of Butler; they have done them in the eye again.

Several members interjected.

[Member's time extended.]

**Mr J.R. QUIGLEY:** I know Madam Deputy Speaker is being distracted, but if she could continue to protect me from the bullies on the other side, I will be forever in her debt.

Several members interjected.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Members, please allow the member for Butler to deliver his enlightening speech.

**Mr S.K. L'Estrange** interjected.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order!

**Mr J.M. Francis** interjected.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order, member for Jandakot!

**Mr J.R. QUIGLEY:** I know that this speech will be widely published in Butler and I know that the people of Butler will be offended by the guffaws of government members after they have ripped off Butler and have given them only \$1.5 million for a block of land. I know the people of Butler will be very interested that it was not the buyers' complaints of the local member, but that it was Madam Deputy Speaker who also witnessed this outrageous behaviour of the government to the problems we have in Butler.

Mr Chris Tallentire; Mr Fran Logan; Mr Mark McGowan; Mr Rob Johnson; Mrs Michelle Roberts; Mr Peter Watson; Mr David Templeman; Mr Mick Murray; Ms Janine Freeman; Ms Margaret Quirk; Mr Bill Johnston; Mr John Quigley; Dr Mike Nahan

---

As I said, it is unconscionable for the government to sign a contract for this amount of money with only days to go in this Parliament and with only months before the election when it would not delay Roe 8 at all, if it was ever to be, if the contract was held off until after the election and until there was a vote fair and square. We are now in a different situation than we were at the last election in which the government came out with all its filthy lies—fully funded, fully costed. The wealthy people from the Tories were saying it was all fully funded, fully costed yet none of it was funded. The government is again saying that it will be broke and unable to pay public service salaries if we do not approve tonight a loan bill for \$1.7 billion, which as the Leader of the Opposition pointed out takes the total amount of money borrowed —

**Mr A. Krsticevic** interjected.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order, member for Carine!

**Mr J.R. QUIGLEY:** Sometimes he does not answer to that, Madam Deputy Speaker. I will tell you what he will answer to, but perhaps I will tell you after the house rises!

The situation is that this \$1.8 billion takes the total loans, as mentioned by the Leader of the Opposition, to over \$23 billion, against eight years of a fiscally responsible Labor government —

**Mr S.K. L'Estrange:** Who did nothing!

**Mr J.R. QUIGLEY:** Who what? Who did nothing! What a lot of lies. I am not calling the member a liar; I am just saying that I am hearing them.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order, member for Butler!

**Mr J.R. QUIGLEY:** We built a railway to Mandurah and fully paid for it. We dug a tunnel under the city and fully paid for it while these Neanderthals opposite us said, “If we tried to tunnel under —

Several members interjected.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you, members! We need Hansard to be able to record this. We just had a wall of sound, to quote Mr Speaker, so would you please desist.

**Mr S.K. L'Estrange:** It's a wall of noise.

**The DEPUTY PRESIDENT:** Excuse me; do not argue with me at this hour of the night, thank you.

**Mr J.R. QUIGLEY:** I am forever grateful for your protection, Madam Deputy Speaker.

We did nothing? We dug a tunnel under the city, strengthened the Narrows Bridge, built a rail line all the way to Mandurah and paid for the whole lot in cash, yet members opposite have the temerity to say we did nothing. I will tell them what we did not do; we did not drive this state to the brink of bankruptcy. That is what Labor did not do. It did not come back here year after year with loan bills seeking billions of dollars upon billions of dollars while the outer metropolitan seats were being starved of infrastructure as has occurred in Ellenbrook after the government had lied about it. If Roe 8 does not go ahead, that billion dollars can go three-quarters of the way to solving all the city congestion. We congratulate the government for taking up the first step of Labor's MetroNet plan of building a rail line to the airport. That was our plan, which the government rubbished, but it has taken up that first step. What was not part of its fully costed plan was Roe 8. It did not end up in the bundle of lies. It was an afterthought by the former member for Alfred Cove. He said, “Let us dig a tunnel; that will solve all the problems.”

**Mr T.K. Waldron:** He's still the member for Alfred Cove.

**Mr J.R. QUIGLEY:** I am sorry?

**Mr T.K. Waldron:** You said the former member for Alfred Cove.

**Mr J.R. QUIGLEY:** Yes; the former Minister for Transport. I am getting ahead of myself. I will say that in April, member.

Several members interjected.

**Mr J.R. QUIGLEY:** Members opposite can laugh at that. I remember when the seat of Alfred Cove was not Liberal. For about eight years, Dr Woollard was the member. The people could not stand the Liberals so they went to Dr Woollard.

**Mr W.J. Johnston:** The minister was voted out because of his involvement in corruption.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order, please!

**Mr J.R. QUIGLEY:** That is right; the Liberal minister lost Alfred Cove because of his involvement in corruption.

**Extract from Hansard**

[ASSEMBLY — Tuesday, 20 September 2016]

p6283b-6335a

Mr Chris Tallentire; Mr Fran Logan; Mr Mark McGowan; Mr Rob Johnson; Mrs Michelle Roberts; Mr Peter Watson; Mr David Templeman; Mr Mick Murray; Ms Janine Freeman; Ms Margaret Quirk; Mr Bill Johnston; Mr John Quigley; Dr Mike Nahan

---

**Mr T.K. Waldron** interjected.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order, member for Wagin!

**Mr W.J. Johnston:** There was a royal commission into it.

**Mr J.R. QUIGLEY:** That is right; remember, member, he was supervising the Department of Commerce or whatever it was in those days and the first person to get their money out with the collapse of the finance brokers scandal was the minister's father-in-law.

**Mr W.J. Johnston:** Yes. There was a royal commission into it and the member for Albany offered his resignation to the Premier and the Premier said no. He was in up to his neck, as the member for Kalamunda should remember because he sat in cabinet with him. Kevin Prince down in Albany was giving advice to the bloody finance brokers —

**Mr T.K. Waldron** interjected.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order!

Several members interjected.

**Mr J.R. QUIGLEY:** We want his contribution too. This is helpful because they are reminding me now.

**Mr W.J. Johnston:** We are talking about a royal commission into a Liberal government, which this member was part of. That man; the Leader of the House, was involved in a cover up.

**Mr J.R. QUIGLEY:** If we are going to go down that road, I mean to say —

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you members, can we return to the member for Butler, please.

**Mr W.J. Johnston:** And the Premier. They were both involved in a cover-up. The Liberal member for Albany offered to resign because he knew he was guilty and the Premier told him not to.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Member for Cannington!

**Mr J.R. QUIGLEY:** I object to what the member for Cannington is saying because it is only half the story. When the Liberal Party was changing the workers' compensation legislation and the then member for Albany knew the government was going to do that, he rang up Albany and said, "For God's sake, issue 100 writs today because we are going to change the law on Tuesday." He was in cabinet. The member for Cannington under-narrated his misbehaviour.

**Mr W.J. Johnston** interjected.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Member for Cannington! Thank you.

**Mr W.J. Johnston** interjected.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Let us return to some sensible order, please.

Several members interjected.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Let us have a debate. Order, members!

**Mr J.R. QUIGLEY:** We want —

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** I am on my feet. Thank you. I think we need to give Hansard a break at this hour of the morning. Can we all just be quiet and listen to the member for Butler, please.

**Mr J.R. QUIGLEY:** I will calmly go back to the point.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** That would be good; thank you.

**Mr J.R. QUIGLEY:** All the people in Butler will understand this: if this contract on Roe 8 is left until after the election, all the people in Perth can say that if they want Roe 8, they will vote Liberal.

**Mr M.H. Taylor:** That is what they did at the last election.

**Mr J.R. QUIGLEY:** No, they did not. The zoo is going off again, Madam Deputy Speaker. I need protection!

Several members interjected.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order, members! The member for Butler is pleading protection.

Mr Chris Tallentire; Mr Fran Logan; Mr Mark McGowan; Mr Rob Johnson; Mrs Michelle Roberts; Mr Peter Watson; Mr David Templeman; Mr Mick Murray; Ms Janine Freeman; Ms Margaret Quirk; Mr Bill Johnston; Mr John Quigley; Dr Mike Nahan

---

**Mr J.R. QUIGLEY:** I saw there is a picture of one of your relatives in the paper today: “Orang-utan set to go wild”!

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order, member for Butler!

**Mr J.R. QUIGLEY:** If you could just give me protection from this zoo over there, Madam Deputy Speaker, who wants to do this filthy act of spitting in the face of democracy again like it did with the Perth Convention and Exhibition Centre by signing a contract to bind a future government. The Liberal–National government will not build Roe 8 in this term of government. If it went to the election with a promise to build it, which it did not, it had an obligation to do it. But the government has not done it. Now, on the eve of an election, the government is threatening to sign a contract so that it can sort of rule beyond the grave. When this government is buried, it can still rule beyond the grave on the argument of sovereign risk, the same as Napthine did in Melbourne when he tried to hogtie the incoming Labor government with a huge road, the east–west link. He signed it even though everyone knew that he was going down the tube, so that he could try to rule beyond the grave. It is absolutely unconscionable to rule beyond the grave of a government that is dead. He tried to lock in an incoming Labor government to build a road that the people of Victoria did not want. That is why they voted him out.

I am challenging the government on behalf of the people of Butler and West Swan and other outlying areas to leave this contract unsigned; put it on the table by all means and let the public see what the government is going to do, but then put it to a vote. What could be fairer in a democracy? Why is the government scared of the vote? Why is the government scared of the people of Western Australia? Why is the government scared of the people of Perth? The government does not trust the people of Perth. If it trusted the people of Perth, it would say, “Well, we have been in government for eight years and we have not built this blessed road yet, we have not signed a contract yet, but in the interests of propriety, in the interests of fairness, seeing as we have just about bankrupted you folks, we will show you the contract that we want to sign and that we will sign with your permission if you vote us back into government.” Then Labor will go out and say that we want to dual Marmion Avenue so that the people of the far north have a reasonable road to come down. We want to put rail through to Yanchep so that we can create jobs in the electorate of Butler. We want to build a rail line out to Ellenbrook to help with all the social problems and unemployment out there.

Several members interjected.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order, members!

**Mr J.R. QUIGLEY:** The monkeys are going off again. I have been trying to communicate with you, Frankie. It is self-evident that the government is scared of the people of Perth. It is scared to go to the vote on this.

**DR M.D. NAHAN (Riverton — Treasurer)** [12.45 am] — in reply: I will not keep us any later tonight. As usual, Labor leaves the worst for last—especially the member acting like a monkey at 12.45 at night, which is pretty silly. I assume that we will go to consideration in detail, and I will have the third reading debate to answer all the questions I need to answer. This Loan Bill is seeking \$1.7 billion. It is needed. It will leave a buffer of about \$1.5 billion. I gave the reasons for it in the second reading speech. Since the last Loan Bill was passed in this place, the government has lost \$9.3 billion in revenue. Members opposite say they predicted this, and that the government should have seen it coming. Of course, they only saw it after the fact.

The government has cut expenditure by \$2.6 billion, leaving a gap of \$6.7 billion. We have sat through this debate and listened to members opposite say that the government should have made up the difference; and without this bill that would have constituted a 23 per cent decrease in expenditure. The response of every member opposite, bar the member for Victoria Park, was to spend faster and more. The classic response came from the member for Butler who claims the government is spending only \$1.5 million in his electorate. If he had looked at the budget, which he probably never has, \$67.4 million was allocated for the construction of the north Butler senior high school. After the exhibition that we had from the member for Butler, maybe we should take it back! Every member who stood up on the opposite side said that they would spend a lot more. They said the government had not spent enough and they decried the way the government funded that expenditure, through debt. That is the task the government has.

Members opposite keep asking where the money has gone. To date, to 2016–17, the two Barnett governments have spent \$57 billion on new capital assets. That is over twice the rate of expenditure of the Labor government and at half the growth in expenditure. This Loan Bill is necessary to meet the revenue problems the government has, which are real and unpredictable, and have had the largest impact on any government since the Great Depression in the 1930s. Members opposite do not recognise that, but I guess that is what oppositions do, particularly Labor oppositions. The member for Victoria Park says that the solution in his fiscal policy is to restrain growth in expenditure going forward at the level that the government is doing now. From listening to members opposite, does anyone think they will show any restraint in the growth of expenditure? I have not heard

**Extract from *Hansard***

[ASSEMBLY — Tuesday, 20 September 2016]

p6283b-6335a

Mr Chris Tallentire; Mr Fran Logan; Mr Mark McGowan; Mr Rob Johnson; Mrs Michelle Roberts; Mr Peter Watson; Mr David Templeman; Mr Mick Murray; Ms Janine Freeman; Ms Margaret Quirk; Mr Bill Johnston; Mr John Quigley; Dr Mike Nahan

---

an inkling of a commitment to anything but a substantial increase in expenditure. We will deal with that in the third reading stage.

I would like to show members this graph that represents a mountain of expenditure. The red bar represents Labor's expenditure and the blue bar Liberal expenditure. Labor's so-called good managers built up a mountain of expenditure and the Barnett government has been cutting it down. That is the real picture. We will go through this later on. Labor's mythology of good fiscal management is based on windfall revenue of unprecedented proportions, which allowed it to grow expenditure at an unprecedented rate but still be able to balance the books and pay down debt. They were glorious times, but they were also the easiest of times. I thank members for their contributions—at least most of them—and we look forward to consideration in detail.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

Leave denied to proceed forthwith to third reading.

*House adjourned at 12.49 am (Wednesday)*

---