

ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE

Special

HON KIM CHANCE (Agricultural - Leader of the House) [5.00 pm] - without notice: I move -

That the house at its rising adjourn until a date and time to be fixed by the President.

By way of explanation, it has become the usual practice at the end of the year during the special adjournment motion to not specify a time for the house to resume. I advise members that although that is the right thing to do because it allows the President to call back the house in the event of an emergency such as a tsunami, a war being declared or some such thing, the government does not intend that the house resume. The government does not intend the President to recall the house until 19 February.

Question put and passed.

Complimentary Remarks - Adjournment Debate

HON KIM CHANCE (Agricultural - Leader of the House) [5.01 pm]: I move -

That the house do now adjourn.

Hon KIM CHANCE: I thank you, Mr President, and all honourable members for their cooperation and effort during what has been an interesting and very busy year. It has been a year in which the ministers and the parliamentary secretaries in this place have been able to achieve stability when settling into their new or modified roles as a result of the changes that occurred in 2006. Fresh on our minds during this year have been the issues of accountability in government and issues raised by the Corruption and Crime Commission. That is part of a new era that all governments in the future will be dealing with. Taken as a whole, even though it has involved a great deal of discomfort and a fair degree of pain, it is a process towards a better government.

With those comments, which are admittedly somewhat sombre, I turn now to the mood of the season and wish all members and parliamentary staff a very merry Christmas and a safe and fulfilling new year. I begin by providing my thanks to you, Mr President. You have continued your usual smooth command of the house and have assisted all members in the discharge of our respective duties. The Chairman of Committees, Hon George Cash, has been his usual competent self and has guided the house through a number of complex and challenging pieces of legislation, not the least of which was one that we dealt with just this afternoon. All members benefit from the experience and guidance of our Presiding Officers, and I thank the President and the Chairman of Committees for their efforts and achievements in that regard, which are essential to the smooth running and operation of our chamber. I also thank our Deputy Chairmen of Committees, including our newest deputy chair, Hon Sheila Mills, who provide tremendous leadership in the important task of assisting in the functioning of this house.

I extend to the Leader of the Opposition in this house my very best wishes to him and his family. I trust that our so-far long-running relationship will only strengthen in the future and that next year, or what part of it I might be in this position, there will be an even greater level of cooperation. I am optimistic that the heightened need for bipartisanship will bring an even greater collaboration in the orderly passage of legislation through this house. I know that the Leader of the Opposition knows what I mean by that!

To Hon Murray Criddle, I reiterate my comments from earlier today. We were all astounded to learn of Hon Murray Criddle's imminent retirement. His contribution to this place and, as I said in the motion today, to the people of the Agricultural Region and to the people of Western Australia since 1993 has been enormous. I have greatly enjoyed working with Murray. I will miss him a great deal. I congratulate him and wish him, Del and his family all the very best, not only for the festive season but also for their ongoing lives.

Our colleagues from the Greens continue to represent their constituency with passion and drive - I had a few more adjectives but I took them out! - while at the same time working with the government when they believe it is appropriate to provide for essential changes in public policy. I thank them for their cooperation. I wish both Hon Giz Watson and Hon Paul Llewellyn a very well-earned break. We know that they work extremely hard representing a smaller party in this house. The workload that they have to undertake to keep up to speed with legislation is very, very considerable, a workload that none of us ever has to experience.

I would also like to thank my fellow ministers and the parliamentary secretaries for their great dedication and commitment to the government's legislative program. Any member with experience in either of those roles will attest to the demanding nature and the hectic pace that accompanies those responsibilities, in addition to their parliamentary and local member roles. My thanks go to them, as does my appreciation for their support and dedication.

My sincere gratitude is also extended to all the other government members for their contribution and support throughout the year. Most recently we have welcomed Hon Batong Pham as our newest member. I hope that he has found in his short term so far that it is a rewarding place to work. I hope that during his recovery he is able to look at next year with drive and ambition. I feel humbled when I speak to Hon Batong Pham about his future and what he has in mind for his future career when we think that just a short time ago he was a very, very sick man. His recovery has been remarkable. We all hope that when we come back here, Hon Batong Pham will walk into the chamber, take his seat and make his first speech.

My appreciation also goes to the frontbench and backbench members of the opposition. We do have a good working relationship. Some of them have been here for a long time, some longer than I have, which is starting to feel like a long time, while some are only recent arrivals. Each member has won the respect of every member of Parliament in this place. They have carried out their duties. The duties of an opposition member are often underestimated. It is a tough job because members work largely unsupported; it is a very difficult thing to do. They have carried out their tasks with distinction and courtesy.

My appreciation and praise also go to our new Clerk, Mr Malcolm Peacock. He has proved over many years to be an extremely competent and reliable hand at the helm of the Legislative Council. I know we all look forward to a continuing relationship of very productive years. We also welcomed Donald Allison as the Clerk Assistant (House). I thank Donald for his efforts so far. Nigel Lake has come to us from the other place as Deputy Clerk. Thanks also go to Chris Hunt, the Usher of the Black Rod. My traditional acknowledgement and warm appreciation also go to Janeen Robertson, the Clerk's executive assistant. I also thank the chamber staff on behalf of the government and all members. We simply could not conduct our business without them. I express thanks for the tireless and professional advice of the staff of the chamber and of the procedure office: Peter Gale, Grant Hitchcock, Brian Conn, Lisa Parrella, Glen Whitting and, more recently, Alice Muller and Deborah Kapoor.

Thanks also go to the President's personal assistant, Lorraine Coogan, and the President's steward, Andrew Gardos. I note that when afternoon tea was changed yesterday from a quarter to four to a quarter past four, some members, not being aware of that, walked outside and found that Andrew was not there at quarter to four. Some actually thought he had been kidnapped, which was a bit of a worry. Andrew is a really important part of our day.

In relation to the committees and their operations, members have been more than ably supported by the dedicated help of the Clerk Assistant (Committees); the Executive Officer (Committees); the advisory officers; the committee clerks; the articulated clerks; and the support staff at the Legislative Council Committee Office. I know that all members will join me in thanking them for their outstanding contributions to the deliberations of this house. I stress the word "outstanding". Members who work with those staff members in the committees, in particular, will be aware of the huge dedication and, more than that, the enormous capacity that those people bring and the strength they contribute directly to the Parliament. I will take a moment to mention their names. As I do not deal with the committees on a day-to-day basis, it is possible I might miss a name. If I do, I hope that people will not be too easily offended because my comments extend to them all. I thank Kelly Campbell, David Driscoll, Paul Grant, Lisa Peterson, Jan Paniperis, Anne Turner, Mark Warner and Denise Wong. I am looking to see if I am going to be prompted if I have missed some others.

Several members interjected.

Hon KIM CHANCE: And Linda Omar - I was just testing - Colin Huntly, Suzanne Veletta, Susan O'Brien, Vincent Cusack and Felicity Mackie. I thank honourable members for their assistance. I also thank all other staff who work and support our excellent committee system. Of course, I provide my annual good tidings to the ever reliable Tina Beale, Janice Shaw and Tuende Selby for the tremendous support that they give to ministers and parliamentary secretaries and also to other Parliamentary Services staff. Tina and Janice do a marvellous job in serving the needs of members efficiently and with the admirable dedication that they display.

We all stand in awe of Hansard, and words never seem to be able to express that, but may I articulate my appreciation and thanks to the staff of Hansard for the amazing skills that they have and for the tireless efforts to which they go to record the proceedings of the house. They never cease to amaze me. May I also recognise and express my appreciation on members' behalf to the staff in the audiovisual unit, who have brought a new sense of technology and twenty-first century service to our proceedings.

Thanks must also go to Mark Gabrielli and his team in the parliamentary dining room for their warm hospitality and service and, similarly, to Enno Schijf and the catering staff for their special attention. Thanks to Russell Bremner for his management of the Parliament, and to all of his staff, thank you very much for your support of this place.

I would also like to thank Cathy, Marilyn and Rosalie at the switchboard for their tireless assistance. I think those three ladies have a special place in all our hearts. Graham McDonald and his team in building services have also done an outstanding job. I thank the gardeners. When we come into this place in the morning or at the start of the day, or if we are able to take the luxury of a short walk outside, it is always a joy to see the condition of our grounds and the way they are maintained, the cheerful way in which the gardeners go about their task and the fact that they are always prepared to stop and have a bit of a chat. It is one of the really nice things about working in a place like this. I express my particular appreciation of the gardeners, Hughie for keeping the place clean around us and Peter Pascoe for fixing all the other problems that nobody knows how to fix. Thanks also to Ken Craig and the security staff who continue to serve the people's house with that amazing combination of discretion and efficiency. This area of the work of the department has of course come under much greater scrutiny. Ken and his team now have to meet much higher standards because of higher levels of security threat. I think the fact that they can still do that with the discretion that they do is greatly appreciated.

Before closing, I want to acknowledge the tremendous work and personal assistance that has been provided to me and all of us over many years by John D'Agostino, as my principal policy officer and here in the Parliament as the parliamentary officer to the leader of the government. John and I worked together for 12 years in opposition and in government. John has recently left the public sector to work for an oil company. He denies the fact that it is paying him nearly twice as much as we used to pay him has anything to do with his leaving. I very much miss John, but I know he left at a time in his career when he needed to do it. I know that we all wish John well. John made a significant contribution to this place through the orderly facilitation of legislation all the way back to 2001. His efforts are sincerely appreciated. I know that we all wish him well in his new career. This is an opportunity to welcome Tony Jupp, who is fulfilling that role. Tony has been my forestry policy officer for some years and remains so, but he comes to us with a broad experience in the public sector, first through the former Department of Conservation and Land Management and then the Department of Industry and Resources, and more latterly he has been attached to my office. Members will find that once Tony is working at Parliament, he can fulfil the role that is expected of him with distinction.

Finally, I must acknowledge that one of our honourable members will be a different person when she comes back next year. Hon Sue Ellery is getting married to Peter on 28 December. We wish Sue and Peter well.

Members, please enjoy the well-earned summer break. I wish members well for the Christmas period, and I thank them for the way we have managed some difficult issues this year. Obviously, we have not agreed with each other all of the time, but it has been managed in a way that I think we can look back on this year and feel proud about the way those issues have been handled. I wish members well through the Christmas period with their family and friends and I look forward to seeing them all again in February to embark on the new year's program.

HON NORMAN MOORE (Mining and Pastoral - Leader of the Opposition) [5.21 pm]: I join with the Leader of the House to say a few words at this time of the parliamentary session. When I was working out what to say this year, I looked at what I said last year, in the hope that I would not be seriously repetitious. I have made a similar speech in this house for about -

Hon Kim Chance: A long time!

Hon NORMAN MOORE: Yes, a long time! The same people get thanked every year, which is appropriate, because what the people who work for us and with us have done in this chamber and in Parliament must be acknowledged. Last year, I commented that we worked very well as a house. Members might remember that at the end of last year, we had a very long, interesting and slightly amusing but also difficult debate on daylight saving. The media spent some time abusing the house for wasting time and saying things they thought were amusing, ridiculous or whatever. That issue was debated extraordinarily well, although it came to a conclusion I did not agree with. This year, I wanted to reemphasise the message of last year, which is that this house can, in spite of the pressures on it, perform extraordinarily well. The last two weeks have been, at a personal level, as difficult a two weeks as I can recall since I have been in this place in seeking to come to the right conclusions about what this house ought to do about the careers and future of two members, and indeed a number of other citizens of Western Australia. It was a very difficult time because I knew what was the easy political thing to do, but in my view that was not the right thing to do. I took the view that I would wear the criticism and do what I thought was right. The way the debate was conducted in the chamber was a demonstration of the very measured and mature way this chamber can now debate difficult issues, which is quite different from when I first came to this place when most debates were a bit more acrimonious.

I regret that some comments have been made about our house in recent times. The only negative thing I will say tonight is that somebody was suggesting that it needs to be cleaned up. Places that need to be cleaned up have some sort of a dirty connotation; I do not notice any of that in this place. As far as I am concerned, the house has

dealt with its issues properly, and the end result is the proper result. If people do not like that, bad luck. Do not reflect on this place as being in some way in need of a cleaning up because it certainly is not.

My comments last year also related to the sessional order. I commented then that I hoped the Leader of the House might bring in a sessional order this year. It did not happen, even though he said then that he thought it would. I do not know what the problem was, but I hope that whether this house has a sessional order might be contemplated between now and next year. A sessional order would make more time available to the government and make things more certain, and, in my opinion, the house would operate more efficiently. It is up to the government to decide whether it does that. One of the good things about the sessional order is that there is certainty about starting and finishing. This year, regrettably, we went back to the old tactics of previous years - I take as much blame for it as anyone - by which the Leader of the House drops a hint that the house might sit for another two or three weeks and that members should not make any plans for New Year's Eve. That is usually done to ensure that legislation is passed, but we all take it seriously and some people have to make changes to their plans. Therefore, can I suggest to the Leader of the House that if we do not have a sessional order next year, he please tell us when we will finish, remembering that it will be before an election, so I guess everyone will be anxious to get out very quickly. However, I beg the Leader of the House to please not have a four-week sitting at the end of the year, because four weeks at this time of year is pretty hard work.

Having said that, I acknowledge that it is that time of the year; we are about to conclude the session and head off to the Christmas break. I extend my personal wishes and thanks to a range of people in the chamber. Mr President, I congratulate you on your continued unbiased chairmanship of this chamber. I congratulate you for standing up for the rights of this house. Indeed, you recently had a very difficult decision to make when the Legislative Assembly tried to tell us what to do. You quite rightly - I will not use the expression I thought of for a moment - told it that what we do here is none of its business, and that is absolutely appropriate. I hope it is not seen to be a brave decision in any context at all.

Hon George Cash continues to provide excellent service and advice to the house, and his advice to me not only as Chairman of Committees but also as a colleague and friend has been invaluable and I sincerely thank him for that. The deputy chairs do a very good job in the chamber, and I thank them for the hard work they put in.

My deputy, Hon Simon O'Brien, works very hard for the opposition, and I thank him most sincerely for the contribution he has made as deputy leader to legislation and issues within our party. I thank all my colleagues on this side of the house for all their hard work, and I hope it will not be too long before they are sitting on the other side of the house. I was interested to hear the leader say that members of the opposition are largely unsupported; I agree with that. If the leader can think of anything to do about it -

Hon Kim Chance: We have done a little bit!

Hon NORMAN MOORE: I actually have not noticed that! I am sorry the leader said that, because it could lead me off into a debate about the fact that two-thirds of the money for the opposition goes to the Liberal Party and one-third to the National Party, which I have always thought a bit rich. However, if the leader wants to provide us with a lot more support, I will be only too delighted to receive it with thanks! Hon Bruce Donaldson, our Whip, has had a couple of victories in recent times; I hope it does not go to his head! I thank him most sincerely for his dedication to our cause and for the hard work he contributes in the chamber. I made a few comments this morning about Hon Murray Criddle. I have to say I am still shocked that Murray has decided to go now. I thought he might leave at the end of this Parliament, but to leave now is a real shock. Murray is one of those very decent people, quintessentially a country person, who has brought a great deal of dignity to this chamber, and I am sorry to say that he will be sadly missed. However, I wish him well in his retirement.

The Leader of the House and I get on very well, I think, considering that we come from different sides. We have an obligation to make sure the house actually works, and I think it does work quite well because we are able to cooperate on that.

John D'Agostino is a very nice young man, who is always very polite and accommodating in respect of the relationship between the leader and me. I thank John a great deal, and ask the leader to wish him well on my behalf in his new occupation. I am sure he will do extraordinarily well.

I know how hard it is to be a minister in this place, because the ministers actually do more work than ministers in the other place; they also have to look after legislation for a lot of Legislative Assembly ministers. I congratulate them all on the hard work they have put in.

I did not know that Hon Sue Ellery was getting married. On behalf of the opposition, I offer our best wishes and congratulations, and I hope the wedding goes very well. The role of parliamentary secretary is probably the most difficult in Parliament and the lowest paid, although it is better paid now than it was. Parliamentary secretaries are not ministers, but they perform the work of minister's in this house, and they do it very well. The

Labor Party back bench, in many respects, is the worst place to be in the Legislative Council. Backbenchers are expected to vote but to not say much and not get in the way of ministers. It is the same no matter which party is in government, and I thank them. The Greens continue to provide that other dimension to debates. Their being in this place has contributed significantly to the way in which debates have progressed over the years. It is now not a matter of just one side against the other; there is often a third opinion, and that is quite refreshing.

To the Clerk, the honourable - well; it is only a matter of time! I was very pleased indeed when Malcolm Peacock was appointed to the job of Clerk of the Legislative Council. He has been here almost as long as I have and he has worked his way through the system both diligently and enthusiastically. I congratulate him on reaching the top of his career, and commend him on the work he does. There is no doubt that he does the job extraordinarily well. I thank also Nigel and Donald for the work they do in support of Malcolm and all the members in the chamber. My best wishes to Mia Betjeman and Nigel Pratt, both of whom were good servants to the chamber, but have now left. I gather Nigel left for Tasmania, and I hope he has taken over the Parliament down there and is running it just as he would run a Western Australian Parliament. The house staff, Chris Hunt, the Usher of the Black Rod, and Grant, Brian, Peter, Glen, Lisa and Janeen, all serve us well in the chamber. I thank them very much for their ongoing work. I thank also the dining room staff Deb and Alice who are now working in this place part time. I say to whoever came up with that idea that it is a very good one. It gives them a chance to acquire greater skills and see what we actually do, rather than simply watch us eating and drinking, which must be a pretty tedious way to spend one's life. It is great that they can learn something about what goes on in the chamber. It would be very good indeed if a few other staff could do that. I thank Andrew, who looks after the afternoon tea that is provided to Legislative Council members when the house is sitting. It is a quaint tradition, but one I hope will continue. I thank also Lorraine from the President's office for the way in which she liaises between members and you, Mr President, when you need to talk to the opposition.

I thank very much Paul Grant and the committee staff. I did not realise there were so many of them, so I will not try to read the list of names, but I thank them all very much. With the little I have had to do with committees, I am extremely impressed. They work in a very professional way indeed. The reports that come from the various committees of this house are very commendable. It adds to the impression people have of this chamber that we do really good work when we put our minds to it. I acknowledge Tina and Janice in the leader's office. Tina has been here a very long time and she is a delightful person, as is Janice. I thank them for the way they have assisted the opposition over the past 12 months.

Again, Hansard, as we say every year, makes some sense out of what we say, and I thank the team very much. Our telephonists, Cathy and Marilyn, have been here a very long time and I thank them, as well as Rosalie. They are part of the Parliament House establishment. I thank most sincerely my own staff of Lee, Enid and Tony. They assist me a great deal and I thank them most sincerely. I will be buying them lunch tomorrow, so that will be sufficient. As the leader said he does, I too usually bump into a couple of the gardeners when I arrive each morning. I often comment on the great job they are doing and suggest that when they have finished they go around to my house and start on the front lawn because it certainly needs someone like them to do something with it! As the leader also said, there is a lot more emphasis on security these days. Our security team does an extraordinarily good job, as do Russell Bremner and all his staff. I thank the dining room staff, particularly Ozzie, who looks after the top table very well, and has become part of our lives in a sense. He is always very obliging indeed.

I want to make a special comment about Peter Pascoe. I think he was here when I became a member. He is one of the most obliging people in the place. If anything goes wrong, we ring Peter and it gets fixed, with never a complaint about anything or a suggestion that it must wait until tomorrow; it is a matter of "How can I help? I'll do it now." I thank him most sincerely for many years of excellent service to all of us.

Next year is a pre-election year, and that means that the best and the worst of us tend to come out in that environment because people start to get a bit toey about what the future might hold for them and we will all be going through preselections and that sort of thing. I hope that the dignity that the house has been able to acquire over the years will be preserved in the face of what will be a potentially difficult year. Having been in this place for years and watched it happen, I have acknowledged that the year before an election can be very difficult in this chamber. If members simply take a deep breath and work out what the ultimate big picture is all about, they might be able to ensure that the dignity of the house prevails over any political squabbles that might dent the way in which we do business.

I conclude by wishing everybody a very happy Christmas. It is a good time to be with our families. We all know that the people who suffer most from being related to us are members of our families, because this job not family friendly. Hon Vince Catania will know more as time goes on how difficult it is to be a member, particularly one who represents the seat that he does, with a wife and a young baby. I wish him well. I wish everybody in the chamber a very happy Christmas, and may the next year be very prosperous indeed.

HON PAUL LLEWELLYN (South West) [5.35 pm]: This is one way for a member to not repeat what he said last year - this year I will be presenting the views of the Greens (WA). This has been another very big year both politically and in civil society. This is a time when we need to look inwards and outwards and over the horizon, as I have said previously in this place. Politically, we have had a national election and our own state challenges in this house. Indeed, we have even made local governments adopt a different way of electing their representatives. As a regional member, I think about the people and families who are experiencing the drought and are facing water challenges in our cities and regional areas. They are awakening to the understanding that this is not an accident. One of my favourite topics is global warming, and that means that we have to roll up our sleeves and do the work that will be necessary to manage that issue. That is where the notion of goodwill and cooperation can be seen in politics and can help to build the relationships that are necessary to move forward. As a new member of Parliament, I am interested in ensuring that, in meeting the challenges of this Parliament, we build goodwill and relationships. That is the fundamental fabric of world peace, which we are supposed to remember at this time of year.

I will give a snapshot of Parliament by acknowledging all the people who service this institution. I will start by thanking the gardeners, because they are the people I see first thing in the morning; the Parliamentary Services staff; the catering staff, who look after all of us extremely well; the people in the Legislative Council Procedure Office; and the Clerks and committee staff, who provide us with the services that make this place work. It is all the invisible services and structures that make a Parliament and any kind of institution such as this work. I say to my colleagues in this house that I know that this place takes a toll on our families. We are about to go home and rebuild those relationships, that goodwill and the determination to work in the best interests of people, which is why we choose to be here. I acknowledge that Louise Pratt has moved on to the Senate, and that will be a completely new life for her. Margaret Rowe has had to step down because of the pressures of this place, and I acknowledge that Brian Ellis has taken over that role. I particularly acknowledge Hon Murray Criddle, because he really is one of those people that in my experience in this place wears the title "honourable" very well. I have noticed that it is with integrity, in the small number of dealings that I have had with Hon Murray Criddle, that he wears that title extremely well.

In summary, this is the time for us to build relationships and goodwill, to take it easy, be safe - I am going surfing, I think; I do not know whether I can still do it - have a relaxing new year, get healthy and be ready for next year.

HON MURRAY CRIDDLE (Agricultural) [5.40 pm]: I will add a few final remarks to what I said this morning when I thanked everybody involved in this place. I genuinely mean the thanks for the efforts that have been put in by people to make my stay in this place a very rewarding one for me. It has been an interesting day, I have to say. I have certainly spent a lot of time on telephones talking to radio and television programs. It has been one of those events in a lifetime that one has, but I have no regrets whatsoever in standing aside. I know it is time. I thank the people for their comments throughout the day. I wish you, Mr President, and every member of this chamber all the best for the Christmas season and well into the future. We all recognise the work that is done in this place; it is a great responsibility and I wish members all the best in the future. Thank you.

THE PRESIDENT (Hon Nick Griffiths): I thank the Leader of the House, the Leader of the Opposition, Hon Paul Llewellyn and Hon Murray Criddle for their contributions to this debate. I thank the Leader of the House for his contribution in advancing the business of the house, in particular advocating its role to the government. I thank the Leader of the Opposition for his contribution in effecting the conduct of the house and for his advocacy on the role of the house. I acknowledge the very solid contributions of the Leader of the National Party, Hon Murray Criddle, and members of the Greens (WA). As members of the small parties in the house, the Greens have a very important and considerable workload.

The Deputy President and Chairman of Committees, Hon George Cash, has provided great support and prudent counsel to me, and also to members and committee staff in many capacities during the course of the year. I thank him very much for his continued hard work and for the many roles that he plays.

I thank the Deputy Chairs, Hon Ray Halligan, Hon Simon O'Brien, Hon Ken Travers, Hon Graham Giffard, Senator-elect Louise Pratt and Hon Sheila Mills for the way they have carried out their very significant duties. I did alert Hon Sheila Mills to the fact that I was considering mentioning her in the course of these remarks this evening, and I note that she immediately assumed the chair. It was very hard getting her out of the chair, so members should note what is in store in due course! I thank the chairs of the committees who perform an essential role for the workings of this house as a house of review, as it has come to be regarded and to be expected by the community as a whole. I thank the ministers, parliamentary secretaries and all members of this house for their contributions.

I thank the Clerk, Mr Malcolm Peacock; he has shown leadership and professionalism in his role, and his efforts in maintaining the proper function of the house are appreciated by all. I thank Ms Mia Betjeman, former Clerk,

and Mr Nigel Pratt, former Clerk Assistant, for their exemplary service to the house and I wish them well. I thank Mr Nigel Lake, Deputy Clerk, for the professional manner in which he conducts his duties, and Mr Donald Allison, Clerk Assistant, for his efforts in assisting with the efficient function of the house. I thank Ms Kelly Campbell, Executive Officer (Committees), Paul Grant and the committee staff for their tremendous and tireless efforts mutually with the Clerks at the table in ensuring that our fundamental activities are carried out properly. I thank our Usher of the Black Rod, Mr Chris Hunt, for his continued support and hard work. I thank Mr Peter Gale, Mr Brian Conn, Mr Glen Whitting and Mrs Lisa Parrella; their support and assistance to members and council staff is significant and much appreciated.

Special thanks to Debra Kapoor and Alice Muller for their assistance in the chamber in the past few months. It has been a delight to have them as part of the team. I also thank our senior parliamentary officer, Ms Tina Beale, and parliamentary officer Ms Janice Shaw. These ladies do a tremendous job and we look forward to their continued support in 2008. I acknowledge and thank Ms Janeen Robertson, executive assistant to the Clerk, for her continued support and commendable service to all she deals with. I thank Ms Lauri Glocke in her acting role of executive assistant to the Clerk in the absence of Janeen during her long service leave. Lauri has conducted herself in a very efficient and professional manner, and I thank her. I thank my executive assistant, Ms Lorraine Coogan, and my personal steward, Mr Andrew Gardos. Their support has been vital to me and is deeply appreciated.

I thank Mr Russell Bremner, Executive Manager, Parliamentary Services, Mr Rob Hunter, Deputy Executive Manager, Parliamentary Services, and their support staff. I thank Mr Enno Schijf, Catering Services Manager, and Mr Claude Morris, head chef, and their staff. I also thank Mr George Webb, sous-chef, for his high standard and culinary skills. I thank Mr Ken Craig, Security Manager, and his staff; Ms Belinda Corey, Reporting Services Manager, and her staff; Ms Judy Ballantyne, Library and Information Services Manager, and her staff; Mr Michel Crouche, Chief Financial Officer, and his staff; and Mr Michael Nye, Acting Information Technology Manager, and Mr Martin Dart, former Information Technology Manager, for all their efforts in the smooth running of that department, and all the staff of the department. I also thank Ms Jane Gray, parliamentary education officer, and her staff; Mr Graham McDonald, Building Services Manager; Mr Peter Pascoe, Assistant Building Services Manager; Mr Dan Cochrane, projects manager; Mr Mark Gabrielli, Dining Room Manager, and his staff; and Mr David Boag, head gardener, and his staff. I concur with the comments made by members. I do not have a garden at the moment, so I look forward to catching up with them in another capacity when I move again. Importantly, many thanks to the ladies who are the front door to the Parliament - Marilyn David, Cathy Harrison and Rosalie Arnold. They have a most courteous manner at all times to everyone they speak to. Particular congratulations to Cathy for 25 years service to the Parliament.

I turn now to Hon Murray Criddle. He was elected to the thirty-fourth Parliament for the Agricultural Region on 6 February 1993, for a term commencing on 22 May 1993, and he has been re-elected on three occasions. I have found him to be a very active, wise and friendly member. I have observed that he has been active in debate in the house and has served on many committees. He is a fine example to members of how they should conduct themselves. In particular I point out Hon Murray Criddle's record as Minister for Transport, from 28 July 1998 to 16 February 2001. He was a minister of high reputation who made strong decisions based on the importance of transport in bringing the wealth created in the country and non-metropolitan regions to places of export. Further, he was decisive in creating very necessary infrastructure for the metropolitan area. I regret his departure, but understand the reasons for it. He has served the National Party, this house, the Agricultural Region and Western Australia well, and I wish him all the best for his future endeavours.

I wish all members and staff and their families a very merry Christmas and a happy and prosperous new year. I hope everyone enjoys time away with family and friends during the break, and that we can all look forward to a successful 2008. Before I put the question, I trust honourable members will join me shortly for a degree of fellowship.

Question put and passed.

House adjourned at 5.49 pm
