

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY

Motion

Resumed from 26 September.

HON MURRAY CRIDDLE (Agricultural) [5.51 pm]: I am pleased to have the opportunity to give my contribution to the Address-in-Reply to the speech of the Governor, Lieutenant General John Sanderson. It seems a long time ago that that speech was made. I want to cover a number of issues. I record my particular thanks to the two gentlemen mentioned in the early part of the Governor's speech. One of those is Hon Richard Court, who is a former Premier and did a sterling job for eight years. His contribution to Western Australia was enormous. I enjoyed working with him in Cabinet for nearly three years. I always found him to be very fair. He allowed us to run our portfolios in the best interests of the State, and I appreciated that. I also touch on Hon Hendy Cowan's retirement. Hendy Cowan was an asset to the Western Australian Parliament. I reflected on that in the previous debate. He certainly stands tall in rural and regional Western Australia for his contribution to its welfare. I think it will be a long time before country people again get the same sorts of rewards they received over the eight years of the coalition Government. They were well served by it. I think that if they were to reflect on that now, they would probably have somewhat of a different idea about what happened. We thank Hendy Cowan for his contribution as Deputy Premier to not only regional and rural Western Australia but also the State as a whole, and for his contribution to the National Party. I was, and still am, a friend as well as a colleague of Hendy Cowan. I see him often and I enjoy his company immensely. The new member for Merredin has an enormous job to follow in his footsteps, but he has the capability to do just that.

I want to touch on the previous motion, as we ran out of time for it. Hon Kim Chance made many points about whether we had the right to do various things. The important point is that the electoral reform legislation was debated and put through this House, and when the Clerk took it to the Supreme Court, the umpire said that that was not the way to do the job. That was the method the Government chose to use to put in place its legislation for electoral reform or, as it is commonly called, one vote, one value. The Government chose its actions. It thought that that was the way it would proceed to achieve its ends. We spent an enormous amount of time debating that in this Parliament. It would have been a substantial cost to argue the case before the Supreme Court. I have heard figures of \$3 million. That money would have served people in regional and rural Western Australia very well in the current period of drought and other difficulties, let alone at any other time. We are now seeing a different approach to passing the one vote, one value legislation; that is, the suggestion that the President should have a deliberative vote. I think that that would undermine the whole principle of this House. The independence of the President is absolutely paramount. Once he loses that independence, we will lose credibility with the people. To say that the current Government and the Greens hold an absolute majority is not correct, because they simply do not. They would if the President were sitting on that side of the House and one of the members on this side were sitting in the presidential Chair. The simple fact of the matter is that under the rules by which the one vote, one value legislation was taken through this Parliament, it simply did not stand up legally. It would be an absolute tragedy for this House if the presidential vote became available on every piece of legislation. It has been an understanding for quite some time that the President should not have a vote. The Government knew that when it introduced the one vote, one value legislation. I would not like to see any politicising of the presidential Chair. We would never again have an independent view of or approach to any issue.

Ian Allnutt's retirement after 36 years in this place should also be noted. I was quite friendly with Ian Allnutt during my nearly 10 years in this House. I valued his contribution, and I think it was a great one.

Hon Norman Moore: His golf has improved dramatically since he retired. He keeps winning tournaments.

Hon MURRAY CRIDDLE: I understand that. I am sure he is enjoying himself immensely. I am sure we would all enjoy ourselves immensely on the golf course!

I want to touch on a couple of issues during my contribution to the Address-in-Reply, not the least of which is the extent of the drought. There seems to be some confusion about just how bad the drought is. I travelled through that particular area on two lengthy visitations. I went from Mullewa, and on one occasion I went right through to Ravensthorpe and on the other I went to Lake Grace. I visited a number of towns. I started at Mullewa, and went through Perenjori, Dalwallinu, Kalannie, Lake Grace, the area around Koorda and Mt Walker before ending up in Jerramungup and Ravensthorpe. The drought in those areas is very bad. I have been in rural and regional Western Australia all my life, apart from when I was in Perth getting educated. I have never seen a situation whereby one can drive down a bitumen road in the middle of winter and not see any green grass on the side of the road where the water usually runs off. That is a terrible indication of the grave situation out there. The people in those areas will have some difficulty getting over this. It has been an enormous setback for the State from an economic point of view. Sheep numbers have almost disappeared from areas such as Dalwallinu and Kalannie, and it is extremely bad further north in the Perenjori-Mullewa area. The

circumstances are similar at Wialki and surrounding places. What is so saddening from a business aspect is that I have never heard of commodity prices as high as they are at present. I heard today that premium wheat - there will be a lot of that around this year - will be worth something like \$340 a tonne, almost a \$100 a tonne over what it was worth last year.

Hon Ljiljanna Ravlich: Why is that?

Hon MURRAY CRIDDLE: There is an international shortage of grain, not only wheat but also barley, lupins and canola. The eastern States are in a very similar situation. New South Wales is about 90 per cent in drought. Victoria has been badly affected. Canada is also having a bad time. It is occurring right throughout the world. It is a very serious situation.

Sitting suspended from 6.00 to 7.30 pm

Hon MURRAY CRIDDLE: Prior to the dinner suspension I was referring to commodity prices of wheat and other grains. Wool, meat and beef prices are similar. As I said earlier, I have never seen commodity prices so strong. Unfortunately, farmers in the eastern wheatbelt are suffering while, in contrast, those in the coastal strip within about an hour's drive are enjoying an outstanding year, apart from a little frost in some places. In my experience, it has not been better. It cannot be said that farmers are having a bad time everywhere, because those in some areas are thriving.

I am pleased to see that the Leader of the House is here. I will report a couple of matters that arose during our trips. Things that arose regularly were not necessarily farming matters; they concerned social issues such as education. People want to make sure that their youngsters can get to school and that they can afford an education that will give their children opportunities later in life. They were concerned that schools should not lose teachers due to the loss of people in the area. When school populations decrease, sometimes teacher numbers are reduced, which is a concern. Another issue involves young apprentices sometimes being forced to leave areas. It would be appropriate if they received some assistance to help them through this difficult time. Given the present commodity prices, if we get a very good season next year in areas that have experienced less fortunate circumstances, skills will be required to provide the impetus to produce.

The federal Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry announced that as soon as an area was declared in need, welfare payments would be paid for six months. Declared areas are receiving those welfare payments now.

Hon Kim Chance: It was a very welcome initiative to see that repeated in New South Wales and adopted nationally.

Hon MURRAY CRIDDLE: It was welcome. Someone suggested that a telephone help line that offered some counselling for people would be useful. I pass that on from the concerned women in that drought-affected area.

Hon Kim Chance: The line has been established. I will relay the number some time tonight or tomorrow.

Hon MURRAY CRIDDLE: The number of that line would be much appreciated and that service will be welcomed by people in the area who have been keen to see it installed. As I said to the minister today, there is a move to develop projects in drought-affected areas. The minister referred to a possible road project in the eastern wheatbelt, although I do not know whether it has been announced.

Hon Kim Chance: It has been announced.

Hon MURRAY CRIDDLE: Construction of the Hyden-Karlgarin Road has been announced. It will be a welcome addition to that area. Other opportunities are available to develop pipeline projects, for example. In Perenjori there was talk of the need for a spur to Mt Gibson. Projects such as that could be implemented over a number of years. The community could be involved and people could be encouraged to stay in those areas. The minister will know that I have been involved in projects across quite a few regions that have been successful. Local people get a sense of ownership of and pride in those projects.

Hon Kim Chance: There is potential for water projects as well as road projects. I have asked my cabinet colleagues to look at developing anything they can.

Hon MURRAY CRIDDLE: I am sure that would be welcome.

One of the spin-offs from the drought in our area was the amassing of emus along the fence. I will pass a photograph to the minister that depicts an extraordinary number of emus. It is enlightening to see a photograph of the emus first-hand. I have inspected the fence, with the Agriculture Protection Board's knowledge. The APB had graded along the inside of the fence, and it has paid a fair amount of attention to the area. At one stage APB officers were absent in the Geraldton region. Three officers went on holiday at once and nobody was left to do the job. That caused concern in our area. Those fences need to be patrolled. I will ask the attendant to pass that photograph to the minister and anyone else who would like to see it. It illustrates the number of birds along

the fence. The picture was taken in July, but the birds are still flocking along the fence. They do enormous damage if they receive a scare. If they run in a large flock into an adjoining fence on the station, they are likely to trample over it. It is a reasonably good fence but not quite high enough in some people's opinion. As the minister will be well and truly aware, the APB is considering upgrading that fence in the long term. I think approximately \$400 000 a year is spent on it. As the photograph illustrates, it is a very valuable barrier for our farming communities.

Hon Kim Chance: It is a spectacular photograph.

Hon MURRAY CRIDDLE: I have seen the birds flock in that way a number of times; it is not an exception and it depicts the true situation. About 1 000 birds are in that photograph. Perhaps other people might like to look at the photograph.

The issue of the skeleton weed program has recently arisen. An announcement was made of a change in the program as a result of what I might call the Dexter Davies review. I do not know what the minister would call the review, but Dexter Davies was the chairman of the committee that produced the report. As the minister might know, I attended a meeting with a colleague from the electorate of Merredin. The meeting was attended by 90 people and was chaired by Peter Capito. The chairman and representatives of the Agriculture Protection Board attended along with representatives from the Department of Agriculture. The issue of concern was that a program had been taken away and people wanted to know what program would replace it.

Skeleton weed begins to flower around 10 or 11 December. Once that happens, the plant can be spread by the seed as well as by the roots. People need to know which areas will be searched, who will carry out the spraying of infestations once they are found and what is the role of the Agriculture Protection Board. Those are their three principal concerns. It was explained that the method of searching for skeleton weed had been changed. It now involves three people in a LandCruiser. I am happy with that if it works. Under the old system, people stood on an outrigger and searched with the help of a global positioning system. It worked reasonably well and had about an 80 per cent success rate. People need to know whether the search for skeleton weed will continue. I understand that people in the areas of Yilgarn and Naremben particularly and in the areas extending south need to know what is happening. I understand from the Agriculture Protection Board representatives that skeleton weed is treated as a priority 2 weed, which means that people must eradicate it.

Hon Kim Chance: Yes.

Hon MURRAY CRIDDLE: If people must eradicate it, they need to know who will carry out the eradication. There was talk of farmers being compensated for the use of Torden and Glyphosate if they were used to get rid of skeleton weed. If skeleton weed is found on a property because the owner has not attempted to eradicate it, the Agriculture Protection Board representatives said that they will go onto the property, spray it and send the owner the bill. That indicates that eradication is absolutely necessary. Although we talk about control, the rule is that skeleton weed must be eradicated. I think there is some confusion. It needs to be clearly explained to people that if they have the weed on their property, they have the responsibility for eradicating it, otherwise the Agriculture Protection Board will have it eradicated for them and the bill they will receive will be quite substantial, especially if the eradication involves 50 hectares of skeleton weed spread over a large area.

Hon Kim Chance: This is not a debate, but essentially the situation is that we will try to put a ring fence around the infestation and treat it as if it were subject to a control mechanism, even though it remains a priority 2 weed. I can understand there being some confusion about that. It is no more or less than the situation that has existed for many years.

Hon MURRAY CRIDDLE: I am trying to make the point that the role of the farmer and that of the Agriculture Protection Board need to be clarified, because it is anticipated that farmers will be putting in \$2.5 million a year for the program. It looks as though the take will be about \$1.5 million because of the lower crop this year and the rate of 35c per tonne. Since it is farmers' money, they need to know how it will be spent and that it will be spent correctly. They need to know whether money will be spent on searching and spraying. I understand that if a new find of skeleton weed is made, Agriculture Protection Board officers will search around the area. All those aspects need to be clarified. We do not want people in Yilgarn or anywhere else getting upset.

Hon Kim Chance: I think the industry came to a uniform agreement, and it is a matter of getting it done.

Hon MURRAY CRIDDLE: The difficulty is getting the information to everybody. I have had the brochure sent to me. Farmers are inclined to put in the round bin the brochures they are sent and the faxes arriving every couple of hours with quotes from the market. People must understand their responsibility and read the brochure.

There must be no winding down of the program or compromise in the effort to eradicate skeleton weed. If it got into crops, especially lupin crops on light country soil, it would do enormous damage. It costs a great deal of money to spray. Farmers are told to spray a wheat crop in the year before harvesting. However, if moist

weather extends the growing season, obviously skeleton weed will grow while farmers are trying to harvest. Once skeleton weed is in the header machine it becomes a real problem because it cannot be removed. The issue of skeleton weed must be addressed. Skeleton weed must be kept out of country areas with light soil.

I turn to a number of other areas of real interest to me over many years. The Minister for Planning and Infrastructure has put in place heavy vehicle penalties and an accreditation program. Last week I was asked whether the program could be run in Geraldton. It was run on Tuesday. People in Geraldton and the surrounding areas got quite a surprise when they found that if they were granted a category 2 permit, which would give them permission to drive on particular roads, the penalties for not abiding by some of the rules and regulations would be between \$2 000 and \$3 000, which is an enormous penalty to be imposed on people for travelling on the wrong road. The penalty will be there. The police will have the power to prosecute, as will transport officers, and sometimes they read rules closely and enforce them to the full extent. People would be upset very quickly if they were faced with fines of that magnitude. I have given one indication of the extent of the fines that will come into being on 1 November. It will affect not so much the big truck operators but the smaller truck operators who do not have time to go into all the detail of the available information. The small operators are therefore sometimes left out on a limb. We are now approaching harvest time when many farmers will be on the roads.

There is certainly some disquiet about school buses in country areas, the rate of payment, the contracts and the continuation of contracts. Although the minister has given somewhere in the region of \$1.2 million for contracts, when I was minister I was of the opinion that there needed to be an advance of something like \$6 million over the total contracts or about \$50 million in total. There needs to be a substantial rise in the rate in order to maintain vehicles in top condition. If one were to talk to Max O'Dea from the transport forum, one would get a real appreciation of the situation. Private operators are talking about joining the union. I would have thought that was the last thing private operators wanted to do.

Hon Paddy Embry: It is a sign of desperation.

Hon MURRAY CRIDDLE: It is, unfortunately. A meeting needs to be held so that they understand the situation. I always found them very difficult to deal with and they must talk through the issues, particularly the rate review. Perhaps the minister can take that advice on board.

Hon Kim Chance: I have met with a large number of school bus operators. Although they had a range of concerns, the principle concern was the date on which the new mechanism starts, which has been agreed with the transport forum. The operators are concerned that the start date for the new mechanism has been put back again and again. Unfortunately, it has been put back partly because the transport forum has insisted on more clarification on the issue. The principal issue now is that the new regime should start as soon as possible. The new regime addresses these matters of higher payments.

Hon MURRAY CRIDDLE: Those issues must be clarified because there is some difficulty with the rate review and the rate at which the operators are being paid.

Hon Kim Chance: I understood that that was agreed; the issue is when they will be paid.

Hon MURRAY CRIDDLE: That is a different issue. There is an understanding on behalf of the Government that there is an agreement. However, I do not think that the industry has accepted the agreement.

Hon Kim Chance: The group I met with were 100 per cent behind the new system but they wanted to know when it would start.

Hon MURRAY CRIDDLE: When did the minister meet with that group?

Hon Kim Chance: That was in July.

Hon MURRAY CRIDDLE: I believe that it is still a very big issue. I would be the first one to admit I was wrong if I was wrong, but I have had close contact with that group. I bring that matter to the minister's attention. It must be dealt with, otherwise some difficulties will arise.

While I am referring to heavy vehicle operations, I will mention the cartage of hay and the width of the loads. Some hay bales are about 2.7 metres wide, and the allowed width is 2.5 metres. That is a small issue that needs some clarification. When officials measure the bales, it can cause some problems. People who cart wool have the same problem. Although the bales can be a little oversized, sometimes overenthusiastic officials measure the bales and fine people \$1 000 if they are oversized. Some commonsense must be applied in those cases.

I will refer to a number of other issues included in these transport regulations. The movement of agricultural equipment between properties must also be dealt with. The WA farmers brought to my attention the matter of moving agricultural equipment at night. Gooseneck spray rigs can be towed behind a LandCruiser. Sometimes farmers want to shift the rig, which has some water in it, and the vehicles are deemed to be overweight. That is

another very simple issue. If the vehicles travelled at 50 kilometres an hour, they would not cause any harm on the road. I do not think there would be any problems allowing that to occur. Sometimes these issues are overemphasised.

Hon Kim Chance: Even so, broom sprayers have been responsible for fatal accidents on roads.

Hon MURRAY CRIDDLE: Of course they have, but whether they were over the allowable width is another issue. I have seen articulated licensed boom sprayers on the road, which are substantially wider and dangerous.

There will be a substantial cost to industry if the construction of the southern transport corridor spur out into the ocean does not go ahead. It would cost about 47c a tonne for a train to shunt and it would cost about 77c a tonne if the load were dumped near Meru and then brought in by another means or if the trains were broken there. That is a substantial cost to the industry. I understand there is some opposition to the spur from some members of the city council. The committee that deals with the issue is in agreement but there is a disagreement between the city council and the project managers. We do not want a good operation like this, which will allow the \$12.5 million foreshore development to proceed, to be impeded. The Government has provided \$1 million for the development, which we are thankful for. The plans look very good. The minister has done the right thing by going ahead with the construction of that corridor. The port will be deepened, and it is operating now. We must be careful that the port does not interfere with the live crayfish trade as that season starts shortly. Everybody in Geraldton agrees that it has been a good development. There is a good spin-off from both the dredging and the contracting for the road development.

Hon Bruce Donaldson: The dredge broke down. It worked for only two days.

Hon MURRAY CRIDDLE: There was a problem with it before.

I must comment on the funding for roads and some of the road projects around the State that have been put on hold, especially with regard to the Grain Logistics Committee. A small amount of money has been put aside for the lime sands route. I was involved in those decision-making processes. It is interesting that a decision I made some time ago was implemented in the end. I am wary of the process when the route that must initially be built for all sorts of reasons, including the saleyards, is route one. Some money will have to be spent on that or Toodyay will have a problem with the trucks going through it and Julimar Road will also need to be upgraded. I do not know what the Government's plan is for the yards. That is a much-discussed issue. It will have to have road access to it whichever way it goes. All those routes will have to be built to get reasonable access from the coast into the hinterland and beyond. The lime sand is very valuable for inland cropping.

Hon Kim Chance: Route two is far more attractive than the first option. I do not think anyone would go for route one as the first option.

Hon MURRAY CRIDDLE: I agree with the minister provided that the road from Goomalling to Meckering is fixed because those early bends going out of Goomalling are very dangerous. A heavy-haulage truck could not travel on those bends safely. Although the road from New Norcia to Goomalling will be upgraded, the other road must be fixed to complete the job, otherwise the big trucks there will endanger the smaller vehicles. All the road funding for country areas has taken a knock. As a result, many smaller contractors across regional Western Australia have suffered. Today I heard that Albany has been allocated 61 per cent of the regional road groups' funding. I think that Mr McGinty is in charge of the southern region. The shires outside Albany are not very happy that they have received only 39 per cent of the funding from the regional road groups this year.

Hon Robyn McSweeney: Hon Kim Chance is the minister responsible for the great southern.

Hon MURRAY CRIDDLE: Then I am talking directly to the responsible minister.

Hon Kim Chance: Albany and the great southern are in my portfolio, but not the south west; that is under Minister McGinty. If the member is saying that my portfolio has won all the road funding from the south west, I am delighted.

Hon MURRAY CRIDDLE: I am saying that Albany has received much of the road funding for its 17 or 18 shires and the rest got 39 per cent.

Hon Norman Moore: I cannot think of any reason why the Government would do that!

Hon MURRAY CRIDDLE: Even the member and I could work that out.

Hon Kim Chance: The woodchip haulage and its concentration on Albany would have had a lot to do with that decision.

Hon MURRAY CRIDDLE: That is a debateable point.

I refer now to the signing of the bilateral agreement for salinity - or Natural Heritage Trust - funding. There is a fund of \$158 million.

Hon Kim Chance: There is no NHT funding like that.

Hon MURRAY CRIDDLE: There is \$158 million.

Hon Kim Chance: No; that is national action plan funding.

Hon MURRAY CRIDDLE: There is NAP funding of \$158 million. I understood that the State was to put aside \$60 million. There has been some discussion about that but no signing of the agreement. I want the message passed forward to the Government that it must ensure that funding comes to Western Australia.

Hon Kim Chance: It is a seven-year agreement. The \$60 million will be provided in the first four of those seven years; there is no problem with that.

Hon MURRAY CRIDDLE: Has the bilateral agreement been signed?

Hon Kim Chance: No, it takes two to sign it. We are trying to deal with the issues and the Commonwealth's cutting back of the NHT funding to less than a quarter of what it was last year.

Hon MURRAY CRIDDLE: In the original agreement, new money had to be found.

Hon Kim Chance: Yes, in the NAP.

Hon MURRAY CRIDDLE: Yes.

Hon Kim Chance: That was predicated on an agreement made by former Premier Court and the Prime Minister that Western Australia's ramp-up of funding would be recognised, and it has never been recognised. The Commonwealth has continually breached that agreement.

Hon MURRAY CRIDDLE: We can get sidetracked on issues like that for as long as the minister likes, but the important issue in the community is that salinity funding is not going ahead.

Hon Kim Chance: I think we are spending about \$35 million a year. You are talking about additional funding.

Hon MURRAY CRIDDLE: I want the \$158 million spent in Western Australia and I want it to start now.

Hon Kim Chance: But there are two parties to the agreement.

Hon MURRAY CRIDDLE: I agree. I am just telling the minister to get on with the negotiations, otherwise we will miss out altogether.

Along with the funding of \$158 million, some \$3.2 million was made available recently for project offices, but I understand that some priority project offices have not been funded. That is a serious issue for groups like the Oil Mallee Association of Western Australia that do not have funding for project offices. There are about 20 of these projects around the State that are vital for regional and rural Western Australia under the circumstances that have arisen at the present time. That issue must be given some attention and I urge the minister to do that as soon as possible.

I now refer to the issue of the Mandurah rail. I do not want to debate the actual rail today; we can do that when the Bill comes into this place. I want to talk about the plan for transport through Perth, bearing in mind that when the minister gets around to funding it, the Lancelin to Cervantes road will be opened.

Hon Kim Chance: Before you do that, I have the number for the dry season's hotline. It is 1800 198 231, and is open 7.00 am to 7.00 pm, Monday to Friday.

Hon MURRAY CRIDDLE: That is an interesting way of doing things. I have never seen that happen before!

Hon Nick Griffiths: That is a ministerial statement!

Hon MURRAY CRIDDLE: I think it might be.

I want to talk about the roads going through Perth, particularly the Government's decision to put the rail down the freeway and into the centre of Perth. If the Government stood back and had a good look at the reason for making that decision, it would be difficult to come to the conclusion that it could be done for anywhere near the anticipated cost. That is borne out by the work that must be done on Mount Henry Bridge and all the way down there, the Narrows Bridge and the tunnelling into Perth. As late as today, some engineers have suggested that they will have to tunnel 16 metres under the buildings. The old Bairds building will be tunnelled under, which is suggested will cost \$40 million. None of the engineers I talked to have been consulted and my communication with them indicates that they were totally ignored in the earlier stage of planning. It now appears that the cost of \$70 million anticipated by the National Party is nowhere near enough. By going underneath those buildings, the tunnelling will reach the watertable. That is a wet area anyway, but the footings for the buildings are down there in that marsh country and it will be very difficult to tunnel in that area. The engineers I talked to believe that the Government has absolutely no understanding of the cost of that tunnelling. It is nonsense to suggest that it is necessary to come up through the city to link the northern and southern parts of the city. That can be done with

the arrangements that the previous Government had in place. I do not believe that there has been anywhere near enough planning, and the six months set aside by the Government to deal with that area was nowhere near enough for the engineering requirements. Very little money, if any, has been set aside to accommodate the risk factors involved there. The Government talks about burrowing through the middle of the Mitchell Freeway and the effect on buildings on the sides of the street. One need only recall the enormous concern that the previous opposition spokesperson - now the minister - had when we were building the Northbridge tunnel that was 400 metres away from buildings. The Government will now virtually burrow under those buildings, which is an enormous risk to take. Anybody who is even dreaming of tunnelling under there would want a real assurance that it will work. The engineers would need to guarantee absolutely that their work would not put any of those buildings at risk. Much work must be done there and the minister should pull back. If the Government wants to put a railway down the middle of William Street, it should bear in mind the congestion that exists there. It need only look out a window early in the morning and at five o'clock in the evening to see the congestion of traffic over the Narrows Bridge and consider the criticism that we had for building the Narrows Bridge duplication. The Government should imagine the absolute mess that would exist there now without the tunnel and without that extra bridge. The bridge was built with all the criticism in the world from the very member who is now the minister. That bridge is in place and the Government now wants to put in place something that will again make it a shemuzzle. The Government should forget about building a railway to Mandurah, because it will not service the people in Kenwick, and go back to using buses. It could build a road from Safety Bay Road to Paganoni Road and around the lakes to Clifton, which would cost about \$300 million. We would then have a transport artery right through the middle of Perth. Bearing in mind that the minister has said she will not build the Fremantle eastern bypass, the Government's plan will create only one real access through Perth. The Government's current plans will jam up the only free-flowing access through Perth and will create a secondary road going down the coast just to add a bit more congestion to that access. The former coalition Government had a good planning arrangement in place that foreshadowed extending the road around Mandurah. The traffic going through Mandurah is growing at a rate of about seven per cent a year and that extension will have to be done anyway. The Government could use \$300 million doing that and put the rest in its pocket to help out the people in the bush and the rest of the city. It could complete most of the projects that the previous Government had on the go. The notion of a railway going down the freeway into the centre of Perth appears ill thought out. A railway that went through Kenwick would pick up all the people there. The Government will not get any new passengers by putting the railway down the freeway. All the passengers go up and down the freeway by bus now and they can quite easily continue doing that by bus. The Government should go back to the drawing board and have a good think about the whole transport system in Perth.

I asked a question today about high wide-load corridors. That question related to the extension of the eastern bypass on the Roe Highway, which would clarify the transport situation there well into the future. The requirements at Fremantle Harbour indicate that container traffic is increasing at an enormous rate of about 11 per cent a year. The minister has said that more container traffic can go by rail, but the rail will not keep pace with the requirements for heavy transport into Fremantle. There was an intention to build a port at James Point in Cockburn Sound. Of course, that has been put on hold because a private operator was involved and this Government does not want to give private operators any opportunities, which is a sad thing because that would have taken a burden off the state budget. That would have shifted live sheep exports out of Fremantle, as well as car carriers. That would have released the pressure on Fremantle Harbour for a little while and, without any extra expense, allowed the development of a good harbour at James Point. That would have released money for other projects. The Minister for Government Enterprises knows that his portfolio is under pressure; the sewerage program has been put back 13 years. That is a major infrastructure development project that could benefit contractors into the future, and the smaller operators would be able to attract investment and carry on.

From my point of view, the whole thought process behind the extension of the railway line from Glen Iris up the Kwinana Freeway into Perth will stifle the opportunity for a free-flowing transport system through the metropolitan area. I do not think that the transport system will have anywhere to go, and if the Government does not go ahead with the Fremantle eastern bypass there may be a need in the future to have another bridge across the river, and goodness knows where that will be. I hope the minister bothers to take some notice of what I have said. I will have a lot more to say on the rail side of things when the Bill comes into this House. From a budgetary point of view, this is a great opportunity if the minister wants to save some money in order to spend it in the right areas.

I have covered an extensive number of projects that could be enhanced for the State's benefit, but I have one other area that I wish to cover; that is, the palliative care service in Geraldton. In recent years this service has been run with the assistance of donations. It is reaching a stage at which the service will be beyond the capacity of the local people to operate. It is a volunteer service and those involved do a great job. However, it involves some large expenses. Its annual budget is somewhere around \$270 000 and it will soon run out of funds. If we do not continue that service, the Government will have to fund a service itself. If that occurs, we will lose the

benefit of all those volunteers. I will speak to the Minister for Health about that, but I wanted it to bring it to the attention of the House.

I welcome the Governor's speech and the Address-in-Reply debate. The Governor is doing a wonderful job for this State. He travels to my electorate regularly and shows a very good understanding of issues in Western Australia. He is well respected throughout the region and it is good to have a man of his stature in the position of Governor. Everyone in this House will agree that he does a very good job.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Hon Bruce Donaldson.