

**ADDRESS-IN-REPLY**

*Motion*

Resumed from 11 November.

**MR C.J. TALLENTIRE (Gosnells)** [12.28 pm]: Thank you, Mr Speaker, and congratulations on your election to that position.

As I stand here I am filled with a deep sense of the honour that has been given to me to represent the people of Gosnells in this Parliament. I am humbled to be an elected member in a Parliament that draws on the Westminster tradition, with its hundreds of years of crafting and refinement. I am also humbled and filled with a sense of connection and profound respect for the Nyoongah people. I consider them to be the traditional owners of this land. I also recognise the traditional owners of other lands across this state, and I recognise the thousands of years of custodianship they have held over this land.

The electorate of Gosnells has a strong working class tradition. In my lifetime it has gone from being a semi-rural area to part of Perth's south-eastern suburban corridor. We are now seeing more infill housing as people come to appreciate the area's proximity to central transport infrastructure. Housing in the area is relatively affordable, and of a style that reflects the down-to-earth honesty of the people of my electorate. The area has an excellent selection of schools, strong sporting clubs, places of worship and other community facilities. My political predecessors have been significant contributors to the development of the area's community assets. It is appropriate that at this point I pay tribute to Tom Bateman, Bob Pearce, Yvonne Henderson and Sheila McHale—a fine lineage of Labor members who have represented this area.

Gosnells is fast becoming an example of multicultural Australia, with roughly 70 cultural groupings speaking 80 different languages. One of my tasks is to ensure that our welcome to newcomers and our attitude to our neighbours go beyond the notion of tolerance to a position of enthusiastic enjoyment and respect for the cultural diversity that is Australia. Positive actions are required to help bring a multicultural community together. I would like to commend the City of Gosnells for events like its annual multicultural food fair. Such initiatives are a great way of nurturing the community on its journey towards embracing people from other cultures and religious faiths. I believe that in the Gosnells electorate we are well on the way to ensuring that people from a diversity of backgrounds are all strong contributors to our community.

The natural environment often helps define the character of an area. In the Gosnells electorate views of the Darling Range are ever present, including the scars of two major quarries that act as a constant reminder of the cost of development. Another natural feature of the electorate is the Canning River. In an area that has been heavily urbanised it provides an extended natural corridor, a place of tranquillity, a place for people to connect with the ecology of this part of the world. Like much of our natural environment, the Canning River and its riparian zone are suffering from invasion by exotic plant species. The river also has problems with excess nutrient runoff and subsequent water quality loss. Thankfully, there are courageous, hardworking people in the electorate who seek to repair the damage that has been done to the river system. Not only are these people doing fine work for the environment, but also they are valuable contributors to the area's community spirit and social fabric. I would especially like to pay tribute to the work done by the South East Regional Centre for Urban Landcare.

My immediate background is in the non-government environmental sector. I think it is a very positive sign for Western Australian democracy that the Labor Party—a political party that has its origins in the Labor movement—should have supported me. Along with health, education and policing, the environment is a priority issue for Western Australians.

Let me say a little now about the journey that has led me to be a member of this Parliament. In my life I have gone through three major immigration experiences. The first time was with my parents and two brothers in 1969 when I as a five-year-old moved here from the north of England. The second time was in 1986 when I moved to France as a 22-year-old. The third time was in 1994 when I returned to Australia. Each of these migrant experiences was different, but there is no doubt that one of the most challenging aspects of setting up in a new country is countering the sense of isolation that can come as one establishes friendships and networks, and finds work. It is essential for successful immigration that people be fully supported so that they can become citizens who contribute to their new community.

Such was my experience in France in the 1980s when the French state had programs in place to foster my learning of the French language and to facilitate my integration and general wellbeing as a worker. As I started my working life in a new country I was made to feel accepted, welcome and respected for what I could bring to my work and local community. I contrast my experience in France with the previous three years of my life spent

in the United Kingdom under a political regime that disputed the value of society, despised helping people to establish themselves and worshipped a cult of profit-driven individuals.

My time overseas was seldom glamorous; it was about hard work and discipline. As an employee of a fast-food outlet in a seedy part of Paris, I well recall measuring my expenses down to the last centime, just as George Orwell recorded doing in his book *Down and Out in Paris and London*. However, I found a society that had advanced dramatically from the world experienced by Orwell in the late 1920s. To me a civilised society is one that supports someone who arrives in the country with nothing, not even the language, and then enables them to establish themselves. That was my experience in France.

When I returned to Australia in 1994, I was proud to be returning home to a progressive country. I had plans of dairy farming and creating a cheese factory in partnership with a French company. In preparation for this, I enrolled at Curtin University of Technology's Muresk Institute to study agriculture and business. It was then that I came to understand the environmental damage that had been wrought on this country. I began to rediscover Australia from the wheatbelt and learnt of the extent of land degradation and the need to invest billions of dollars in land care to repair land fast-growing saline. I also learnt of the massive biodiversity loss caused by a denial of the ecological processes that underlie a healthy, productive landscape. I am sad to say the spread of salinity continues, as does, in some quarters, a denial of the need to work with nature, not against it.

In 1999, equipped with an honours degree from Curtin University, I was recruited as a public servant to the Western Australian Department of Environmental Protection to work on notices of intent to clear native vegetation. I was given an excellent education in biodiversity conservation and was inspired by my hard-working colleagues. Not only did I learn about environmental matters, but I also came to understand the ethos of public service. I then sought to take my environmental knowledge to the non-government sector and became Director of the Conservation Council of Western Australia. The job was as exciting as it was rewarding, and I am thrilled to have contributed to a number of campaigns and policy developments, but there is still much to be done, and I am excited by the prospect of using my background to assist people in this Parliament.

I would now like to outline some of my priorities for my time in Parliament. One of my priorities will be to build on the work that has been done to establish sustainability principles at the core of all government decision-making, so that future decisions are made only when economic, social and environmental benefits will be delivered, and that this is done in a way that meets the needs of current and future generations. I would like to acknowledge the contribution that Dr Geoff Gallop made in this area when he was Premier of Western Australia.

The assessment of major projects provides a good example of an area where we should be applying sustainability principles. The community needs to be able to test the claims made by proponents of major projects, who promise so much but often deliver environmental and social losses and questionable economic dividends. The time has come to provide for a sustainability assessment system that provides for quality input through a process that assists private individuals and community groups to raise questions and get answers. Essential to the success of the process is that submissions must be responded to in a transparent and comprehensive manner. Projects should be allowed to proceed only if they are found to be viable after facing the rigors of the assessment process, where environmental, social and economic factors mutually reinforce each other.

There is great wisdom in the Western Australian community, and we should help this come forward and not be reliant on information presented by those with vested interests. Presently, analysis of the economic benefits of projects is largely left to project developers and some arms of government. There is no reason that the claimed jobs, royalties and statewide economic implications of a project should not face the scrutiny of the whole Western Australian community. There is much that can be said about the policy settings for sustainability, but I would like to highlight the need for sustainability indicators to be developed. The present indicators of our state's performance, such as gross state product, give a one-dimensional view. We need to have easily accessible indicators of ecological footprints, inclusive wealth and social wellbeing.

In a broader sustainability context, it strikes me that there are two things about Australia that make our country truly unique, truly exceptional. One is our Indigenous culture; the other is our natural heritage. More than anything else, these are the two elements that should be used to define our national character. They are also the two elements that should be made central to our sustainable future.

Since white settlement, this land has changed dramatically. True, there have been many material benefits, but we must also acknowledge that much damage has been done to the culture of this land's first people and to the ecology and landscape of lands of which they were custodians. Turning complex functioning ecosystems, which have taken hundreds of millions of years to evolve, into endless suburbia or into low-yielding areas of broadacre agriculture or into highly marginal grazing lands are decisions we have made. Had we had the knowledge and the sustainability principles that we have today, we would have gone about the development of this state very differently. We must learn from the mistakes of the past.

The practical application of sustainability principles in the Gosnells electorate has well and truly begun, but ongoing government support is needed. I have already mentioned the unpretentious style of housing in the area. In my time in Parliament, I am looking forward to working on programs that will encourage and assist with the improvement of our housing stock so that houses can be more energy and water efficient and so that maximum use can be made of warming winter sun, while the effects of baking summer sun can be reduced. There is something very wrong with the Western Australian building industry that continues to allow a proliferation of badly designed homes to be built that require the expensive running of heating and cooling systems. Good climate-sensitive design would make for cheaper-to-run, environmentally sound, more comfortable homes.

During the course of my campaign and since being elected, I have talked with parents of school-age children and their teachers and learnt of the challenges involved in bringing up young people today. I am a firm believer that education must be a partnership between parents, teachers and children. This is particularly the case with sustainability education. Our population and consumption levels are growing, making our society more and more complex. With this complexity comes the need for individuals to make more decisions as their range of choices increases. For young people this can mean more decisions about courses of study, sports to play, how recreational time is spent and, most difficult of all, a future career. A major part of education needs to be about equipping people to make decisions so they can decide what is truly best for them.

We live in a world that is driven by the marketing of products so that their sales can make a profit. I believe in providing people with information so they can make informed decisions. I also believe that we must have clever regulation in place to save the confusion that comes when the unscrupulous try to profit from selling such things as unhealthy fast food, cheap unsustainable housing and fuel-guzzling vehicles. I want to contribute to helping the people of Gosnells to be proud individuals who think for themselves, care about their families and communities and know that life's most enriching experiences come from relationships, not from McMansions or home theatres.

I turn to a more specific environmental outcome that this Parliament can deliver—legislation for biodiversity conservation. Our present Wildlife Conservation Act 1950 is out of date and fails to provide adequate protection for our remaining biodiversity. It was with great disappointment that I read the recently released 2008 global assessment of threatened and endangered species by the International Union for the Conservation of Nature. According to the report, Australia is performing especially badly. A total of 788 Australian plants and animals are currently listed as threatened. This includes 44 threatened species of birds, 38 threatened species of reptiles and 48 threatened species of amphibians. The red list includes 349 Australian mammals, of which 57 species are listed as threatened, the ninth highest number globally. This equates to over 22 per cent of Australian mammals under threat, by far the highest figure amongst all the developed nations.

One of the most dramatic changes to any landscape in the world has occurred in Western Australia. The destruction or fragmentation of 18 million hectares of native vegetation for broadacre agriculture has come at a huge environmental cost in terms of salinity, erosion, soil acidification, other forms of land degradation and biodiversity loss. The "State of the Environment Report: Western Australia 2007" records that over 14 000 hectares of land is lost to salinity each year. That is equivalent to 19 football ovals per day. There is also evidence that, along with climate change, this clearing has contributed to the decline in annual rainfall across the south west and the wheatbelt since the 1970s.

We have seen the wholesale destruction of ecosystems before they were even scientifically described. It is worth reminding ourselves that we are custodians of a natural heritage that is spectacular on a global scale. The Department of Environment and Conservation records that we have over 11 500 known taxa of vascular plants and that this represents about 50 per cent of all known Australian vascular plants. There are parts of our state, such as the Lesueur National Park and the surrounding area, or the Fitzgerald River National Park, where a 10 metre by 10 metre survey quadrat will include more plant species than in a similar survey conducted anywhere else on earth. Western Australia has eight of the 12 national biodiversity hot spots. These are so-called because they have a high number of species that are not found anywhere else in Australia or the world and because they are vulnerable to a range of degrading processes. The 2007 "State of the Environment Report" records that WA currently has 362 threatened plants, 199 threatened animals and 69 threatened ecological communities. To provide statutory protection for plants, animals and ecological communities, we need a biodiversity conservation act that brings into effect a series of regional biodiversity management plans across the whole state.

In addition to legislation, we need to ensure that people are learning to love the real Australia and are not duped into believing that lawns, palm trees and European farming systems are natural or well suited to this part of the world.

During the Gallop and Carpenter governments important changes were made to the Environmental Protection Act 1986 so that we now have environmental harm provisions. One further amendment that I would like to see is to the act's environmental impact assessment process. We need to address the present imbalance that exists

between the enormous financial resources of an organisation that presents a project for assessment and the capacity of private individuals and community groups to gather and present their concerns.

I turn now to my commitment to the hospitality sector in Western Australia. I am proud to be a member of the Liquor, Hospitality and Miscellaneous Union. I enjoyed being a respected and justly paid front office manager in hotels in Paris but was dismayed to find on returning to Australia in 1994 that doing the same work here was underpaid and undervalued. Since I left the hospitality industry, I see that the standards in the industry in Australia have continued to decline. Employers might complain that they cannot find suitable staff, but the truth is that the hospitality industry in Western Australia is suffering because most employers fail to adequately pay and nurture good staff and because the industry has failed to address an attitude that exists in the Australian culture that says it is subservient to provide service to others.

During my time in this Parliament I want to contribute to a dramatic turnaround in the quality of our hospitality sector. To do this, we must respect the industry's workers as true professionals and provide them with pay and conditions that professionals have the right to expect. I am very pleased to support the Liquor, Hospitality and Miscellaneous Union's "Better Jobs Better Hotels" campaign. This is exactly the sort of initiative that will enhance the reputation of the Western Australian hospitality sector.

[Member's time extended.]

**Mr C.J. TALLENTIRE:** This is vital work as it underpins the success of our tourism industry. According to a Western Australian Tourism Commission study by Access Economics, the economic contribution of tourism to the Western Australian economy in 2005-06 was \$4.9 billion. Not only can tourism be a fast-growing part of our economy, but also it can, if done properly, be a perfect example of a sustainable industry that protects Indigenous culture and our natural heritage. If done properly, we can be sure to have a tourism sector long after our gas fields have been exhausted and long after the dwindling of our mineral resources.

I am greatly honoured to be a member of this Parliament because of the opportunity it gives me to be involved in helping shape the future of Western Australia. A number of people have helped me get here. I would like to record my appreciation to all members of my campaign team. To name a few key people, I owe special thanks to Fiona Henderson, Sarah Seymour, Jack de Groot, Pierre Yang, John Sherry and Eve and Ray Omicini.

I also want to record my love for and gratitude to my parents, Peter and Wilda Tallentire, and especially to Irene Tallentire. They have helped make me what I am today.

I also want to thank the Conservation Council of Western Australia for its role in my life. It was my privilege to serve with four presidents—Professor David Harries, Professor Philip Jennings, Dr Sue Graham-Taylor and Dr Harry Cohen. Thank you all for the assistance and guidance that you have given me.

I respect the genuine commitment to this state displayed by all members of this Parliament. Ultimately, I am a progressive-minded person, not a conservative. I believe in having a generosity of spirit, not a blind faith in markets or greed. I believe that as the world gets more complex, we need more and smarter regulation, not less, and I believe that a wealthy country such as Australia should be leading the world with sustainability initiatives, including greenhouse gas emission reductions and renewable energy initiatives. We should not be waiting for everyone else to move first.

The people of the Gosnells electorate have placed their trust in me to be their elected representative. In an area that could be described as Labor heartland, people demand that their member of Parliament be hard working and active in the local community. I understand that expectation and see that the only way to counter the cynicism that exists towards politicians in general and the growing disenfranchisement many express when discussing our democratic process is to dedicate myself to my community. I will dedicate myself to the people of the Gosnells electorate and to the Western Australian and Australian communities of which we are a part.

[Applause.]

**MR I.M. BRITZA (Morley)** [12.48 pm]: Mr Speaker, I congratulate you on your election to Speaker of the house and look forward to watching you arbitrate with honour and integrity in this chamber. It is an immense honour to join this chamber as the member for Morley. I wish to thank the people of this wonderful electorate for giving me the privilege and opportunity to represent them in this Parliament. I also want to take this opportunity to recognise my colleagues, new and re-elected, in the government and the opposition. I want to acknowledge the former member for my constituency of Morley, formerly called Ballajura, Mr John D'Orazio. I do not lay claim to the stature or respect that was earned by the former member. His work in the electorate and for the Bayswater council, which has already been publicly recognised, has provided me with an excellent foundation on which to build.

I take this opportunity to thank the marvellous group of people who supported me during my election campaign. The campaign for the seat of Morley is now well and truly over. It was an unusual campaign in many respects

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and, ultimately, a closely run affair. However, the support and enthusiasm of my campaign team and their unwavering loyalty to me were never in question. To them, I owe the deepest debt of gratitude. We all genuinely enjoyed the campaign, while at the same time being acutely aware that no-one knew who we were or how to spell my name and did not even know what I looked like.

Mr Speaker, with your consent I would like to place on the public record my sincerest thanks and appreciation to my elder brother, Ross Britza, who is in the public gallery, and my sister, Joy Evans, whose faithful and loyal support over many years has enabled me to stand here today on behalf of the Britzas Australia-wide with a great deal of genuine pride and humility. To many others too numerous to name, I also express thanks for their enthusiastic support over such a short but remarkable political operation.

I would like to acknowledge several people in particular. Firstly, Mr Jonathan Daventry, who somehow saw in me the potential of a man who could serve the Liberal Party with dignity and respectability, and possibly be elected into Parliament. Neither of us fully realised that all of this would happen in eight short months. I joined the party in January, was pre-selected a week after the election was called and now sit alongside my colleagues in government. It is difficult not to offer a little bit of this to divine providence.

I acknowledge the friendship, support and encouragement of Bishop Harry Westcott from Alectown, New South Wales, who has continually spoken into my life and encouraged, upheld and supported me over 25 years. This is a man who is highly respected on five continents and I am honoured to have had this man as a colleague and deeply appreciated friend.

I acknowledge Dr Graham and Katherine Jacobs, who came alongside my wife and me and gently, but persuasively, encouraged us to turn our hearts towards being involved in politics. This led us to finally joining the Liberal Party and now we are part of Western Australian history.

I also acknowledge Dr Kenneth Copeland from Fort Worth, Texas, USA. This is a man who believed in me when it was not popular to do so and he saw in me something that I did not completely see at first: a deep love, admiration and appreciation of my own country and my responsibility to stand up and take my place to serve her where needed. When I fell and failed, he had compassion for me and helped to put me on my feet and spoke over me only words that would help me to achieve my destiny by rising to the call on my life. How important it is to show mercy and compassion when it is in our power to do so. To this man, I owe much and am grateful and honoured to call him a friend and a teacher who has been an important and significant influence in my life.

I acknowledge the influence and encouragement of Mr Barry Court, who is in the public gallery. He is the current president of the Western Australian Liberal Party. This man helped me to restore my faith in leadership. He is a man not concerned about popularity; is fiercely loyal, even to his own hurt; is vitally concerned about truth; and, above all, can be trusted. To this man I dedicate the triumph and my absolute joy of winning the seat of Morley.

I acknowledge the love and support of my wife, Penny. After speaking at countless conferences and conducting numerous seminars all over the world on all aspects of family issues, including counselling and offering advice to many couples and young people, I found myself divorced and beginning to experience the depths of despair—the ostracism by my peers, anguish and hopelessness that so many others who experience this go through. When Penny came into my life I found the love, passion and, finally, the direction I needed. I did not know that a man could be loved by a woman in the way that Penny expresses her love to me. It does not matter what I achieve in public life during the day, there is nothing that beats the joy of going home to someone who is absolutely delirious and excited to see you. To my wife I owe much and although her love and passion for me is still a complete mystery to me, it is something that I have never taken for granted, and I express that to her often. Members may be excused for wondering why in the world I am expressing my heart so publicly and passionately about my wife. Well, it is because the best gift that I can give my electorate is a stable, passionate and loving home. They will know that I will deal with them with the same honour, respect, integrity and love that are expressed in my life. Thank you, Penny, for loving this man when he had nothing; he had lost everything and had even lost his way a little. I am a very grateful and appreciative husband who will never forget what you have done for me. To my elder sons, Timothy and Michael, thank you for encouraging your father every step of the way. You never wavered in your support and I am truly thankful for your love, encouragement and support. I give thanks to my young 15-month-old son, Samuel. It sounds as though I am going through my family, but that is okay. I could never have imagined that I could love a boy the way I love my son: truly, he has been God's personal gift to me.

I would like to focus on a couple of the issues that confront Morley. I have two high schools and several primary schools in my electorate and I am disheartened by the physical condition of several of them. At Morley Senior High School there is a pressing need for the entire science block to be completely refurbished. The science benches have had the laminated tops completely removed, exposing the timber, and all the gas fixtures that are

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from the early 1970s need to be replaced, just to name a few things. Weld Square Primary School is in desperate need of an appropriate administration block, which I understand is a standard request from most schools. Some of the classroom conditions are appalling and in dire need of either complete refurbishment or an entire rebuilding program. I am sure that many schools throughout the state are going through the same frustrations experienced by the schools in my electorate; however, this does not diminish the need for a program of rebuilding and refurbishing to be re-established in the Department of Education and Training rather than just the maintenance program. The Morley parents and citizens have done a remarkable job in supporting these schools while they deal with the pressing issues that seem to confront them on a daily basis with no feeling of finality of completion in their hearts. I make a commitment to stand up and be counted on behalf of these teachers, parents and their schools to maintain the quality of education in adequate and satisfactory classrooms and administration facilities that they thoroughly deserve.

The seniors in my electorate are numerous in number and while I have not met all the associations and clubs that represent them, I intend to meet them and raise my voice on their behalf in this Parliament. In many cultures the elderly are held in high respect. It is to our shame that we do not follow the same example. They do have a voice and it is getting rather loud these days. It is simply wrong that their cries are not being heard or, apparently, not being acknowledged.

When I won the seat of Morley, I knew that the people did not know me and the vote was primarily against the previous government. However, I felt like an adopted son. The people voted for me and, just like an adopted baby, they did not know where I came from, what I was like, what I believe, and probably hoped that, at least, I stood for Liberal Party policies, which I do. What are my principles, ethics and personal beliefs? My parents, the Reverend Bill and Beryl Britza, were missionaries for just on 20 years in Malawi, Africa, before becoming Baptist pastors. My father pastored in churches in Kojonup, Woodanilling, Bayswater and, finally, Liverpool, New South Wales. I was the fifth child of six children and was born in Perth before heading to Malawi, where I lived until I was nearly six years old. My parents related to me that my arrival back in Perth was quite traumatic, because it was only back in Australia that I realised I was white. This was exacerbated by the fact that I spoke predominantly Chinyanja, a Zulu tongue, and little English. However, it did not take long for the white genes to kick in. I started clapping on the “on” beat, I could not sing and I certainly had no rhythm. However, I survived this experience intact. I bring this anecdote before the house because I believe it laid the foundation for the genuine care and awareness I have in my heart for the people of Africa. Our state has many representatives from this nation. I have had the privilege of representing the Premier at several African functions, and I am honoured to have done so. I would consider it an honour to be counted with the many people from Africa who now call Western Australia their home and bring their desires and concerns before this house.

I also share with the house my unashamed support and love for the nation of Israel. I have visited this nation, and my heart is tender towards its people. History has shown time and again that whoever supports and honours this nation truly becomes prosperous, flourishes and increases in influence. Therefore, I publicly declare my support for and loyalty to this nation.

Having married a beautiful, strong and passionate native of Texas—I hasten to inform the house that there is a huge difference between a Texan and an American—I have a natural love, admiration and deep respect and honour for the United States of America. I am well aware of this nation’s real and perceived failures, but it stands on its own in the world as a nation whose people stand for what is right and have a deep-seated heart for and belief in democracy, freedom and justice. Whether or not we support the United States of America, it is a sobering thought to consider that no-one thinks to invade us because of our excellent alliance with this nation, whose own armed forces have also given their lives for our nation’s freedom. It is very important to state at this time that my declarations towards these nations and their people, who also reside in my electorate and elsewhere in this state, in no way diminish the total respect and value I have for all nations and for their people who call Western Australia their home, and I am equally thrilled and delighted to become part of their lives and represent them as well.

In the light of the fact that I have been a minister of the church for nearly 30 years, I understand how many people would immediately, without much thought, put me into a particular religious box. So I take this opportunity to either confirm that or go the other way. I am not ashamed of the foundational spiritual principles that were given to me by my parents. They not only gave me sound spiritual guidance for my future welfare and personal benefit; they also instilled in me a sense of right. It truly amazes me that people can have perceived genuineness about what is right or wrong and still totally miss what is truth. Very soon, as far as morals and ethics are concerned, two plus two will definitely add up to five, at the rate we are going. The community already laughs and mocks the apparent lack of commonsense among politicians and is particularly annoyed when its decisions via referendums and other forums are not received or taken seriously. We pass some legislation that the vast community does not agree with or understand and then we wonder in amazement at the cynical attitudes that are growing within our own citizens and the media towards us. I as a rule do not listen much to cynics, and

any time I hear someone declare himself to be one, I remember the writer of Proverbs declaring that a cynic is someone who is constantly looking for wisdom but never finds it—all he finds at the door of his heart are stockpiles of stupidity. I guess we just need to leave those who express cynicism most with their own piles of stupidity and leave it at that. Some previous speakers have already alluded to the decline in our moral values. Many people often query why morality is such a strong issue with those who hold strong spiritual values. It is quite simple really. Every civilisation that has lost its compass where morals are concerned has simply slipped into history and its people have always played an extremely high price for it. Just because we live in the twenty-first century does not mean that the consequences of the past will not come to us.

Morality is an interesting thing, and I have sometimes meditated on the old fairytale of the king who wore no clothes. Everyone was trying to convince themselves that the king was wearing clothes so they would not be seen as foolish, stupid, out of date, irrelevant or, in our case, not to have passed into the new twenty-first century thought patterns and beliefs, as though morals actually evolve. The fact was that the king was as naked as could be, and it took a little boy to declare it out of simple commonsense. He knew the king was naked, and just said so. There was no meditation, no excuses, no explanations, no committees, no legislation, no legal briefs, no conferences and no marches. He just said it because it was simply true; it was a fact that the king was naked. Just because something is legal does not make it right, and just because a bill is presented and is passed by a majority does not mean that it is right. Just because abortion is legal does not make it right. When a woman who is pro-choice wants a child she calls it a baby, and when she does not want it she calls it a foetus. It may be legal but it is not right.

This brings me to my final point. While obviously holding on to sound biblical, Judaeo-Christian beliefs and principles, I simply ask whether the decision before me is right. Situational ethics is a dangerous path to walk when there are no absolutes to guide oneself in making decisions that affect hundreds and thousands of people. When listening to bills being presented in this chamber, I will be constantly asking myself whether they are right or wrong. I will make decisions based on moral absolutes, because they are not persuaded by how we personally think or feel about a matter. Two plus two will always be four. Even if we do not like it or are angry and frustrated by it, the answer will always be four, and moral judgements are the same. People can say whatever they like, believe whatever they want to believe, and act however they want to act, but moral absolutes simply remain the same.

[Member's time extended.]

**Mr I.M. BRITZA:** I conclude with a statement that will be my guiding rule in my term as member for Morley and in this house: it is easy to do justice, but very difficult to do right, therefore let right be done. I thank members of this house for the friendship and goodwill extended to me and I humbly express the honour I feel to be a part of this chamber and to serve the people of Western Australia, the people of Morley, the Premier, his ministers and the members of this chamber.

[Applause.]

**MR W.R. MARMION (Nedlands — Parliamentary Secretary)** [1.07 pm]: I proudly stand in this place representing the families and businesses of Nedlands. It is a privilege and an honour to be their voice. I note that I follow several luminaries in Western Australian history as the member for Nedlands: Sir Norbert Keenan, Sir Charles Court and Richard Court. They were all men of great substance, principle and sound judgement. They were all highly regarded for not only their passionate support of free enterprise, but also their vision for Western Australia and their commitment to the electorate. My hope is that I will equally serve the people of Nedlands in this place as they have been supported in the past. Looking back on history, I am reminded that great men and women built this state, including men like my parliamentary predecessors. They were men who believed in free enterprise and who had a vision and were not afraid to step out to create that vision.

I am here today because my great-great-grandfather was such a man. His name was Patrick Marmion, and in 1841, at the ripe old age of 25, he migrated from Northern Ireland to Fremantle. Although Fremantle and Perth had been settled for only 12 years before Patrick arrived, his energy, drive and commercial nous must have suited the times. Officially, ship's records list his occupation as a clerk, with one historian suggesting that he arrived as an indentured servant. Even so, he managed to develop a successful merchant business in Fremantle, along with a whaling station up the coast, close to where the suburb of Padbury is now located. He died in 1855, leaving his wife, Charlotte, and son, William Edward Marmion, to continue the family business. William went on to make his mark in other ways. He was the first member for the seat of Fremantle, and was Minister for Lands in the first Forrest cabinet. He served in the Legislative Council from 1870 until 1890, when he moved into the Legislative Assembly.

William Edward Marmion had a reputation for being honest and clear-sighted. He was an outspoken supporter of Fremantle as a gateway to the state and he was not afraid to stand up on behalf of his constituents. From the 1870s through to the 1890s, when Albany's King George Sound and other hubs threatened Fremantle's position

**Extract from Hansard**

[ASSEMBLY - Wednesday, 12 November 2008]

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Mr Chris Tallentire; Mr Ian Britza; Mr Bill Marmion; Mr John Hyde; Mr Tom Stephens

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as Western Australia's major port, William Marmion fought hard alongside other Fremantle businessmen to get the government to build a much-improved longer jetty, thereby assuring Fremantle's place as the state's premier port facility. He also argued for the retention of the railway workshops in Fremantle rather than moving them to Midland Junction. In his support for John Coode's plan to develop Fremantle's harbour on the coast, as opposed to the mouth of the Swan River, he took on some formidable opponents when he reportedly criticised and bullied the engineers who supported C.Y. O'Connor's alternative plan. It is interesting that now, more than 100 years later, the very nature and location of the Fremantle port is again on the agenda as the state considers its future export and import tonnages bound to and from the Perth metropolitan area.

We can be proud of our heritage. We must learn from our history. My pledge to the people of Nedlands is similar to that given by all those statesmen who have gone before me; that is, I will energetically defend and champion their needs even in the face of great opposition.

Incidentally, I have also read that William Edward Marmion's fellow parliamentarians believed that he lacked tact. That piece of information, not surprisingly, was never passed down to his ancestors through family historians. That is one trait of William Marmion's that I do not plan to emulate. Fortunately, I am surrounded by many good people, including my wife, Katelyn, who I have no doubt will remind me of this pledge in the months and years to come.

It is to these same good people that I owe a debt of gratitude. Thanks to their efforts and support I survived the rigours of preselection in a nail-bitingly close election. I wish to publicly record my thanks to them, along with the hundreds of people who supported me through this process. I was amazed and humbled by those who came forward to help me. To the people who manned my campaign office, who doorknocked more than 7 000 homes and who worked the booths and scrutineered, I say a heartfelt thank you.

I would not have considered running for the seat of Nedlands without the support of my family. I refer to my wife, Katelyn, and my five children—Brittany, Olivia, Richard, Trent and Kezia. My parents, Betty and Dick Marmion, who are here today, were less enthusiastic about my possible entry into politics. It is their observation that politics makes one's hair prematurely grey or, in some cases, white!

I pay particular thanks to Peter Collier, a North Metropolitan member of the Legislative Council. As my campaign manager, he devoted an enormous amount of time and energy to my campaign. At the risk of leaving out the names of some 300 people who worked on my campaign, I single out Barry Ireland, Des Wells, Ross Roberts and Del Willmott for the time they devoted. I also acknowledge the advice and grounding from the following experienced campaigners—Richard Court, Liz Constable and my mother's dear friend June Craig. Most of all I thank the electors of the seat of Nedlands—the people who placed their trust in me. I regard it as a great honour and responsibility to represent them, and I sincerely thank them for the opportunity.

The Nedlands electorate is a special place. It is bounded by the Swan River to the south and south east, Thomas Street and Kings Park to the east, Loch Street and Brockway Road to the west and Cambridge Street to the north. Within its boundaries are the suburbs of Crawley, Dalglish, Dalkeith, Jolimont, Karrakatta, Nedlands, Shenton Park and Subiaco, along with parts of Claremont, Floreat, Mt Claremont, Wembley and West Leederville. Major features within the electorate include Subiaco Oval, Karrakatta Cemetery, Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital, St John of God Hospital Subiaco, Princess Margaret Hospital for Children, King Edward Memorial Hospital for Women and the University of Western Australia. It has more than eight kilometres of Swan River foreshore with some wonderful recreational walks and rivers parks. The electorate is home to a wide cross-section of people. We are generally a happy group of people, but we are not without our challenges.

Nedlands has more than 6 000 residents over the age of 65, which is nearly 14 per cent of its population. That compares with the figure for the rest of Western Australia, which is 11.8 per cent. Given that the median age of those who live in Nedlands is 40, Nedlands has one of the highest age profiles in Australia. Already my constituents have sent me a clear message. One of the principal issues that concerns them continues to be a lack of timely access to hospitals for emergency care and the waiting period for those requiring important surgery, which they want reduced. I am pleased that the new Liberal government has an experienced and very capable person in Dr Kim Hames who, as the Minister for Health, recognises the need to address these pressing concerns. I will work hard to keep this issue high on the government's agenda.

Provision of aged-care places is another major issue for the electorate of Nedlands. With a much larger proportion of elderly residents than is the case in other electorates in Western Australia, we are already facing the problems of having to place loved ones who need residential aged-care accommodation in distant metropolitan suburbs that are unfamiliar to them and far from close relatives. Exacerbating this problem is the need to upgrade and rebuild most existing aged-care facilities. Sadly, the renovation of many of these facilities is simply not an option. Rebuilding is usually the only answer, but that requires relocating residents to temporary accommodation that is often out of the electorate. That places enormous stress on the residents and their families. Solutions are not easy. Tough decisions have to be made. Land is a somewhat scarce commodity in the western



suburbs. Not surprisingly, councils and developers want to maximise the return on their investments, and any land that is available is invariably used for residential development. This is where our Nedlands heritage provides the background for our future vision. We need to be mindful of the ever-diminishing residential aged-care places in our electorate and what that means to us as a community. A failure to support our elderly residents will greatly diminish our social fabric and intergenerational family links. If we sever the very roots of our community tree, we will not have a strong community. Now is the time to plan for the future. Now is the time to identify suitable sites on which to build new facilities and now is the time to upgrade existing facilities. Just as we plan for schools, hospitals, public open space and other essential community infrastructure, we must assure our elderly residents that we really do care. Now is the time to create a future network of residential aged-care sites throughout the whole metropolitan area, including Nedlands. The generation that is being affected by this challenge deserves better because they have served our communities and defended our country. There are horror stories out there; indeed, anyone who has recently tried to find care for their ageing parents will know exactly what I am talking about. The situation is un-Australian and needs to change.

Equally, we must invest in our future younger generations and in parents and their families. The deteriorating standard of state school facilities is driving them towards the private education system. That issue concerns me greatly. As a parent I have chosen to use the state's primary school system. The teachers at both Nedlands Primary School and Hollywood Primary School are dedicated to the learning needs of my children. I was given great comfort when, in the first few weeks of the new Liberal government, the Premier and the Minister for Education decided to improve the conditions and pay rates of our valued state school teachers. That is a great first step, but we now must work hard to improve the standard of our schools' infrastructure. It is evident that the older schools in my electorate are run down and in desperate need of an upgrade. Sadly, the once temporary demountable classrooms have become permanent reminders of quick-fix options. There has been no thought for the future. A failure to increase maintenance expenditure during the past eight years has meant that the burden to cover the shortfall rests with parent associations. Whilst parents in some suburbs may be able to fund school infrastructure needs, that is certainly not the case for parents in other suburbs. I am advised that the current written-down depreciated value of Western Australia's schools is a conservative figure of \$7 billion. Using the Australian Taxation Office's allowable depreciation rate of two per cent, that equates to an annual maintenance expenditure requirement of \$140 million, yet the total funding allocated by the previous government during the past eight years was only \$60 million. I recognise that there is not an endless pot of money available for the government to allocate. However, this simply means that we need to focus on the priorities and ensure that we get the best value from the taxpayers' dollar.

Although well established, Nedlands is not without its transport planning and infrastructure issues. There are some good roads, a train line and bus routes, yet we can make our transport system a whole lot better. Integrating these modes of travel and introducing a network of safe bicycle and pedestrian paths will increase our community's faith in our transport system. With five children, I am particularly keen to have safe environments that encourage them to use our footpaths and bike paths without fear of a possible collision with a vehicle. Again, it is important that we have a vision and a plan for the future that takes into account all travel options, including passenger cars, commercial vehicles, buses, trains, bicycles and pedestrians.

The areas of transport planning and infrastructure are a particular passion of mine. I come from a family of engineers. I have a Bachelor of Engineering and Master of Business Administration from the University of Western Australia. These have stood me in good stead through 24 years in public service, starting as a civil engineer at Main Roads and finishing as a director in Premier Richard Court's office.

My time as an engineer in Main Roads allowed me to gain valuable experience in designing, planning, costing and constructing roads throughout the state. This included being posted in the divisions of West Kimberley, Bunbury, Narrogin, Kalgoorlie and Perth. At Main Roads I also had the privilege of reporting directly to some great leaders and engineers, including our current governor, Dr Ken Michael; Dr Jim Gill, the current chief executive officer of Water Corporation; and Don Aitken, who was the Commissioner of Main Roads for over 20 years and the chancellor of the University of Western Australia.

For the past six years I have managed, in partnership, a successful consulting business that focused on strategic planning of urban developments and the economic assessment of major government infrastructure projects. My most recent work included developing business cases covering major state infrastructure projects such as the Perth Arena, Fire and Emergency Services' volunteer and career fire stations, schools and train stations.

With this background, I am passionate about developing a vision, plans and policies that will meet the needs of our state now and well into the future. One of my greatest frustrations is the reactionary planning and implementation of major infrastructure projects, particularly transport projects, in a vacuum of any overall master plan or visionary context. Where is our draft 2050 passenger rail network; our 2050 port network; our 2050 land use plan for industry; and our 2050 road and rail freight networks linking major industry? It is not easy to develop such plans, but the first step is easy. We just have to say we will do it, allocate the resources

and start. It is nearly 50 years since the Stephenson-Hepburn plan was prepared. From this plan came the metropolitan region scheme and a planned road network. It gave the metropolitan area a developmental framework. It is well past the time for this plan to be looked at again and for a completely new start to be made.

Since my preselection I have often been asked why I have chosen to enter politics and why Nedlands. The “why Nedlands” part is easy. Nedlands is well and truly part of my family history. My grandmother and father lived in Nedlands in the 1940s and my father and aunt both obtained their first degrees at the University of Western Australia. I have travelled and resided all over Western Australia, from Bunbury to Derby, but I have returned to my heritage and have now lived in the Nedlands area for more than 20 years. I am a passionate advocate for Nedlands and for delivering a plan to ensure that its future is as strong as its past.

And why politics? That question is slightly harder to answer. Choosing to stand as a candidate and entering Parliament is a challenge for anyone, and I have always admired members from all sides of politics who have taken on this challenge. Although it is an enormous privilege to represent an electorate, it also carries with it the enormous responsibility of making decisions and judgements on significant issues for the state. I have been blessed with a career path that by chance has given me a broad experience in all levels of the public service. I believe that I have much to offer the people of Nedlands and Western Australia and that it is my duty, as well as my passion, to utilise my knowledge and experience in the most important forum—the Western Australian Parliament.

Growing up I learned from personal experience the value of hard work, determination and, above all, the importance of a team approach to getting the job done. As well as reinforcing the need to work hard and do my best, my parents also instilled in me the values of honesty and integrity and the need to give back to and play an active part in the local community.

For most of my life I have done this. I am the current president of the YM Coastal City Hockey Club, chairman of Engineers Australia’s Centre for Leadership and Management, and chairman of the Engineering Excellence Awards for Western Australia. I am also heavily involved in my children’s sports and education because, like many of us, my family means the world to me. They keep me grounded in reality and provide me with a reason for ensuring that the decisions I make do not adversely affect their future.

[Member’s time extended.]

**Mr W.R. MARMION:** My wife, Katelyn, and I believe that strong family values are vital to the social fabric of our local community. It is important to me that my children grow up learning the lessons that I did and that they understand the value of hard work, the benefits of teamwork, the importance of honesty and respect and the joy that comes from getting involved in the community and giving to others. They also need to understand that we all have a role to play in our local community.

I am very fortunate because I can remember the time when anyone could get a hospital bed, when education, not funding, was the issue for our public schools and when our local roads were safe. I want my children to experience the same things that I did, and this can occur only when we have a government that works to meet the challenges of the future to benefit us all.

I believe that if we want to make a difference, we have to play our part. I want to play my part in a government that sets the bar high; a government that looks to the future with courage and resolve to create a vision that all communities can strive for; and a government that plans thoroughly to create realistic and intelligent policies that benefit us all. By that I mean policies that deliver health services more efficiently to the whole community and reduce the time patients spend in emergency waiting rooms and on surgery waiting lists; policies that allow aged-care residences to coexist with other residential properties in all our suburbs to allow families to stay close to one another for a lifetime; policies that look at the optimal size and location of schools, taking in the future demographics of our state and future educational requirements; policies that consider the operational life cycle of schools and fund them accordingly; policies that look to our future transport needs, including sea ports, major freight routes, rail links, bus routes, cycle paths and walkways; and policies that address reactionary town planning by setting a vision for the future for our urban development that will set the infrastructure goals for the metropolitan area for the next 50 years.

In closing, I wish to affirm my belief that the fundamental role of government is to facilitate the freedom of the individual and to provide services for the protection, safety and benefit of all individuals. In making decisions regarding what is best for the state, we must never forget that our state is made up of many individuals, some of whom require additional support due to their particular physical, financial or social circumstance. Laws, regulations and other red tape are necessary but we should work hard in this Parliament to make sure that, where possible, we keep legislation simple, unambiguous and to a minimum. It is my hope and desire that I will have the wisdom in this house to make decisions that will be to the greater benefit of the state and, as a consequence, every individual who lives here.

Today I have outlined a number of issues which my electorate feels passionate about but which affect us all. I look forward to working with my parliamentary colleagues to deliver solutions and to create the vision, develop the plans and draft the policies that will benefit not only my constituents, but also our entire state.

[Applause.]

**MR J.N. HYDE (Perth)** [1.28 pm]: Here we are deep into late lunchtime on a Wednesday, musing on the affairs of state as we clock-watch and await the 2.00 pm whistle so that the theatrics of the question time circus can begin. I have been called up to the crease as the post-lunch somnambulism kicks in to pad out the innings, play for time and ensure that someone wittier, younger and more erudite than I can excite the masses at the resumption of play after question time. It reminds me of a past life when I was the night editor of *The Scotsman* newspaper in Edinburgh: master of my own domain between 1.00 am and 3.00 am, an afterthought in daily journalism, roaming the newsroom like the *Marie Celeste*, the ghost ship doomed to wander the high seas without ever finding a satisfactory berth. My sole raison d'être was to be around, sober and functioning just in case Margaret Thatcher popped off the perch or some other earth-shattering news occurred that justified a new front-page story. It never happened of course.

I am genuinely surprised and humbled to be in this house, elected for a third time. Of course, some of my colleagues are even more surprised—their astonishment exceeded only by their genuine wonder that someone like I can manage to tie his shoelaces in the morning. I thank the constituents of Perth for re-electing me. I love Perth passionately, with its wonderful array of villages and communities within. I thank my excellent electorate staff, Katrina and Julian, and our huge army of volunteers who believe strongly in the change we have achieved lately.

Being thrust into opposition after seven and a half years gives one a chance to reflect honestly. One of my aims in moving into state government was to ensure that our community infrastructure was upgraded. Schools in the electorate of Perth were the most visible need and the century-old sewerage and water pipes buried underneath the ground the most invisible need. Children at Highgate Primary School would not use the toilets because they were so old and decayed. There had been no big infrastructure scheme for decades. The Labor government rebuilt the toilets and also provided a new library resource centre. We opened the new library resource centre at Mt Hawthorn Primary School, successfully amalgamated the junior and primary schools there and built a new administration block and toilets, which will be opened in the next month. I am available, if the Premier is not, to open them on that date.

Mt Lawley Senior High School is in many ways the jewel in the crown of education builds in Western Australia—\$44 million or so on the spend and we have ended up with not only a beautiful, sustainable campus, but also an engaging atmosphere of “reading, (w)riting and (a)rithmetic”. At North Perth Primary School I got to open the new outdoor assembly area and canteen. I also battled the bureaucracy over synthetic grass, and we won. I made a grievance in this chamber to the minister about how crazy it was that every year the school had to apply to the Department of Education and Training to get a tiny operating grant to replant denuded grass because it did not get enough sunlight to grow. Department rules would not fund synthetic grass—only expendables. After my grievance the school got a trial, it worked, the kids are happy and the department is saving money. We should have done much more in government, we should have done it quicker and we should have done it smarter. I hope we get the chance to be in government again to do more good more efficiently for the community.

Can I give some advice to the new Liberal backbenchers? Do not be afraid to back your convictions and challenge your ministers and the bureaucrats, especially Treasury. The wunderkinds in Treasury, with their freshly minted diplomas from the London preschool of economics and wonderful alumni such as Robert Mugabe, pray before the god of the AAA rating and other Thatcherite mumbo jumbo. Of course, the AAA rating is not scientific or mathematical; it is handed down from on high by paid ratings agencies. These are the very same ratings agencies that gave ticks to the investment banks in the United States that have gone under and are largely to blame for the US-led recession that much of the world, except Western Australia and parts of Asia, are heading into. The mythical net debt-to-asset ratio figure of 47 per cent sounds like a number that some astrologer has devised—found in the tea leaves between the images of Elvis Presley and the Virgin Mary. The ratings agencies should be grilled relentlessly for getting it wrong over investment banks and so much else, and a growth economy such as Western Australia should be very wary of accepting their advice, let alone paying for it. China, Thailand and Malaysia are still in growth mode because they rejected the agencies' advice after the Asian crisis in 1997 and invested in infrastructure and jobs, instead of cutting them as they were told to. Singapore eased off its public investment in recent years and is now in recession.

Western Australia is still a growing economy, like China, Thailand and Malaysia, because of our investment in public infrastructure—the Mandurah railway, hospitals, schools and desalination plants. New South Wales is an economic basket case because it has not invested in public infrastructure, yet these ratings agencies equate that

state with ours. The whole premise of the ratings is economically corrupt. We cannot compare a decaying manufacturing economy such as New South Wales with the investment needs and borrowing capacity of a service-based growth economy such as Western Australia. The next time ministers or Treasury say no to a new school toilet because the expense might threaten the AAA rating, I ask government backbenchers to please assert their own position as representatives of their electorates. Members on that side of the chamber are in government because the Liberal Party won more metropolitan seats in the election—National Party members are actually 22 per cent less represented in this house that forms government—and the Liberals won those metro seats because people did not believe our Labor government had done enough quickly enough. It is irrelevant that we did much more than any previous government. The electorate has lifted the bar of expectations higher. The metropolitan government members are the key to their government's survival and the majority of their constituents are working in my electorate in the central business district. One thousand people a week are still moving to Perth for jobs. Our unemployment rate is going down; it is currently 2.2 per cent. Those members must invest in the transport, health, education and environmental needs of those constituents. Those are the priorities, not a mythical AAA rating.

The Chinese and Thai governments are not hesitating to build a new hospital or highway every week because a ratings agency may add 0.5 of a percentage point to some borrowings. Experienced investors and developers in my electorate shake their heads at our timidity over the AAA rating. We as a Labor government got our CBD priorities wrong. The Northbridge link must be the number one priority for the CBD—our economy's and the state's real engine—and the link must stretch all the way to the freeway. Do not delay. The sooner this begins, the sooner the private sector will value-add with its investment. How horribly wrong was Treasury to say that we could not prioritise the Northbridge link? How horribly wrong was Treasury to bluff that Western Australia did not have the capacity to meet multi-mega projects at the same time? It is the same way in which Treasury was wrong for ridiculing me and other Labor backbenchers when we first came into government and pointed out that Treasury's premise—the price of oil would remain at \$22 a gallon and therefore royalties would not be available to fund government infrastructure—was holding us back. It took Treasury a further six years to realise that arts investment played a key role in our growth economy sustainability. When I made speeches in this place on arts investment seven years ago, Treasury just did not get it. I praise former Premier Alan Carpenter and our former Treasurer for last year's \$80 million Ignite funding package. More than ever we need to attract quality workers to WA, and the arts are the great metro economic attracter.

Our government also made a great economic decision to build a new theatre in Northbridge. Now that we are in opposition we must honestly reappraise our associated policies and decisions. The electorate wants a bit of mea culpa from us. The naming of the theatre in Northbridge must be reviewed. We set up a consultation process in government and have largely ignored it and ditched it. I know that the then government did not intend it, but it was a huge slap in the face to the theatre community and its elders. Perhaps this was a microcosm of how we got some things wrong in government.

I personally think that Heath Ledger was an amazing WA talent and an accomplished artisan. I actually had the benefit of seeing him in a school production at Guildford Grammar when I was a drama teacher elsewhere, and he was clearly a person of immense talent. Certainly part of our new theatre complex—perhaps the smaller space—could be named after Heath Ledger to celebrate youth and the internationality of the arts in Western Australia. However, how could we make the biggest investment in theatre ever in this state and not celebrate our elders? I say this as a person who has been a member of Actors' Equity in this state for 21 years, and also a member of British Actors' Equity. We have to consider the contribution of people like Jill Perryman, Edgar Metcalfe and Raymond Omodei to theatre in this state. We have to celebrate our elders. Perhaps that is something to which those of us in Labor governments do not give the respect that we should. We are so pent up when we get into government, because so little has been done by the conservative forces, that we want to change, change, change, and we often forget the importance of celebrating and acknowledging what has gone on before.

It is important that we build a new theatre complex. I salute the new Premier and the new Minister for Culture and the Arts for opening up for debate the issue of the naming of the theatre. Our government set up an advisory committee. We consulted the arts to death—over and over again. I would advise the current Minister for Culture and the Arts to not set up a consultation group for anything but just get on and do it. Although our government had set up the consultation group for the naming of the new theatre, we circumvented the process. I want to read out a comment from a fellow Actors' Equity member to give members some idea of the pain that long-time theatre practitioners felt, not so much about the naming itself, but the process; and that is the important issue. She said —

To give some credit to the government, the consultation process was extensive in regard to the building's design, and there is general praise from industry workers for the decision to locate the

building in Northbridge (as opposed to the river side); however, in 25 years time it's very unlikely that theatre goers will realise just how capricious and politically motivated this decision was.

It is important as we go into this incredible growth period—Western Australia will continue to grow—that we acknowledge the work of people in the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s, particularly in the arts.

I would now like to move on to a couple of other issues. I urge the dwindling number of government members in this chamber to not cut funding to the arts. I urge them to ignore the fallacy of a magical three per cent efficiency dividend across all portfolios. I urge them to look at the value and worth of projects and not try to apply some mathematical formula to get a particular policy or community outcome.

I was involved in starting up the first professional theatre company in Broome. It still saddens me greatly that, unlike Cairns, Broome has not become the great arts—particularly Indigenous arts—professional haven that it should be. In Cairns in Queensland, space has been provided to give not only Indigenous performers but all regional performers the ability to earn a professional income, and also to add value to tourism. The arts is a great economic driver in regional areas. When my good friend the now member for Pilbara was the opposition arts spokesperson the last time we were in opposition, and I was working for him, we wrote what I think was the best arts policy this nation has ever seen.

**Mr T.G. Stephens:** You wrote it! I announced it!

**Mr J.N. HYDE:** No. I give the member for Pilbara a lot of credit for that. One of our commitments in that policy was for a performing arts centre in Broome. I think we kept putting \$5 million into the budget for that, and that money is still there, yet that performing arts centre has still not been built. That should be a priority. I certainly hope that the people who are talking about investment in regional Western Australia will get that performing arts centre in Broome built, because it will be a great catalyst for the professional theatre, film and other arts practitioners not only in Broome, but throughout the Kimberley and the Pilbara.

[Member's time extended.]

**Mr J.N. HYDE:** Another big issue in my electorate is the need for a new Western Australian Museum. Before I was in Parliament, and when the Tories were in government, they had tried for their eight years in government, and previously, to get an economic outcome for the old East Perth power station. They had tried many things, to their credit. They had consulted with the private sector and had looked at the possibility of building hotels or apartments on that site. However, nothing had worked. When we came into government, we went through the whole process again. We tried absolutely everything. The only thing that would work was to relocate the WA Museum to that site. The only good economic outcome, the only good social outcome and the only good transport outcome for Western Australia was to move the WA Museum to the East Perth power station site. That would not only provide a first-rate site with plenty of room for expansion for the state's museum, but also free up cramped central business district arts space that could be used for other activities. We need look only at Sydney and Brisbane—those wonderful arts-led, site-recovery cities—to see that not locating a museum and other major arts attractions in the central business district does not impinge upon a city's vitality and outcomes. The reason that relocating the WA Museum to the East Perth power station site is the only sensible government and economic outcome is the value adding. It will create an incubator area for the arts, and it will encourage some of the down-sized television stations that are the product of this digital age to relocate to the associated business park and residential development in that area. The private sector has tried everything for that site, but it will not work.

Another important aspect is the opportunity cost. Our government spent over \$35 million on upgrading the exterior of the old East Perth power station. Every month that building is empty, it is decaying. The new government will need to spend valuable money to keep that empty building, which is just being mothballed, graffiti free and safe. If the government does not want to use that site for the Museum and decides to demolish that old asbestos-ridden building in the central business district, that site will still be empty in eight years' time. That will be a great economic cost. It will also be a great social cost to your constituents who live nearby, Mr Deputy Speaker (Mr M.W. Sutherland), you having taken over that area from me at the last election.

I finish on an issue that I am quite passionate about, which is the Corruption and Crime Commission. Three reports in this regard were tabled in this chamber on Tuesday; namely, the annual reports that the CCC and the Western Australia Police legally must table regarding the Surveillance Devices Act and the Telecommunications (Interception) Western Australia Act. I will probably put a question on notice, as I am concerned, Attorney General, that the CCC has tabled its Telecommunications (Interception) Western Australia Act statistics, as it is required to do, but the police service has not done so. Legally, that report has to be tabled at the first available opportunity after 30 June.

I have always been greatly concerned about the information that these statistics provide, having been on the CCC oversight committee. I guess I am like Peter Beattie, in that he chaired the committee in Brisbane, which saw

him languishing outside of cabinet and shadow cabinet for eight years; such a fate often comes to people involved in CCC committees, but they deal with a very important area.

What the statistics tabled yesterday show is that the CCC in the last financial year put in operation 102 warrants that judges signed because those warrants had a good chance of getting information on bribery or corruption that could result in an offence punishable by a five-year term of imprisonment. One hundred and two separate warrants is a huge amount; it is certainly something I would hope the CCC oversight committee would be chasing up.

Of more concern to me is that the WA Police has not tabled its statistics, because, when we look at the Surveillance Devices Act reports that both the CCC and the police have tabled, we see that the Corruption and Crime Commission had 10 warrants issued for devices in the past year and the police service had 60 such warrants. This follows the pattern that I have seen every year and it still staggers me. Everybody concentrates on the CCC as though the CCC is invading people's privacy, but the police service has had the same powers and has used its powers with surveillance devices and telecommunications intercepts for over 20 years, yet there seems to be no focus on or oversight of how they are being used. If there were 10 Corruption and Crime Commission surveillance device warrants and 60 by the police, and if we have 102 telecommunications intercept warrants by the CCC and the same percentage were applied, we could well be looking at 600 telecommunications intercepts by the police. We will know once we get these statistics. I hope that it is just an administrative oversight that resulted in Parliament not receiving these figures. The tabling in Parliament of these figures in many ways is the only opportunity that Parliament and the general community have to look at the powers of these organisations. They are powers that I support, and I have supported on many occasions in this house.

I finish by mentioning, as the member for the Perth electorate, the importance of the multicultural community and the many organisations that are headquartered in my electorate. I had the great pleasure to attend, along with the member for Morley, the Mr Africa contest in Queens Park on Saturday night. I got an invite to the Mr Africa contest because, when we were in government, I was one of the judges and I also represented the government at the Miss Africa contest.

**Mr B.S. Wyatt:** Was the member judging Mr Africa as well?

**Mr J.N. HYDE:** My input was welcomed, member for Victoria Park! There was not a swimsuit section but there was a traditional costume section that ably substituted with a great array of talents. Fresh from their enthusiasm with the election of a Kenyan to the president's position, the Kenyan community were stacking the Mr Africa contest. I think that may have caused some concern to the member for Morley because, although my links are with Tanzania and East Africa, his links are with West Africa, having lived there, but the Kenyans did themselves proud, as they did in the Miss Africa contest.

I will go back to where I started in my Address-in-Reply speech. It is a great honour to be a member of Parliament. The opportunities to attend amazing events in the community, such as presented by the multicultural community, give me great pleasure and certainly humble me.

I finish by saying that in many ways we are part of a cycle. Many of us in this house have been in government before, and have been in opposition before, and so the cycle goes again. In many ways the cycle can be healthy if we learn from what has happened. The reason many of us are re-elected is that we, as members of Parliament, have listened and we have changed views that we may have had five or eight years ago as the community has changed. The community has no problems changing its views and opinions, and, as members of Parliament, we have to recognise that, accept it and perhaps celebrate it. I thank the house.

**MR T.G. STEPHENS (Pilbara)** [1.56 pm]: I acknowledge the traditional owners, the Nyoongah people. On the occasion of the opening of Parliament, their presence at the front of the building was that part of the pomp and ceremony that I really enjoyed and am pleased to see the tradition is now embedded in the process of the opening of Parliament. In acknowledging the Nyoongah people, I acknowledge how important the world of sacred dreamings and the spirit of the Aboriginal people are and the efforts that so many within that community have made in ensuring that their rich heritage and its offerings are available to all of us.

I also want to congratulate you, Mr Speaker, upon your election to office. I also congratulate the Premier and his ministers, the leaders on this side of the house and new members on both sides of the house on their election, as well as the members who have returned to the chamber on their re-election. I wish there were more of us returning to the house. Understandably, I also wish there were more new members arriving in this place on our side to assist us with our numbers rather than those opposite, but that is the way fate would have it! Of course, fate could change, and we would love that opportunity.

Several members interjected.

**Mr T.G. STEPHENS:** If that was an invitation by the Minister for Agriculture and Food to come and join them on the government benches, about 27 more seats would have to come across!

**Extract from *Hansard***

[ASSEMBLY - Wednesday, 12 November 2008]

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Mr Chris Tallentire; Mr Ian Britza; Mr Bill Marmion; Mr John Hyde; Mr Tom Stephens

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One of the great things about the Address-in-Reply debate, and particularly after an election, is to hear from the new members arriving in this place and telling their stories. I have enjoyed very much listening to those speeches that have been delivered in the house, and I have had a quick look through *Hansard* to see what people have had to say in speeches I have missed, to learn a bit more about members' backgrounds through their contributions in the house. Some excellent inaugural speeches have been delivered. It reminds me of the contribution that was made by a bloke who was called a "red theologian". His name was Vine Deloria and he was leader of the first nations of North America and wrote a book called *Custer Died for Your Sins: An Indian Manifesto*. He said to the missionaries, whilst reflecting about their work, that it was a pity they just did not sit down and swap stories about the shared experience of the religious traditions, the spiritual traditions, of North America and those of the West.

Debate interrupted, pursuant to standing orders.

[Continued on page 187.]