

INFRASTRUCTURE — GOVERNMENT COMMITMENTS

**2. Mr P. PAPALIA to the Premier:**

Can the Premier outline the government's latest infrastructure commitments for Western Australia?

**Mr A.J. CARPENTER replied:**

Contrary to the opposition, we have a broad and expansive vision for the future that encompasses the entire economic, social and cultural landscape of this great state of ours. It goes way beyond the next couple of years. We have been extremely busy outlining that vision during the parliamentary recess.

**Mr T. Buswell** interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** I call the Leader of the Opposition to order for the second time.

**Mr A.J. CARPENTER:** Another area we can talk about is water security. That area was completely abandoned by the previous government. We are leading the nation in water security. Our infrastructure program is nothing short of astounding and breathtaking and is unparalleled around the nation. Indeed, I think it is unparalleled in the history of the state. We have committed \$25 billion over the next four years. When we came to government, the infrastructure program was 18 per cent of the state's budget, and the state's economy was in decline. One of the big criticisms I had of the Howard government was that it invested nothing in the productive infrastructure of the nation. It is interesting that now that it is no longer in government, the Business Council of Australia has joined in that chorus of criticism. That is a very different line from that which it ran a year or two ago. Now it is criticising the Howard government for failing to invest in the productive infrastructure of the nation; that is, physical infrastructure for education and training and improved capacity. The Howard government did nothing.

That is what we are doing in Western Australia. That has been the big difference between our budget strategy and the budget strategy adopted by John Howard. We have invested our surplus budgets in massive infrastructure development and in improving economic capacity in this state. The former federal government failed completely. It threw the money away, it pork-barrelled it, to buy itself back into government time and again. At last, the business leaders of Australia have taken off the cloak of political expediency and identified that very problem.

Somebody mentioned the regions. In the regions, we are building new hospitals on a scale that no-one else has ever contemplated. We are building new schools, police stations, transport links –

Several members interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** I call to order the members for Dawesville and Roe.

**Mr A.J. CARPENTER:** We are transforming our regional cities. I have never seen anything like the transformation that has happened in Geraldton. Do members remember the state that Geraldton was in when we came to government? The town was on its knees begging for help. We had our first cabinet meeting in the new airport building in Geraldton and we were begged for help. Now the city is confident. It aspires to a great future. It has transformed dramatically because of our investment. Since I was a child in my home town of Albany, I have heard about the need for an entertainment centre there. Guess what? It is getting one.

**Dr K.D. Hames:** Wow!

**Mr A.J. CARPENTER:** The member might dismiss it as not being particularly significant, but the people of Albany do not. The member for Dawesville might not understand the importance of it, but the people of Albany do. There is huge investment going on in Albany. There is investment underway in Bunbury and Busselton. Do members remember the local member's opposition last year to the redevelopment of Busselton? That person was prepared to sacrifice the development of his own electorate to score a few political points in this place. The list goes on. A vast sum of money—as I have said, \$25 billion—is being invested in Carnarvon, Exmouth, Port Hedland, Mandurah and the Kimberley and in the metropolitan area. How long has it been since anybody on the opposition benches has driven down to and looked at the Australian Marine Complex?

Several members interjected.

**Mr A.J. CARPENTER:** The member for Capel asked where it is. I invite people to look at the development at the Australian Marine Complex in Henderson. It is a massive, world-scale development that is completely under the radar.

Several members interjected.

**Mr A.J. CARPENTER:** Yes, it was.

I now refer to the infrastructure developments in the metropolitan area. The new Northbridge theatre will be a magnificent addition to our social and cultural infrastructure, as well as an economic boost to the creative

industries in this state. Perth Arena will be the heart of our cultural entertainment capacity to engage performances on a scale the state has never seen before. Over the summer break I considered the big decisions in infrastructure that were before us—the museum, the sports stadium and the Perth waterfront. We made the decisions. An amount of \$500 million will be spent on building a new, world-class museum on the East Perth waterfront. The museum will showcase Western Australia to ourselves and to the rest of the world. There will be a 60 000-seat sports stadium in Kitchener Park, Subiaco. That is a once-in-a-century project. The waterfront development will transform Perth.

Several members interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Order, members!

**Mr A.J. CARPENTER:** Members opposite are pathetically immature; they are the bottom of the barrel. The Perth waterfront development will transform the city of Perth. That is what we are doing.

Several members interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Order, members!

**Mr A.J. CARPENTER:** In a phrase, we are building Western Australia.

Several members interjected.

**Mr A.J. CARPENTER:** That is background noise to the main game of politics. The main game of politics is to improve the quality of life of the people of this state. That is background noise, and the general population will respond to it at that level. It is irrelevant background noise. The main game is what is happening with infrastructure and investment in health, education and community safety, and we are delivering.