

McGOWAN GOVERNMENT — MINISTERS

Motion

MR D.T. REDMAN (Warren–Blackwood) [4.01 pm]: I move —

That this house condemns the Premier for appointing ministers that have demonstrated a lack of public accountability and transparency.

I rise today to speak to the motion. This motion is very appropriate, given the debate we have just had on a suspension of standing orders moved by the Liberal Party regarding issues with the current Minister for Police and our view that she gave misleading information about the facts of the matter and that she should be accountable for that. It is appropriate and timely that we take stock of where we are at, given that we are heading towards the end of the year of a new government. In my view, and certainly that of the National Party, this government has had some fairly serious shortcomings in public accountability and transparency in a number of areas. It is no stretch of the imagination that that is a platform the Premier and the Labor Party took to the election. The government attempted to wear as a badge of honour that it would have the highest standards of transparency and accountability, and we would therefore assume that its actions would follow that. I want to work through issues that have emerged with a number of ministers at various points in time to paint a picture that, in fact, it is not all rosy with public accountability. I make the point that it is now time to take stock, if nothing more, to send a very strong signal that we, the opposition, are watching to ensure that the government is accountable to the standards that it espouses to reach.

The first minister I want to talk a little bit about is Minister Logan, who is Minister for Corrective Services. That is a portfolio I had for a while, so I am very familiar with the issues that the minister has been working through. I want to talk about the culture that sits behind the way that many Labor Party members and current ministers behave and treat people. I want to talk about an occasion prior to the election. I understand that Mr Logan was not minister at the time, but it paints a picture. The now minister made statements at a forum in Jandakot addressing the Perth Indian community on 3 March. He referred to the Roe 8 issue and made his views very clear about the contractors, sending a very strong signal to the public at a public forum. He said that if any of those contractors chose to seek compensation from the government, the government would remember them. A person does not get to be a member of Parliament or, indeed, a minister representing the Labor Party if they have not been through that battle-hardened world of the union movement. Not too many Labor members reach what might be seen as the Holy Grail of that pathway, which is becoming a member of Parliament and, ultimately, a minister, without having some battle scars. Through these sorts of events we know the culture behind the ministers who sit in this house. I want to go into the comments made by Mr Logan. I quote from an article that appeared in the ABC online news on Thursday, 9 March 2017. It states —

A senior WA Labor MP has come under fire for a warning he gave to Roe 8 contractors who might attempt to seek compensation if Labor wins the election and stops the project.

Shadow Cabinet minister Fran Logan was at a public forum for members of Perth’s Indian community in Jandakot on March 3.

He was reported as saying the following —

“If they then turnaround and say now we want to be compensated for the loss of the long-term contract —

He is referring to the Labor Party’s plan to cancel the Roe 8 project —

I am sure that Mark (McGowan) will say see you in court,” Mr Logan said.

“That’s a long process. There’s lots of other projects coming up and we will remember your name —

I highlight that again—“we will remember your name” —

if you put your tender in. If that’s the game you want to play. If you want to take us to the court, no worries.

“We’ll see you in court for over the next four or five years and when you put your tenders in we will look very carefully at your tenders.”

If that is not a threat, I will go he. That was commentary on 3 March this year, just a whisker before the election, from a member of Parliament who is currently Minister for Corrective Services. It was threatening behaviour towards contractors who may well be seeking compensation, and rightly so, on a decision that the current government made. Yes, I admit that it made that call before it went to the election; nevertheless, a compensatory path was only to be expected, and there was threatening behaviour. That is the culture that sits behind this. I will refer to another example in my speech today that also comes back to some of this culture. I guess it lays some of the foundations of that behaviour. I would call that bullying behaviour. I will refer to some other examples of similar types of bullying behaviour that is starting come out, now that the Labor Party is in government, in feedback

we are getting. It relates to people who hold authority in our community and decisions that get made by government about who might seek benefit from that.

I now want to refer to the Minister for Regional Development; Agriculture and Food, Hon Alannah MacTiernan. A number of questions about issues related to her were asked by the Leader of the National Party. I want to go through where we have come from to get to the point that we find ourselves at today. The minister has a long history in renewable energy. She has a long history of espousing those opportunities. Indeed, when she was a minister in the previous Labor government, she made decisions about a range of projects. I want to quote from a media release from Tuesday, 5 August 2008, just before that infamous election in that year. The article shows a picture taken of a very young looking minister and is headed “Wave power a step closer in Albany”. It is a media statement from the minister and some commentary. I quote —

Planning and Infrastructure Minister Alannah MacTiernan today announced that Perth-based Carnegie Corporation had been issued a five-year exclusive licence to identify suitable areas for a wave energy facility off Albany’s coastline.

The minister is on the public record supporting that wave energy project. Indeed, in this case she made a clear call to support an exclusive licence for this Perth-based company to pursue some renewable energy options in the Albany area. The target of a couple of campaigns from the Labor Party, which can be seen in its policy positions going into the 2013 and 2017 elections, is to make Albany a town that uses 100 per cent renewable energy. There is the wind farm in Albany and it has some issues with shortage of capacity, so I can understand a political argument around that.

Since the former minister in 2008 made statements around her support for those projects and, I guess, her support for a project in Albany, she has been on a board. She was a director of Energy Made Clean Company, so she was a board member. The chief executive officer of EMC said that as a former long-serving Minister for Planning and Infrastructure, Alannah brings a wealth of experience and a reputation for getting difficult jobs done. “We are extremely pleased she has agreed to take on this role”, said Mr Davidson, the company CEO.

There is a history there; she has been involved with that. She made a decision on 4 July 2013 to resign from that position, when Carnegie Wave Energy acquired a 35 per cent stake in EMC to establish an alliance agreement and begin working together on a wave-integrated microgrid in Mauritius. Other projects took the fore. The point is that the minister was a director. There was a point in the time that she received a shareholding as payment for her role and has kept that shareholding.

Dr A.D. Buti: She hasn’t got that shareholding any more.

Mr D.T. REDMAN: I am talking about a shareholding at a point in time.

Dr A.D. Buti: She wasn’t a minister then.

Mr D.T. REDMAN: I am talking about a former minister who played a role as a director of a company and who took payment of a shareholding when she was a director and held that shareholding.

Dr A.D. Buti: She wasn’t a minister then.

Mr D.T. REDMAN: I was not suggesting she was a minister when she had the shareholding.

Dr A.D. Buti: What relevance is it then?

Mr D.T. REDMAN: I am not saying she was. I am making the point, member for Armadale—if the member listens to me—that there is clearly a strong link between the minister and Carnegie given her history as a minister in a previous government, being a director of a company that is now part owned by Carnegie at a point and having a shareholding as a payment from that company.

Mr W.J. Johnston: Was Hon Alannah MacTiernan ever a director of Carnegie?

Mr D.T. REDMAN: I am not aware that she was a director of Carnegie, but Carnegie acquired EMC, of which the former minister was a director and at that time had a shareholding in it and clearly had a shareholding of a part owner of the organisation called Carnegie.

Mr W.J. Johnston: As I understand your allegation, she awarded the contract to Carnegie —

Mr D.T. REDMAN: I am making an argument that there is a link between the minister and a history that has her closely linked to these organisations.

Mr W.J. Johnston: I am just trying to establish: was she ever a director of the company that won the tender?

Mr D.T. REDMAN: I am not aware that that was the case.

A strong history is developing. The current government went to the election on a platform, including announcements in Albany about developing wave power down there and supporting a project that in the Labor Party’s view would

Mr Terry Redman; Mr Vincent Catania; Mr Bill Johnston; Mr Colin Barnett; Mrs Liza Harvey; Ms Rita Saffioti

push for a 100 per cent renewable energy focus for the community of Albany. At this point in time, she was not a minister; it was prior to the election. It is interesting that the Labor Party went to the election and won the election. Once the election was won, shares in Carnegie jumped 23 per cent. Just after the election, on 13 March, Carnegie shares jumped 23 per cent based on Carnegie being likely to receive a wave energy project in Albany. That was interesting because, clearly, Carnegie was seen to be the frontrunner. I can fully understand how it would be seen to be a frontrunner—because of the associations Carnegie had with the former minister and the minister’s views about wave energy in Albany and, indeed, her links to Carnegie and support of licences for Carnegie going back prior to 2008. The shares jump just after the election; three or four days later, the minister divests herself of the shares. The shares went up, but she wonders, “How can I sort this from a public perception perspective? Let’s give the money away.” She did—a fantastic gesture. Indeed, the Premier said twice in response to questions that she gave her money to a charity. That means that if any one of us has shareholdings or a financial interest in something, we give them to a charity; that is okay. The Premier pushed that point twice. I do not accept that.

Mr W.J. Johnston: The minister never gave away shares.

Mr D.T. REDMAN: The fact is if we have a shareholding, we are demonstrating an interest and a relationship with the companies. The Premier said today in his response to a question from the Leader of the National Party —

However, it is worth noting that WA Labor’s release mentioned Carnegie as “a likely” not “the likely” proponent.

That fixes it. This sorts it right out. It is in our policy position as a likely proponent. That is arm’s length. It must be arm’s length, surely to God. Funnily enough, everything rolls out. There is not even a cabinet decision. From what we can understand, the decision is based on the subcommittee of cabinet that considers the budget, the Economic and Expenditure Reform Committee, approving that and getting the resources to it. Then the minister is given the lead because the Minister for Energy is pretty busy, to run a process and announce it. It did not even go through cabinet; cabinet did not get a chance to have some scrutiny at arm’s length in this process. If this issue is not a perceived conflict of interest, I will eat my hat.

Mr S.A. Millman: We look forward to that.

Mr D.T. REDMAN: This issue is a perceived conflict of interest. I will tell members a bit of advice I got at one stage. As former ministers, we have to watch this stuff awfully closely. I am a regular user of Jacob’s Ladder. I have an apartment close by and I use Jacob’s Ladder to maintain a little bit of fitness. When I was the Minister for Lands, I got a letter from the City of Perth asking for approval to get the land easement that Jacob’s Ladder sits on changed to a mall. The City of Perth wanted it changed to a mall with my authorisation so it could put a time frame on when it could open and close it—apply a curfew running from seven o’clock in the morning to seven o’clock at night. On the basis of me being a user of Jacob’s Ladder—bear in mind that ministers drive on the roads that they approve—I sought advice. The advice that came to me was, “Terry, you’ve got a perceived conflict of interest here.” I use all sorts of stuff that government makes decisions on sitting around the cabinet table, so I stepped back and passed on that decision to another minister. If ministers are to hold the highest order of accountability and transparency, they need to be cognisant of those steps. I do not believe that has happened here. I believe that there is too much of an association. Too much smoke is coming out of this to suggest there is not a fire there. The Premier should have sought to get at greater distance from this minister and that project, which at points in time, albeit not as a minister, she has had shareholdings in and links to. She had been a director of companies that are now associated with this organisation and she has a history of promoting this project, and I do not think there is enough arm’s length space here. That is the first point. I think there has been a failing here of what I call a perceived conflict of interest, albeit some of the mechanics and time frames are awfully close and the language used is awfully cute; nevertheless, it is there.

One more issue that I think heightens the matter is the nature of the project itself. We are familiar with it because it was a project that the Great Southern Development Commission had been working on. We the National Party, I am pretty sure supported by the Liberal Party, took it to the election to enable us to say there is a significant renewable energy project to occur down here. One of the issues we were grappling with was the gas pipeline versus renewable energy, versus the longer-term energy capacity needs of Albany. It is a very difficult issue because once we commit to making big investments, it takes future decisions out of the play, so it was not easy. We committed to that project prior to the election. We committed to a wave-integrated renewable energy project with a number of pieces to it. In summary, it was a \$22.4 million commitment out of royalties for regions. It was on that historical line that runs to Walpole—Walpole, Denmark, Albany—that has a lot of capacity and reliability issues, and here technology was potentially presenting a solution to it. What was put up in discussions with Western Power and its needs, and in discussions with a range of companies that could produce and support these new capacity and generation solutions, was a solar array with batteries in Walpole that could take a certain amount of peak load for a period. It would have a solar battery solution at Walpole and a solar battery solution at Denmark integrated with Denmark Community Windfarm, coming back to Albany and setting up a common-use infrastructure to hook in a wave project in Albany.

It would have been a fully integrated microgrid and a fantastic initiative. In summary, out of \$22.4 million, \$10.6 million went towards Western Power to have a substation for the connectivity for future investment by the private sector, \$11.1 million went through Denmark Community Windfarm to support the ownership of the solar array, and \$700 000 went towards the University of Western Australia to assist with wave integration site investigation works. The university received some support for some of the technology that was available. It was a fantastic project. That total of \$22.4 million was going to produce 10 megawatts of peak capacity out of the solar photovoltaic cells, two megawatts out of the battery situations at Denmark and Walpole, and ultimately a 20 megawatts contribution from the wave farm. Albany has a total need of around 45 megawatts—a fairly significant amount of capacity for \$22.4 million. What project did the Labor Party put up? Firstly, it has forgotten about Denmark and Walpole, but put those projects aside for a second. The Labor Party has put \$3.75 million towards a wave energy research centre. Investing in research will not do anything for capacity. Following the procurement process, Carnegie Clean Energy is now putting \$15.75 million towards a trial technology project that will produce one megawatt. That is a total of \$19.5 million. It cost \$22.4 million for the work that we did with Carnegie and the Clean Energy Group, with Western Power producing in excess of 10 megawatts through solar power and two battery solutions producing two megawatts each, and then it hooks into 20 megawatts from the wave farm. In future, the Labor project will pick up 20 megawatts from the wave farm. If we compare those two projects, even a very superficial analysis says that something is not quite right because of the investment made and the return in energy capacity. Although the project is innovative and different and uses wave technology that is not necessarily locked down hard as something that will make way for solar, wind and all the other options on the table, the numbers come up short for what we are getting out of it. The value for money does not appear to be there.

This issue has been put on the table now because a former minister from a former Labor government is pursuing wave energy in Albany—the renewable energy Holy Grail for Albany—as a project and wants to launch it, having had strong links with the project through her directorships and shareholdings and payments at points in time. She came in as a minister, and the project still runs through, and that company has landed with the outcome of what might seem to be a substandard or suboptimal solution for the capacity that it actually delivers. To me, there are some arms-length issues here that emerge. I would have thought that the Premier, at the very least, would have sought to take a step to distance himself or to distance the minister—for her own benefit, arguably. I do not deny her passion or her capacity, but there are enough unanswered questions here to say that there should have been another step in that process. In my view, there has not been, and the Premier should have taken steps to deal with what is a significantly perceived conflict of interest, where a company, now with a major shareholding, of which the minister was a previous director—therefore, relationships can be built from that—and at one point she held shares in it. There is enough smoke to be wondering whether there is a fire. If it was not for the fact that they have come up significantly short on a value-for-money proposal, one might look at it slightly lighter.

Mr M.P. Murray: Who checked your figures?

Mr D.T. REDMAN: We worked with Western Power and Carnegie because they are the same companies that the government works with. In fact, we were as surprised as hell when the announcement was made of what was going to be invested in one part of the project. We wondered what was going on. It did not add up. For a slightly greater amount of money, we could have secured the reliability and capacity of a line going out to Walpole—over 100 kilometres—secured a microgrid, and picked up a significant private investment by the way of the energy component.

Mr M.P. Murray: All that for \$24 million? I doubt it.

Mr D.T. REDMAN: I am making a claim and I stand by it.

I want to go to another level of discussion now about a couple of questions that I have asked in this place. I need to be careful—and rightly so. I have asked two questions: one of the Minister for Local Government last week and one of the Premier yesterday about some issues that we are aware of up in Port Hedland and in the Warralong community. I say this with caution because I do not, for a second, like the idea of naming people from outside the house. The Premier was right today: once you name people, they do not have a chance to respond. This privilege is there for a very good reason so that members are able to raise issues without fear of litigation, but it needs to be used sparingly and carefully. If only one of these issues came to the fore, that is probably where you would leave it. But a couple of issues have come up on the basis of two questions. I want to put that together very carefully and highlight where some issues sit with the government. The main point I make here—I will run to the argument to get to that point—is that the response from the Minister for Local Government last week and the Premier yesterday does not take on board, in my view, a preparedness to have a look at those issues and make their own judgements on whether what is being raised is fair or not. If the Minister for Local Government says, “Yes, I will have a look at that”—in fact, I gave him the bit of paper and I am pleased he took it, but I do not know if any actions have arisen from that. The Premier went into defensive mode yesterday, and on the basis of those questions said, “This is as the Minister for Local Government said. This is just a duck hunt, which fits into the local government space. We should expect that that sort of stuff will happen and go away.” But that is not the case.

Mr Terry Redman; Mr Vincent Catania; Mr Bill Johnston; Mr Colin Barnett; Mrs Liza Harvey; Ms Rita Saffioti

We were made aware of an email between the Mayor of the Town of Port Hedland and the Labor Party. Quite rightly, both responses said that this is not the place to talk about Labor Party's business, as indeed it is not the place to talk about the issues of the National or Liberal Parties. However, the email referred to what was claimed to be heavy-handed tactics by a person who was the president of the Labor Party branch on the mayor pushing for favourable outcomes with employment and favourable outcomes for the Town of Port Hedland for businesses that might be employed to do particular work. It is quite a serious issue. A number of other comments are made in the email, including the naming of Premier Mark McGowan and Stephen Dawson as seemingly —

Mr W.J. Johnston: Who is the email from and to?

Mr D.T. REDMAN: The email is from Camilo Blanco, who is the current Mayor of the Town of Port Hedland, and it is to info@walabor.org.au. It is to the Labor Party. We accept that.

Mr W.J. Johnston: Were they allegations by a person involved about a third party?

Mr D.T. REDMAN: Exactly, and I made the point, minister, that I do not raise this issue lightly. I made the point that if it was not the product of a couple of issues that —

Mr W.J. Johnston: So it has nothing to do with any minister in this place, because it has not come from a minister and it is not to a minister. It is a person making an unfounded allegation.

Mr D.T. REDMAN: There are issues raised in here about local government elections and the process of it, and I think rightly —

Mr W.J. Johnston: Just like there are all these Liberal candidates and National Party candidates

Mr D.T. REDMAN: Of course.

Mr W.J. Johnston: — and all these allegations that people want to make to me about them—do you want me to repeat them; is that what you are asking?

Mr D.T. REDMAN: Sure, the minister will make his judgement about what he raises in this place and what he does not.

Mr W.J. Johnston interjected.

Mr D.T. REDMAN: At the start of me saying this, I put a really heeded caution on what I am raising. I do not take that lightly.

References in the email are —

... directly suggesting Mark McGowan and Stephen Dawson are backing the branch president's attempt to corrupt systems in place that regulate local and state policy ...

Several members interjected.

Mr D.T. REDMAN: There are other issues raised there that I do not particularly want to put on record here. Other issues there —

Mr W.J. Johnston interjected.

Mr D.T. REDMAN: The minister will get his opportunity.

Point of Order

Mr V.A. CATANIA: I cannot hear the member for Warren–Blackwood speak to the motion because I am hearing someone screech over there, and I think it is the member for Cannington.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Ms J.M. Freeman): Thank you.

Debate Resumed

Mr D.T. REDMAN: The other question I raised, which is linked because the same person is involved, relates to the Warralong community. I am not going to dwell on it but —

Ms S.F. McGurk: You're going to raise it anyway.

Mr D.T. REDMAN: There are issues raised here that I think are right. I make the point —

Several members interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Members, you have made the point. Let us move on.

Mr D.T. REDMAN: The Premier said yesterday that I should raise it with the appropriate authorities. We are absolutely going to. It is quite right that we do.

Mr P.C. Tinley interjected.

Mr Terry Redman; Mr Vincent Catania; Mr Bill Johnston; Mr Colin Barnett; Mrs Liza Harvey; Ms Rita Saffioti

The ACTING SPEAKER: Minister, I will call you.

Mr D.T. REDMAN: I am trying to focus here without screen dumping all this stuff on the public record. That is what I am trying to avoid. I am trying to cherrypick enough of a case —

Mr J.N. Carey interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Member for Perth, you are called for the first time.

Mr D.T. REDMAN: I am trying to cherrypick enough of a case, without putting out a screen dump, to make the case that I think the government has some responsibility to look at these issues and be aware of them. I hope that the signal last week to the Minister for Local Government has triggered an outcome. Although he did not deny it or accept it when I asked him the question, I would be very surprised if the minister's office was not aware of what is going on because a lot is happening in those areas. It is quite hot. There has been a bit of media commentary about it, although not as direct as that which is being raised here. Again, I hope the Premier raises the issues.

I am sure that as a result of this motion the Premier and the Minister for Local Government are now more aware of these two circumstances than they were before. Two issues came together because of the involvement of a person and that suggests that there is a bit more to that than perhaps meets the eye. At the very least, we need to look at it. That is what I am pushing. I am not laying claim to saying that the accusations are accurate. The Minister for Mines and Petroleum said, quite rightly, that people complain to our offices all time. If I lost sleep over all of that, I would not get a wink of sleep. I am very carefully cherrypicking enough information to claim that there is some reference here to the current Minister for Local Government to the point at which if I were the Premier, I would want to have confidence that that issue is not taken further than what it deserves to be. Indeed, the Premier should have confidence in and inquire into his minister's behaviour or involvement to ensure that he can have confidence in him. In my view, a couple of issues smell a little and there needs to be some sort of resolution.

I asked the Premier a question today about the Minister for Housing and the Premier really was flippant about it. I have been through the minister's financial interests, which always makes good reading. All of us, this side included, from time to time do not get things right. Therefore, it is appropriate that we fix that when it is drawn to our attention. However, that was not the point that I was making or the question that I was asking. Two fairly significant addendums were made to submissions from government members in the Assembly. I have not looked at the Council yet. One was from the Minister for Housing and I talked about them in question time today. He made changes going back to 2010 concerning property ownership and rental income. The Speaker also added a fairly substantial addendum to his financial declaration and added changes that went back to 2001. The Speaker of this house made a fairly significant addendum to his financial statement.

Today I asked the Premier: was he aware of these issues when he made the Minister for Housing a minister? He did not say whether he was or was not. In fact, he pointed the finger right back at me and asked why the hell I was asking this question. I will tell members why I asked the question. The screen outside the chamber shows which ministerial portfolios people have had and have not had. At the first cabinet meeting this year the Minister for Housing was the Minister for Mines and Petroleum from 17 to 22 March. He was the Minister for Mines and Petroleum for five days. Why? He went to the first cabinet meeting and, obviously, made some declarations that the Premier saw fit to say, and is on the record as saying, that there was a perceived conflict of interest. To deal with this perceived conflict of interest —

Mr W.J. Johnston: What was it? What was the perceived conflict of interest?

Mr D.T. REDMAN: I am quoting from a media statement on Tuesday, 21 March 2017, which states —

Premier announces minor change to Cabinet to avoid potential conflict of interest

Premier Mark McGowan today announced a minor ministerial change to Cabinet to avoid any potential or perceived conflict of interest.

This is the point I made before.

Mr W.J. Johnston: What was the conflict of interest?

Mr D.T. REDMAN: The minister would have to ask the Premier. But he saw unfit —

Mr W.J. Johnston: Read the announcement.

Mr D.T. REDMAN: It states —

At the first McGowan Labor Government Cabinet meeting, Cabinet was made aware that a family member of Mr Tinley worked in the oil and gas industry.

This is the point I make. The threshold for this was that a family member who works in the sector was sufficient for the Premier to say, "I am not going to make him a minister. He is going to back away from this portfolio." I like the Minister for Housing. He is a good guy and he is out there batting and having a crack at stuff. I raise this

Mr Terry Redman; Mr Vincent Catania; Mr Bill Johnston; Mr Colin Barnett; Mrs Liza Harvey; Ms Rita Saffioti

issue: I am not saying that the changes should have been made or it is a major issue that changes were made. I am making the point that the Premier saw fit not to have the minister in that portfolio because of perceived conflicts of interest, yet I just talked about the Minister for Regional Development not being at arm's length at various points in time and the outcome is that there is no perceived of conflict of interest. Today I asked the Premier whether he was aware of these massive changes to financial disclosure going back to 2010. He did not answer it. I do not know whether or not he was because —

Mr M.P. Murray: Why don't you go back a bit further to when a leader of your side snuck in under the cloak of darkness and changed the figures?

Mr D.T. REDMAN: Hang on; let me make my case. I am sure the minister is going to get a —
Several members interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER: It is lovely to have you in here, minister. But we have all decided that we are going to let the member for Warren–Blackwood get on and pursue his argument. Thank you very much.

Several members interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER: The minister has just been called—twice.

Mr M.P. Murray interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Minister, I am on my feet—three times.

Mr D.T. REDMAN: I asked the question today because a circumstance had played out in which the Premier obviously was not aware that the current Minister for Housing's family member was involved in the resource sector and the Premier made a call that it would be inappropriate for that minister to hold a particular portfolio. I asked the Premier whether he is aware of the changes that the minister made on his financial declaration. The Premier could not answer that. History tells us that the Premier may not have been aware. My recollection of filling out the code of conduct and the ministerial declarations is that we attach a copy of the parliamentary declaration. Being a former member of Parliament, the member probably—I do not know, and this is the reason that we have this debate; some facts would be nice in this —

Several members interjected.

Mr D.T. REDMAN: Here is a chance for members to put some facts on the record.

If members opposite are going to run on a line of facts, the facts as I now know them are that the current Minister for Housing went to his first cabinet meeting as the Minister for Mines and Petroleum. Upon being identified as having some perceived or potential conflicts of interest, he lost that portfolio.

Several members interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Members!

Mr D.T. REDMAN: There has been a massive change from what I have seen made to financial disclosures going back to 2010 in the submissions that closed on 30 September, and were signed, from memory, in the middle of that month. My memory is that when you fill out and present your ministerial declarations, which go a step further in that they go to spouses and partners and people who are involved —

Ms R. Saffioti: You just said he attached the parliamentary one.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Minister!

Mr D.T. REDMAN: I did. I did because —

Several members interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Members!

Several members interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Members, I am on my feet. I have just called another minister and a member three times. Let us not do this again.

Mr C.J. Barnett interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Cottesloe, you are called for the first time.

Ms R. Saffioti interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Minister for Transport, you are called for the first time.

Mr C.J. Barnett interjected.

Mr Terry Redman; Mr Vincent Catania; Mr Bill Johnston; Mr Colin Barnett; Mrs Liza Harvey; Ms Rita Saffioti

The ACTING SPEAKER: Member for Cottesloe, you will be called for the second time.

Mr D.T. REDMAN: To be accurate to the minister, I think three things need to be presented to the cabinet secretary.

Ms R. Saffioti: You just said you had the parliamentary report.

Mr D.T. REDMAN: I am going to go over that. The first thing is a signed code of conduct. You put your initials on the bottom of the code of conduct to say that this is what you undertake to do. You also put in a copy of your parliamentary declaration. That is what we did under the former Premier: we put in a copy of our parliamentary declaration, and we also filled out a ministerial declaration that took it a step further; it went back a couple of layers, which was in cabinet. That is my recollection of what we did. Unless there is something different happening here, which I will be pleased to hear about, one possible scenario—I have raised it to ask some questions—is that the current Minister for Housing has attached his parliamentary declaration, presumably the last one, which would have finished on 30 September last year, for the period up until the end of June 2016, the 12 months to that period, which as we know today was wrong.

Mr W.J. Johnston: What was wrong with it?

Mr D.T. REDMAN: The minister has just made his current submission for the period updating issues; that is what was wrong.

Mr W.J. Johnston: What was left out of the ministerial declaration?

Mr D.T. REDMAN: Would it not have been nice —

Mr W.J. Johnston: I am asking you: What was the problem? What was the amendment?

Mr D.T. REDMAN: I have it here somewhere, but I am not going to be able to find it quickly. I read the bulk of it in my question today. A number of properties were not declared for periods, and there was a failure —

Mr W.J. Johnston: What was wrong or amended in the 2016 return? The previous returns are irrelevant, because he wasn't a minister at any time, so what's amended in the 2016 return?

Mr D.T. REDMAN: I am making the point that amendments went in now for the 2016 return —

Dr A.D. Buti: No.

Mr D.T. REDMAN: Yes. What you sign-off on is up until 30 June this year. That had an amendment or addendum attached to it that was changed.

Mr W.J. Johnston: What was the amendment?

Mr D.T. REDMAN: There is an addendum attached to the back that talked about —

Mr W.J. Johnston interjected.

Mr D.T. REDMAN: Listen, so that I can answer the question!

For different periods of time, back to 2010, four properties were either not listed properly or were not there. Income raised from those properties was not declared and it said “nil return”, and there were a number of fairly significant changes for a time. Those things happen. The Speaker got a number wrong on his. Nevertheless, it is an issue. I am making the point that I asked the Premier. This is the issue. Things happen, but we are all measured on our actions. The Premier chose to dismiss the question I am raising about whether he was aware of those declarations. It may be that he was and maybe it was taken into account and found to be insignificant. I do not know that. That is why I asked the question. To me, it is reasonable for me to ask a question: did one of the Premier's ministers declare what we now know to be significant changes as of the most recent declaration at the point of being made a minister and at the point of the decision-making to be made a minister? I now have a copy of the amendment that the Minister for Mines and Petroleum asked me about. The member for Willagee signed it on 20 September this year. It talks about changes in the annual returns for the period 25 March 2010 to 30 June 2010 on four properties. It states —

For this return I should like to include, under Section 1 ‘interests in real property’, the following:

The next paragraph states —

I wish to provide additional information with respect to my Annual Return for the period **1 July 2012 to 30 June 2013**. For this return I should like to include, under section 1 ‘interests in real property’, the following:

Two properties are listed. It continues —

I wish to provide further information with respect to my Primary Return as at **25 March 2010**. For this return I should have included, under section 2(c) ‘other income’, the following:

Mr Terry Redman; Mr Vincent Catania; Mr Bill Johnston; Mr Colin Barnett; Mrs Liza Harvey; Ms Rita Saffioti

Rental income—and it lists four properties —

Where rental income was not declared I also wish to provide additional information with respect to my annual return for the period **25 March 2010 to 30 June 2010**. For this return I should have included under section 2 (c) ‘other income’, the following:

It lists rental from three properties. The last point is —

I also wish to provide additional information with respect to my Annual Return for the period **1 July 2012 to 30 June 2013**. For this return I should have included, under section 2(c) ‘other income’, the following:

It then lists rental income.

I am not saying that this an issue in the portfolio. I am asking: was the Premier aware of this when he made the decision to appoint the current Minister for Housing into that portfolio? That goes to the point of the motion. It talks about accountability on transparency and accountability to the public of Western Australia. We know that at different turns, members may get trapped in some of these areas, but all I was doing was asking the question. I got it kicked back in my face saying, “Why are you asking that? Why are you lowering yourself to raise it?” It is right that we do. The current Minister for Housing was dismissed from a portfolio at the start of this year because of perceived and potential conflict of interest. On the back of that, why should I not ask the question: was the Premier aware of these issues? It may be that he was not. The Premier is the only one who can make the call about whether that deserves an action or not—but maybe he was not aware. The Premier has been wearing this badge of honour on accountability at the election: “We are going to hold ourselves right on the top of that hill.” One step that he can take is to table the ministerial declarations.

Mr W.J. Johnston: As you did.

Mr D.T. REDMAN: Table it. This government is holding itself to a higher account. Tabling the ministerial declarations of at least three of the ministers I have referred to today would be a step the Premier could take to give confidence to the public and this house that indeed the Premier is maintaining an appropriate standard for public accountability and transparency.

I have been through a number of issues. It is timely at this time of the year to talk about the new government because it is easy to get casual about this stuff, particularly in those roles. We have experience on this side, as former ministers, of asking questions about the appropriate steps to distance yourself from decisions. I will use the example of me and Jacobs Ladder. I was a tad surprised, but that is the step I took. Seek advice and take the steps. There have been some shortcomings here, and the Premier is in the position to be able to put some of them right. Enough issues are being raised to say that perhaps a casualness is starting to set in and things are being defended that should not be defended, rather than saying, “Yes, I will take the step.” My advice to new members of Parliament—indeed in our party—and ministers is that you are measured by your actions. Things happen, things go wrong, people break out of prison and people do all sorts of stuff out there. Things happen in agencies that are beyond your control. It is your actions that are the real accountability step, and that is what you are being measured by. That is what I am saying. The Premier is in a position to look at a range of issues and put some actions on the table. One of those could be to table the ministerial declarations and make it clear that at the time that the ministers came into cabinet, they were open and transparent in what they declared to the Premier. The Premier and the Minister for Local Government took the “I’ll fight back” argument rather than saying, “Yes. I can have a look at that, member for Warren–Blackwood. I can take that away and have a look at it and make some judgements and make a call about whether it is something I have a role in.” I believe they do, but that is something that they can take a step on and get some advice on. We believe that it is timely to look at these things. We are very concerned. I will put in a freedom of information request about the Albany Carnegie Clean Energy project. I think there are some real concerns—in particular, about value for money—about the decision-making on that project and the steps the government has been taking. The project is based on a history that has led to a landing point that I do not think stacks up on the accountability front. Albeit, it is an exciting project and one that we want to see happen. We want to see wave energy coming to the fore. The other part was the company not wanting to be in Albany, which was raised in the upper house recently. It had a project operating off Garden Island involving federal funds. I think there has been a request for those federal funds to be redirected down to Albany. Again, we have some strong concerns about a minister who is very driven towards a particular outcome and the self-fulfilling prophecy that that leads to.

That is my contribution. I think that there are enough issues here that deserve some attention. One step that the Premier could take is to table the ministerial declarations, which would make a very clear statement to the public that he aspires to the highest levels of accountability that he wears as a badge of honour and took to the last election.

MR W.J. JOHNSTON (Cannington — Minister for Mines and Petroleum) [4.52 pm]: I love debates in which not a single allegation is made about any person on the Labor side of politics.

Mr Terry Redman; Mr Vincent Catania; Mr Bill Johnston; Mr Colin Barnett; Mrs Liza Harvey; Ms Rita Saffioti

The ACTING SPEAKER: Are you the lead speaker?

Mr W.J. JOHNSTON: Yes, I am the lead speaker. Not a single allegation has been made about any member of the Labor Party. Yet, we are supposed to somehow question ourselves to see whether we are free of conflicts of interest. For the benefit of members, I will read from the code of conduct that applies to members of this house. Clause (3)(a) states —

A conflict of interest exists where a member participates in or makes a decision in the execution of their office knowing that it will improperly and dishonestly further the Member's private interest or another person's private interest directly or indirectly.

That is what a conflict of interest is. Let me make a point about Hon Alannah MacTiernan. Hon Alannah MacTiernan cannot have a conflict of interest over Carnegie wave energy because she has never owned shares in that company while she has been a member of this Parliament or a minister. Let us make that clear. Before she became a minister, she disposed of her shares. How did she dispose of those shares? She gave them to a charity.

Mr C.J. Barnett: It is irrelevant.

Mr W.J. JOHNSTON: I am sorry. It blows my mind how the former Premier does not get conflicts of interest. I will address the former Premier in a few minutes.

It is not possible for Hon Alannah MacTiernan to have a conflict of interest over Carnegie wave energy. It is simply not possible because she has no direct or indirect interest in that business. She cannot obtain a benefit from it by way of shares because she has none. It is different from what happened with the Leader of the Opposition when he was making decisions and signed a contract for millions of dollars with Telstra Corporation when he was a shareholder. That was a conflict of interest. There was no doubt that it was a conflict of interest. Think about it! He was the minister responsible for making the decision and he executed the decision on behalf of the government to give millions of dollars to a company he owned shares in. That was a conflict of interest—no doubt! Everybody knows that it was a conflict of interest, except the member for Cottesloe. The member for Cottesloe thought it was okay. When we suspended standing orders to condemn the member for Riverton, the member for Cottesloe attacked us. That is his view of conflicts of interest. Hon Alannah MacTiernan does not own shares in a company that has a contractual relationship with the government but, according to the member for Cottesloe, that is a conflict of interest. His Treasurer owned shares in a company that he personally executed a contract with but that was not a conflict of interest.

There is the issue of the member for Riverton's QBE shares. When he was the responsible minister, he entered into insurance arrangements with QBE while he owned shares in QBE. The member for Cottesloe said that that was not a conflict of interest and defended him. What a disgrace! I love it. The man from Cottesloe rings talkback radio. It is normally the pensioners who do that. Perhaps that is the hint that it is time that the member for Cottesloe got on with his life. He is holding back the Liberal Party. It cannot move forward while the member for Cottesloe sits at the back. It cannot face its failure because the member for Cottesloe was the failure. Let us not forget that he is the only Premier in the history of Australia to have gone three years as the not-preferred Premier of the state. No Premier in the history of Australia, except the member for Cottesloe, has ever gone three years rating behind —

Point of Order

Mr V.A. CATANIA: I cannot see how talking about the previous government is relevant to the motion. This debate is about the motion in front of us; that is, that this house condemns the Premier for appointing ministers who have demonstrated a lack of public accountability and transparency. The minister is not talking about that.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Ms J.M. Freeman): There is no point of order.

Debate Resumed

Mr W.J. JOHNSTON: We have not even started on what the member for Cottesloe did in giving millions of dollars to the original shareholders of Kingstream Steel.

Point of Order

Mr C.J. BARNETT: I seek leave to make a personal explanation. I never gave a dollar to Kingstream—not a dollar!

The ACTING SPEAKER: Take a seat, member for Cottesloe. You know that a point of order is not an opportunity to take up debate in this house. You will have an opportunity to get on your feet.

Debate Resumed

Mr W.J. JOHNSTON: I had not even got to that, but I will get back to that later.

Let us talk about this ridiculous suggestion that there is a conflict of interest in making an amendment to a member's parliamentary return. Let us understand what is being said here. It is being said that because the

Minister for Housing changed his previous year returns, that creates a conflict of interest in his operations as minister. That is simply mind-bogglingly stupid! How can it be a conflict of interest to amend a previous year return? If he made an amendment that stated that he owned 20 million shares in a housing company or a construction company, maybe we would think that that is a conflict of interest. Of course, if he had disposed of the asset, like the Minister for Regional Development did, it would not have been a conflict of interest. This is about correcting the record when something had been forgotten. What was forgotten? It was income from rental properties. People can own more than one property and not generate an income. Some people have more than one property and generate rental income. We expect that to be declared. It is not about a conflict of interest. I will get to decisions of government in a moment, but just because a minister has forgotten to declare their rental income does not create a conflict of interest. I am not saying that because somebody has more than one property, they generate income, but I note that the member for Warren–Blackwood has three properties and does not declare any rental income. I do not know whether he has a rental property, but I note that he has three properties listed on his disclosure return, but he does not declare rental income.

Mr D.T. Redman: The minister will see that there is income via a trust.

Mr W.J. JOHNSTON: All right. As I said, there is nothing automatically incorrect.

Mr Z.R.F. Kirkup: Here we go. So he has trawled but he has found nothing.

Mr W.J. JOHNSTON: No, I am not saying that. We have already found that the smoking gun is the member for Riverton who signed a contract with Telstra worth millions of dollars while he was a shareholder—a part owner—in Telstra. Unlike Hon Alannah MacTiernan, who did not sign a contract with a company she did not own shares in. The idea that we are somehow taking equivalence is a bit ridiculous. A number of other members have more than one property and do not declare rental income. There is nothing automatically wrong with that. But let us make it clear again: it is not a conflict of interest for the Minister for Housing to update his return from a former year. He was not a minister at that time. Unless the member for Warren–Blackwood is suggesting that there was a conflict in respect of something the Minister for Housing did, there is no allegation about the Minister for Housing. What is the allegation?

Mr D.T. Redman: My question was to the Premier. My question was not in respect whether the change in declaration was a conflict of interest; my question to the Premier was whether in fact he knew about the full interest of the member who was made a minister under his government.

Mr W.J. JOHNSTON: The member for Warren–Blackwood asked a question going back to the member for Willagee’s return in 2010.

Mr D.T. Redman: I am making the point that there has been a major change to his declaration.

Mr W.J. JOHNSTON: That is not a conflict of interest and he was not a minister in 2010. He was not a minister in 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015 or 2016. He was not a minister! He was a minister in 2017 and the Premier was fully aware of all the issues regarding the declarations of the minister. But that was not the question the member asked in question time; he asked him about the past. That is a ridiculous question. A member cannot have a conflict with their past.

Mr D.T. Redman: Go back and read the question.

Mr W.J. JOHNSTON: I did. The behaviour of the National Party is extraordinary. As I said to the member for Warren–Blackwood, there are some people who have respect for him and the fact that he did this dirty work on behalf of the Leader of the National Party is a bit of a surprise to us. We do not expect much from her, but we do expect some from the member. We are disappointed with that. I love the fact that he raised the Albany pipeline, the great mirage of the former government. Every year they kept saying, “We are committed to the Albany pipeline. It’s going to win us the seat.” The former government allocated \$9 million for the Albany pipeline. We allocated that money to other renewable energy projects in Albany instead. Is it not interesting? The former government fought me all the way to the Supreme Court of Western Australia to prevent me from getting freedom of information documents about the Albany gas pipeline. Guess what? It was a \$320 million project. Talk about a conflict of interest. The previous government allocated \$9 million and went to the people of Albany and said, “We’re going to deliver this”, for a \$320 million project and the opposition comes in here talking about conflicts of interest and honesty and all those things that it wraps itself in. There was no more political dishonesty than the Albany gas pipeline. Maybe there are some other things that we could go through with the member for Cottesloe, but, clearly, the Albany pipeline was a dishonest effort to trick the voters in Albany that the Liberal Party and the National Party actually cared for them. They were involved in a scam against the people of Albany, making false promises that they knew were false. They knew that the project was going to cost \$320 million. They allocated \$9 million and then said, “We’re committed; we’re going to do it.” What an embarrassment. How the member for Cottesloe can get to work each morning after having done that to the people of Albany not once, twice or three

Mr Terry Redman; Mr Vincent Catania; Mr Bill Johnston; Mr Colin Barnett; Mrs Liza Harvey; Ms Rita Saffioti

times but four times, because he did it back in the 1990s as well, is a disgrace. At some time, the member for Cottesloe will have to face what he did in life and the failures that were there all the time.

Two conflicts were raised today in this debate. Hon Alannah MacTiernan cannot have a conflict of interest when the member never held shares at any time that she was in Parliament or a minister.

Mr V.A. Catania: Was she elected at the time when she gave up her shares? Did she give her shares up after she got officially elected?

Mr W.J. JOHNSTON: All these things are public record.

Mr V.A. Catania: No, I just want to correct what you just said. She was a member-elect at the time that she had shares.

Mr W.J. JOHNSTON: I will say it again: talk about conflicts of interest. Here is the man who got elected as a Labor member and then ratted. He talks about conflicts of interest. The reality is exactly what I said. Before she was a minister she disposed of the asset. How can she have a conflict of interest if she does not own the shareholding? What is going through the member's mind to think that somebody who does not own something can have a conflict? It is just bizarre! Is the member saying that she is friends with the directors? Is that the argument? Let us go through the directorship friends the National Party has. Does it want to start that game? I will quote the code of conduct again, which states —

A conflict of interest exists where a member participates in or makes a decision in the execution of their office knowing that it will improperly and dishonestly further the Member's private interest or another person's private interest directly or indirectly.

It goes on to make the point that a member does not have a conflict of interest when they are a member of a class of people in the general population. For example, if a member makes a decision to assist mothers and happens to be a mother, that would not be a conflict of interest because the member is there as a class. That is not a conflict of interest. Interestingly, the member for Warren-Blackwood says that if he had been asked to make a decision about a matter to do with a property that was next to his property, he would have excused himself from that decision process. That is an admirable approach, but, of course, it is not what all ministers do. I would be surprised, for example, if a minister was involved in a decision to spend \$100 million of taxpayers' money on a project right next to their property; imagine that. That would be a conflict of interest in my view. Certainly, if they participated in the decision process it would clearly be a conflict of interest.

We also go to former minister Brendon Grylls and his relationship to the Ponzi scheme that operated in the Pilbara. That was a matter that we raised with the minister when he was in this chamber. He was helping promote a scheme to have Asian investors put money into a Ponzi scheme for the benefit of a crooked woman in the Pilbara. He was warned about it and he kept defending his decisions. That was the National Party's attitude to conflicts of interest and we have not even got to the problems with Pelago.

Ms M.J. Davies: In relation to the first incident that you raised —

Mr W.J. JOHNSTON: Which one?

Ms M.J. Davies: —what personal benefit was the previous member receiving?

Mr W.J. JOHNSTON: It will be interesting to know how much was donated to the National Party.

Ms M.J. Davies: Nothing.

Mr W.J. JOHNSTON: Is the Leader of the National Party saying there were no donations at all to the National Party?

Ms M.J. Davies: I have to go and check.

Mr W.J. JOHNSTON: Okay, I look forward to her coming back and letting us know.

Ms M.J. Davies: I don't look at the donations. We have a state director. You're a former state director, you understand how that works.

Mr W.J. JOHNSTON: I am sorry, I accept that the member does not know about it. I accept that.

Ms M.J. Davies: I am saying to you that you raised Brendon Grylls in relation to the Ponzi scheme and you are saying that there is a conflict. You have explained the conflict.

Mr W.J. JOHNSTON: On a number of occasions, we raised in here the need for the member to distance himself.

Mr V.A. Catania: He wasn't a minister.

Mr W.J. JOHNSTON: He was. We asked a series of questions—go back and read the *Hansard*. We did a matter of public interest motion or a suspension of standing orders—members should go back and read it. For crying out

Mr Terry Redman; Mr Vincent Catania; Mr Bill Johnston; Mr Colin Barnett; Mrs Liza Harvey; Ms Rita Saffioti

loud, we did raise it with the minister at the time. He had plenty of opportunity to distance himself from that, and he refused to do so.

Ms M.J. Davies: That's not correct; you're rewriting history.

Mr W.J. JOHNSTON: That is exactly what happened, member. He could not admit that he had made a mistake. He could not admit that his dreams were used by somebody to make millions. I am not saying that Brendon Grylls was a direct beneficiary of the Ponzi scheme; I am not saying that. I am saying that he should have been bright enough, when he was challenged about it —

Ms M.J. Davies: That's what you intimated by raising it.

Mr W.J. JOHNSTON: No.

When we raised it with him, he should have been bright enough to work out that he had got things wrong and correct what had occurred. Instead, he came in here and defended it. That he defended his behaviour is what was wrong.

It is just like Kingstream and the member for Cottesloe. I have never accused the member for Cottesloe of executing a state agreement for improper purpose; I have never done that. I have always said, and I will say it again now, that the state agreement entered into by the member for Cottesloe was used by Kingstream improperly. It was not the execution of the agreement that was improper conduct; it was the action after that by those people. The member for Cottesloe should have understood that that was a risk he was running. He should never have signed that agreement, because it was never going to go anywhere. It was signed for a political purpose, because in the lead-up to the 1996 election the Liberal Party needed a story, and it chose Kingstream as its story. It was done for a political purpose by the member for Cottesloe—not for a corrupt purpose, but for a political purpose. It should never have been executed. The fact that Kingstream used it improperly is not the member for Cottesloe's fault. I am not blaming him for it. I am saying that he should have been bright enough to work out that the politics should not have come first and that he should have done that properly. If the member for Cottesloe had listened to the Labor Party during the debate, when the Labor Party said that it was going to refer that matter to an upper house inquiry, that is what the member Cottesloe should have done. Instead, he came back in here the next day, when he found out from the Labor Party, and waved around a letter from the CEO of the company stating that a delay of the state agreement would affect its capital raising on the Australian Securities Exchange. It was totally inappropriate that the member for Cottesloe waved around that letter in this chamber in that way. He should never have allowed himself to be used like that. As I say, I am not accusing him of corruption in any way or in any circumstance. I am saying that he was politically naive and he got used by brighter people who used that state agreement for an improper purpose.

Mr C.J. Barnett: That is disgraceful.

Mr W.J. JOHNSTON: It is not disgraceful. That is exactly what happened.

Mr C.J. Barnett: In 27 years I have never misused one dollar of government money.

Mr W.J. JOHNSTON: I never said that you did. What I said, and I will say it again in case you misunderstood, was that you used it —

Mr C.J. Barnett: If you're going to make an accusation about me—make it!

Mr W.J. JOHNSTON: I am going to.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Member for Cottesloe!

Mr W.J. JOHNSTON: What I said is exactly what I said four years ago. I have said it outside the chamber in a public forum, so it is not like I am scared of anything. The agreement between the government and Nik Zuks was a mistake. It was done for a political purpose because the Liberal Party needed a headline in the lead-up to the 1996 election. They said that they would sign the agreement. They then signed the agreement, and in March 1997 it came back to this chamber for approval. The Labor Party said that the appropriate response was to send this matter to an inquiry. The member for Cottesloe came into the chamber with a letter from the CEO of the company, which he read into *Hansard*. That letter stated, "If you refer this matter to a parliamentary inquiry, it will prevent us doing a capital raising on the ASX." It was not the member for Cottesloe who was acting improperly; it was the people involved with the company who acted improperly. Let me make that clear again: what the member for Cottesloe did wrong was that he was not bright enough to work out that the government of Western Australia was being used by these promoters who went out and raised money for a project that was never going to happen.

Mr I.C. Blayney: A lot of people thought that Kingstream would happen.

Mr W.J. JOHNSTON: I understand that that is what they thought.

Mr I.C. Blayney: We didn't hear voices from anyone else saying that it wasn't going to happen.

Mr W.J. JOHNSTON: Go back and read the *Hansard*, member. I will send the member for Geraldton a copy of my speech in *Hansard* when I spoke about this last time. I do not want to take another hour on this. It is a complicated issue, but it was wrong of the government to enter into that agreement at the time. The Labor Party knew it was wrong, and that is why the Labor Party wanted the matter referred to a committee.

There have been a lot of problems in the last eight years around conflicts of interest. I want to refer to the member for Bateman's behaviour as a minister. I refer to the memorandum provided to the Premier from the Cabinet Secretary of Cabinet Services on 4 December 2014. The subject is the cabinet-in-confidence ministerial code of conduct review of the interests of the Minister for Transport; Finance. The minister had very complicated shareholdings when he came to office and rather than behaving like Hon Alannah MacTiernan, who simply disposed of those shareholdings to make sure there was no conflict of interest, unfortunately, the then minister held onto his holdings. Not only that, but also he created new ones. He also arranged meetings, as is all detailed in the report. The minister became aware of his conflicts of interest and transferred to another minister the approval process for matters that the conflicts of interest related to. However, that decision apparently was never known to the Premier or cabinet.

When the National Party comes in here and does not raise a conflict of interest about any member of the government, I point out that it was party to the behaviour of the Liberal Party in government when there were actual conflicts of interest, as found by the Premier, that led to no action at all. I am happy for members to read the memorandum of 4 December 2014. It is a bit rich to want the Labor Party to now take this seriously. Somehow we have to be held to account for not having conflicts of interest when the Liberal and National Parties happily went into government with actual conflicts of interest and there were no consequences. That is one thing about our side of politics: if things go wrong, there are consequences. When things go wrong on that side of the chamber, there are no consequences. I give the example of the members for Riverton and Bateman, both of whom had actual conflicts of interest and it led to no action.

Ms A. Sanderson: How about the trip to China?

Mr W.J. JOHNSTON: The trip to China, absolutely. In the end, the Premier saw it was so bad that he had the trip cancelled. The minister thought it was okay to take staff to China to do his personal business, as found by the cabinet secretary.

Again, I am not saying that it is a conflict of interest to appoint a former groomsmen to a senior role in the public service. That is not, in my view, a conflict of interest. Some people would suggest appointing friends to senior roles in the public service is a conflict of interest. But if the person is capable and talented, of course they can be appointed to a senior role.

Mr C.J. Barnett: That is appalling.

Mr W.J. JOHNSTON: What is wrong?

Mr C.J. Barnett: That is appalling.

Mr W.J. JOHNSTON: What is appalling?

Mr C.J. Barnett: You are implying that a senior public servant was appointed to a position because he happened to be an acquaintance of mine from a long time ago.

Mr W.J. JOHNSTON: No, I am not saying that at all. I am saying that that is not a conflict of interest.

Mr C.J. Barnett: I did not appoint him. He had been a 40-year public servant.

Mr W.J. JOHNSTON: No, what I said —

Mr C.J. Barnett: I know exactly what you are saying, and it is sleazy.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Member for Cottesloe.

Mr W.J. JOHNSTON: Let me make it clear again. Let me say this again.

Mr C.J. Barnett interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Member of Cottesloe.

Mr W.J. JOHNSTON: I am saying it is not a conflict of interest to appoint a person that someone is friends with to a senior role in the public service if that person is capable. If they are capable, they are entitled to be appointed to a senior role in the public service even if they are friends with the person who appoints them. Let me make that clear; I will say it again. It is not a conflict of interest to appoint a friend to a senior role in the public service so long as the person appointed is talented. I do not understand why the member for Cottesloe makes inane

Mr Terry Redman; Mr Vincent Catania; Mr Bill Johnston; Mr Colin Barnett; Mrs Liza Harvey; Ms Rita Saffioti

interjections when I have said it is not a conflict of interest. Is the member for Cottesloe saying that it is a conflict of interest?

Mr C.J. Barnett: So why would you say it? Why would you raise a senior public servant's position—someone who has been in public service for 40 years?

Mr W.J. JOHNSTON: Is the member saying that it is a conflict of interest to appoint a friend to that job?

Mr C.J. Barnett: I am asking why you even raise an issue if you are saying it is not a conflict.

Mr W.J. JOHNSTON: I am making a point. We are talking about conflicts of interest.

Mr C.J. Barnett: No, you are not. It is grubby and you know it.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Members.

Mr W.J. JOHNSTON: It is not grubby; I do not understand this. The motion states —

That this house condemns the Premier for appointing ministers that have demonstrated a lack of public accountability and transparency.

That is what we are debating, and I am saying that if a minister or a Premier appoints a person who is a friend of theirs to a senior role in the public service, so long as that person is capable of doing the job, it is not in my view a conflict of interest. I did not say it was; I said it is not a conflict of interest.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Minister, through the Chair.

Mr W.J. JOHNSTON: I said that in the same way that I said there was nothing wrong with the member for Riverton appointing a friend of his to the board of one of the power companies; I mean, that is what happens. As long as they are a capable person, we can accept those types of appointments. I am not saying that there is anything wrong with those things. I am saying that is what governments do. That is what occurs in the ordinary course of events—so there is accountability and transparency.

That is why I want to reflect on the attack by the Liberal Party on the police minister today. The police minister involved the Public Sector Commissioner, a person of integrity and trust, and I am sure the member Cottesloe agrees with me. The Minister for Police made sure that the Public Sector Commissioner was involved in the appointment process even though she did not have to under the law and even though the former government did not do that when it was appointing a person as the police commissioner. So, the accountability standards that we get from the opposition are a bit bizarre. The Public Sector Commissioner is a fine public servant. He is a person who, as the member for Cottesloe says, has dedicated a long time of service to the community. That is something we should be all proud of. As a former public servant myself, it is something I think public servants should be very proud of. Yet, the Liberal Party spent all its time today attacking the Minister for Police for a decision that involved the oversight of the Public Sector Commissioner. It just does not make any sense. We have to get a straight line on what the Liberal–National Party opposition means when it talks about accountability. It cannot just be that they did not do it, therefore it is bad. There has to be some substance to it. That is what I just do not understand. I do not understand why the opposition undermines the authority of people like Public Sector Commissioner, who was involved in the decision-making process that led to the appointment of the police commissioner. Yet, the opposition comes in here and undermines that role and denigrates it. The opposition says it lacks accountability. When the Minister for Police involves the Corruption and Crime Commission in an appropriate way in vetting the decision about who is going to be made to police commissioner, the Liberal Party attacks it; it tries to undermine the credibility of the CCC. Maybe somebody will have to 'fess up, but I am unaware of any member of the Labor Party ever asking for their name to be removed from the transcripts of the CCC, yet we know that has happened on the Liberal side. We know that, we have been there and we do not want to go back there again. By the way, the circumstances leading to the removal of the member's name from the transcript of the CCC has never been properly explained in this chamber. There was an edited letter placed on the table of the chamber for a single day of sitting, but the names of the people involved were removed so no-one could see what had actually happened. No-one could check to see who had been involved in the decision-making process, particularly remembering that the CCC had rejected the request to remove the name and yet in the end it was still removed. By the way, I asked in estimates one year how many times this circumstance had occurred and I was told it had occurred once. On one occasion has a person's name been removed from the records of CCC without the commissioner himself issuing a suppression order. The way that occurred is very, very strange.

There is, as always, on the opposition side a huge double standard. There is the double standard that it applies to the Labor side. It attacks Hon Alannah MacTiernan, who is probably one of the few members of this Parliament who is known outside of the Parliament. As I made the point last week in private members' time, if each of us went down to the Hay Street Mall, leaving aside the member for Cottesloe and the Premier, and 10 people in the street were asked who we were, nine of them would not know. That is the reality. But Alannah MacTiernan is not one of those. Hon Alannah MacTiernan is well known because she is an effective person on behalf of the

community in Western Australia, which is probably why the National Party attacks her. It attacks her when there is no conflict—not only is there no conflict, there cannot be conflict, because at no time when she was a minister did she have shareholdings in Carnegie Clean Energy. I also note that I asked the member for Warren–Blackwood by interjection whether Hon Alannah MacTiernan had ever been a member of the board of Carnegie and interestingly he said he was not aware that she had ever been a member of the board of Carnegie. Of course, Hon Alannah MacTiernan was a member of a company called Energy Made Clean, which was taken over by Carnegie. That is how come she ended up owning shares in Carnegie. She has never bought shares in Carnegie; she received shares for EMC as payment for her board role there. When Carnegie took over EMC, that is how she got shares in Carnegie.

Mr V.A. Catania: At any time did Hon Alannah MacTiernan partake, while she had shares, in any sort of promotion of Carnegie or anything like that?

Mr W.J. JOHNSTON: Have you asked her that?

Mr V.A. Catania: I am just asking you.

Mr W.J. JOHNSTON: Certainly not to my knowledge.

Mr V.A. Catania: Or yourself?

Mr W.J. JOHNSTON: As I make it clear, and as the Premier made clear in question time, and I think it is in a written answer provided to the question on notice, Hon Alannah MacTiernan was not even on the committee that made the decisions about our policies. Also, we never made a decision to support Carnegie. There was never a decision to support Carnegie.

Mr V.A. Catania: Never?

Mr W.J. JOHNSTON: Never; not by the Labor Party.

Mr V.A. Catania: There was never any promotional material?

Mr W.J. JOHNSTON: No, absolutely not. Go back and have a look. As the Premier pointed out, that was not what we said in our announcement. I had no involvement in the decisions of government on this topic, but I was party to the Labor Party decision-making process, because I was a member of the little committee that we had to look at these matters. We never agreed to give anything to Carnegie. We agreed to have a policy that would allow wave power in Albany and companies had to compete on merit. As I understand it, the result of that policy was that when there was competition on merit, Carnegie won the project.

Mr V.A. Catania: I just want to get some clarification.

Mr W.J. JOHNSTON: It is interesting that the member for North West Central now seeks clarification, yet there were allegations made of a conflict of interest on a number of occasions by the National Party. Now they want to clarify the decision process. It is ridiculous. The member cannot come in here and make an allegation and then ask for evidence. It happens the other way around. Find the evidence and then make an allegation. It is ridiculous. At some point, members opposite need to appreciate that Hon Alannah MacTiernan is a formidable opponent to them. I understand why they throw ridiculous mud at her: we all know that she is a person immensely respected in regional Western Australia, as she is in the metropolitan area. I am sure Hon Alannah MacTiernan's decision to return to the Parliament of Western Australia was a contributing factor in our winning so many regional seats.

Mr F.M. Logan: They do not like that farmers love her; they love her.

Mr W.J. JOHNSTON: Hon Alannah MacTiernan is a fine servant of Western Australia and that is probably why the National Party does not like her. They do not put the interests of regional Western Australians at the top of their list. If they did, they would support Hon Alannah MacTiernan and not attack her.

Mr V.A. Catania: What about royalties for regions?

Mr W.J. JOHNSTON: The former Labor member interjects about royalties for regions. I make the point —

Mr V.A. Catania interjected.

Mr W.J. JOHNSTON: I know; you are the rat; that is true. The point is that the Labor Party is 100 per cent committed to royalties for regions. We have not cut one cent from royalties for regions. We will never cut one cent from royalties for regions. We continue to operate royalties for regions exactly in accordance with the law introduced by the National Party and passed by this Parliament. We are proud to do that because we are the party of the regions. We are born in the regions and we continue to be the major party for the regions. This is the problem: members opposite cannot get away from the fact that no allegations have been made.

The allegation against my good friend the member for Willagee, the Minister for Housing, is that he was careless. He is hardly the first member who has been careless filling in a form. It is not as though he snuck into the Clerk's office and stuck a piece of paper underneath another piece of paper in his file and told journalists that he had

submitted an amendment. He has complied with every aspect of his obligations as a member of Parliament. If he had not, members opposite would be the first to come in here and move a motion about it. The facts are, as members know, he has complied with all his obligations. He has made all the disclosures he needs to make. None of the returns that were amended relate to any time that he was a minister. That is unfortunately the problem. If we are going down the track of saying that anyone who amends a return in Parliament is therefore guilty of a conflict of interest, that does not take them anywhere.

Mr F.M. Logan: God help all of you.

Mr W.J. JOHNSTON: God help everybody. God help me, most probably. I have no idea. I am sure that at some time I will make an error filling out a form.

Mr Z.R.F. Kirkup: Not you, surely!

Mr W.J. JOHNSTON: Of course. The member for Dawesville gave this little love ballad to me last week. I must say that he talked about meeting me in 2007 and the deep impression I left on him; member, I do not remember you, and I doubt anyone ever will.

Mr F.M. Logan: Even John Howard doesn't.

Mr W.J. JOHNSTON: I am sure John Howard does not remember, either.

The member for Warren–Blackwood made errors filling in his form when claiming travel allowance. We all make these sorts of mistakes. That is what happens. The member for Warren–Blackwood did not resign as a minister when he made those errors on his travel allowance claim form—neither did Hon Kim Hames resign when he made errors on his return. It is interesting that, of course, the Liberal Party now does not like the parliamentary pension scheme that the member for Dawesville benefited from.

Mr Z.R.F. Kirkup: Hey!

Mr W.J. JOHNSTON: I refer to the former member for Dawesville.

I refer briefly to an email sent by a former member of the Labor Party to the Labor Party's information@walabor.org.au. I will read the first line from the email referred to by the member for Warren–Blackwood. It states —

I refer to your correspondence not dated received by myself and my wife on 8 September 2017 expelling us from the Labor Party. I am objecting to the expulsion. I am not disagreeing rule 4.7.3 has been breached because I did campaign for the National's candidate, Brendon Grylls.

What a shock that a member of the Labor Party has been expelled for breaching our rules. In fact, he was not expelled. Because he breached rule 4.7.3, he ceased to be a member of the Labor Party. We are not an incorporation organisation, so we do not have to expel people. If a person breaches the rules, they cease to be a member. He was not actually expelled. The letter from the secretary would have been the notification that he had been —

Mr P.A. Katsambanis interjected.

Mr W.J. JOHNSTON: No; we are not an incorporated association; we do not have to apply. I am a former state secretary.

Mr P.A. Katsambanis: It sounds Stalinist to me.

Mr W.J. JOHNSTON: No; we are an unincorporated association. We are entitled to have people join or not as we choose. That is the one thing that the courts will not intervene on. They intervene on everything else, but not that issue. Imagine a person who is told they are no longer a member of the party admitting they have breached the rules and therefore cease to be a member and raising spurious allegations against people they have never met. What a shock! It is hardly headline news. We do not need to hold the front page when we find that a disgruntled former member of the Labor Party makes stupid allegations about people in the party. How ridiculous is it to expect us to call the Corruption and Crime Commission and get police involved when a person makes unsourced and unsubstantiated allegations against the Premier and a minister. How ridiculous! It is hardly a surprise that a person who is upset about ceasing membership of the Labor Party decides to vent their spleen in the middle of a local government election. What is surprising is that the member for Warren–Blackwood would deign to bring this matter to this chamber—not on one occasion but on several occasions. How ridiculous. It makes more transparent what is sought to be achieved by the member for Warren–Blackwood. If it was genuinely about accountability, he would simply refer it to the appropriate authorities, but, of course, he does not.

It contrasts with the defence by the National and Liberal Parties of the Lord Mayor. Let us make it clear. The Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries, the Corruption and Crime Commission and the State Administrative Tribunal have all found that the Lord Mayor acted inappropriately. Indeed, the SAT imposed

a penalty on her of 18 months' suspension, yet the Liberal and National Parties have come in here and defended her. However, we are supposed to suspend ministers from cabinet on the basis of unsubstantiated allegations from a disgruntled former member of the Labor Party. I want to make this clear. The Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries, the CCC and the State Administrative Tribunal make a finding, yet it does not move the other side of politics, but an unsubstantiated allegation by a disgruntled former Labor member does. It is a very interesting contrast.

Again in today's question time, attempts were made to make something about a number of members' staff being in local government. One of the councillors that I happily deal with in the City of Canning is a staffer for the member for Riverton. He was elected when the member for Riverton was the Treasurer of the state of Western Australia. Did we ask for a Corruption and Crime Commission inquiry into that? These are scales—it is bizarre that it is only when a Labor staff member runs for office that there is a need for an inquiry, but not when people on the other side of Parliament run for office. Let us not forget the letters that were sent by Olwen Searle, a councillor of the City of Gosnells and now Mayor of the City of Gosnells, to the Premier and the former director general of the Department of the Premier and Cabinet, raising questions about the involvement of Liberal Party members of Parliament using their office to support the campaigns for candidates in the City of Gosnells elections. Those letters were replied to by the DG and the Premier to say that it was acceptable for the office of those Liberal members of Parliament to be used for that purpose. That is what happened.

Mr P.A. Katsambanis: Really?

Mr W.J. JOHNSTON: Yes. Olwen Searle wrote to complain about the fact that a couple of Liberal members of Parliament were using their offices—their photocopier and their phones; all those things that are provided by the department—to directly support individual candidates in the City of Gosnells. Olwen Searle wrote to the Premier and the director general at the time of the Department of the Premier and Cabinet, Mr Peter Conran, and they wrote back to her and said that it was acceptable for Liberal Party members to use electorate offices for the purpose of assisting candidates in the City of Gosnells. That is what happened, and not only that, a private message was sent to Mrs Searle to say that it was improper for her to raise the question with the Premier. I do not know the author of that private message, but I make the point that that is what happened. Not only was it okay for Liberal members to use their offices and their office resources to campaign for candidates in the City of Gosnells, which beggared belief, but also the letter stated—this is great; I am sure members will love this: “Whilst there is an exclusion for the use of your parliamentary office for your own election, it does not exclude it for the use of people running for different elections.” The implication was that a member could use their state office to support a candidate for federal Parliament or local government, but not for themselves when running for state Parliament.

Dr A.D. Buti: What about other state candidates?

Mr W.J. JOHNSTON: Who knows? Let me make it clear that that was the position taken by the member for Cottesloe when he was Premier. This is why I found it so bizarre in question time today when Liberal Party members were asking questions of the Minister for Police about one of her staffers putting something on Facebook about closed-circuit television, or something like that, and yet they authorised members in Gosnells to use their electorate offices to campaign for Liberal candidates running for local government elections. Can members see the problem at the heart of the attack in question time today? I am sure that even the member for Cottesloe gets the idea that criticising the Minister for Police for adhering to the spirit and letter of the rules regarding a personal staffer in her ministerial office contrasts greatly with the expectation of the member for Cottesloe when he was Premier on the use of electorate offices for local government campaigns. I must make the point here: my view is that state members of Parliament should not get involved in local government elections. I can tell members that I do not get involved because there is only pain and agony down that path.

Mr Z.R.F. Kirkup: No-one would ask you for help with your record.

Mr W.J. JOHNSTON: Actually, Liberal members ask me for help, but that is okay. I just tell them the same thing that I tell Labor members: I am not going to help them directly. I am happy to give them encouragement and advice, but I am not going to get directly involved because it is not a good idea. That is why I find it bizarre that the Liberal Party authorised the use of electorate offices for those campaigns in the City of Gosnells, and then had the audacity to come in here, without any evidence of inappropriate behaviour, and criticise the Minister for Police. The Minister for Police strictly adhered to the rules regarding her staff. One of the questions asked by the Liberal Party to the minister today was—I cannot remember the exact words—along these lines: “Are you ensuring that nothing is being leaked out of your office?” The point is that that is what the law of Western Australia states; it already provides an obligation on staff members not to act improperly. A procedure is already in place, and guess what? It is exactly the same procedure that existed when members opposite were in government and when their staff ran for parliamentary office; that is my point. It is an absolutely ridiculous criticism. There is not a skerrick of suggestion from the Liberal Party that these staff members have broken any rules. Not once did they make that

Mr Terry Redman; Mr Vincent Catania; Mr Bill Johnston; Mr Colin Barnett; Mrs Liza Harvey; Ms Rita Saffioti

suggestion and yet they think it is okay to have candidates in the City of Gosnells running their campaigns out of a parliamentary office.

Mr C.J. Barnett: No-one said that.

Mr W.J. JOHNSTON: They did.

Mr C.J. Barnett: No-one has said that.

Mr W.J. JOHNSTON: Yes they did; Peter Conran said it.

Mr C.J. Barnett: So everybody is running a campaign out of a member's office?

Mr W.J. JOHNSTON: Yes.

Mr C.J. Barnett: No.

Mr W.J. JOHNSTON: Yes, that is exactly what the member's letter said.

Mr C.J. Barnett interjected.

Mr W.J. JOHNSTON: I have got it. I have read all the letters, member.

Mr T.J. Healy: And they are doing it again.

Mr W.J. JOHNSTON: They are doing it again. They are doing it right now based on the instruction that the former Premier and Mr Conran gave.

Mr I.C. Blayney: Will you table those letters?

Mr W.J. JOHNSTON: I am happy to table it. I will come back tomorrow and table the letters. Peter Conran said that it was okay.

Mr C.J. Barnett interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Members!

Mr W.J. JOHNSTON: No, I am very careful with what I said.

Mr C.J. Barnett interjected.

Mr W.J. JOHNSTON: Yes, that is right—propriety. We are talking about propriety. We are talking about people coming in here and throwing stones at a minister who has done nothing wrong—a proud Western Australian in Hon Alannah MacTiernan. She is one of those few people in the Parliament of Western Australia who is known and respected by the population of this state. Members opposite come in here and make an allegation with no substance about that member. They then go and make allegations with no substance or basis against the Minister for Police. Members opposite even drag in the Minister for Housing, whose only sin was to correct a record to make sure it was accurate about a period when he was not a minister, and make an allegation of impropriety. It is just bizarre that that is the approach that the Liberal and National Parties take to us in this chamber. We are not going to put up with it. We are not going to have the Liberal and National Parties come in here and do this. We are not going to put up with it. It is not appropriate, it is not right and it is completely and utterly unreasonable.

I am going to finish with one last allegation—my favourite one. My favourite allegation is that Labor members used to work for trade unions. I love that allegation. Of course, let me make the point: the Premier never worked for a trade union and neither did the Deputy Premier. The problem with their allegation is that it is factually wrong, but let me go further. For those members like me who are proud to be a former union official, it is a terrible accusation. Their accusation is that I worked on behalf of working people to try to get them a fair go. What a disgrace! How terrible can members opposite make me feel about how I used to help people with their workers' compensation claims, how I used to assist people who were injured at work to get what was fairly and rightfully theirs, and how I would negotiate wages for low-paid workers to get them a little bit extra so that they could have a more comfortable life? What a terrible allegation to make about me. Well, guess what? I am guilty of caring for ordinary people in this state. I am guilty of being interested in making sure that working people get proper representation at work. The problem is that members opposite cannot have this both ways. They cannot say that unions have too much power and then that they do not have enough power. They cannot come in here and say we should give in to the WA Police Union, but we are in the pockets of the trade union movement. They cannot say that we need to give in to the police union, because next week it will be that we should give in to the nurses union, and the week after it will be the teachers union.

Mr P.A. Katsambanis: You gave in to the UFU.

Mr Terry Redman; Mr Vincent Catania; Mr Bill Johnston; Mr Colin Barnett; Mrs Liza Harvey; Ms Rita Saffioti

Mr W.J. JOHNSTON: No, we did not. That is rubbish; it is completely wrong. That is absolute and utter rubbish. If the Police Union had accepted the former government's offer, its members would have their pay rise by now. The problem is that the police union rejected the former government's offer. Hopefully, we can come to an accommodation fairly soon because, as I always say about industrial disputes, they always come to an end. They always come to a settlement; there is always an endpoint. That is why I have never gone out of my way to inflame the situation between the police union and the government, because there will be a settlement; we all know that. All industrial disputes end.

The opposition cannot have this both ways. It cannot say that we are weak on the unions and then criticise us because we will not give more to the unions. It cannot criticise us for being in the pockets of the unions and then tell us that we are undermining the independence of the Salaries and Allowances Tribunal. The opposition must pick a side of the debate and stick with it. The first thing that the Liberal and National Parties have to do is admit they got it wrong. They had one of the largest victories in 2013, and now they have to face up to the fact that over half their members were defeated. They must at some time come to terms with that, and ask why it happened. The Liberals and the Nationals lost trust; they did not put the interests of Western Australians first, and they made bad decisions and drove the state to the brink of bankruptcy. At some point they will have to start developing a strategy and moving forward. As I said before, it is pretty hard for the Liberal Party to move forward with the member for Cottesloe at the back.

Mr C.J. Barnett interjected.

Mr W.J. JOHNSTON: That is just a fact, member. The member for Cottesloe could do the people of this state a favour and do something else. He does not enjoy himself in here. He has not been happy for a number of years now. He may as well go and do something that makes him happy, because there is no point coming in here and dragging down the Liberal Party, holding the Liberal Party back from rebuilding, and sitting up the back there whingeing about how life is unfair and that history has not treated him fairly. That is just the way things are. In a poorly executed opposition strategy over the last six months, this motion must be somewhere near the top. Members opposite coming in here and not making an allegation about Hon Alannah MacTiernan, and not making an allegation about the Minister for Housing, but then telling us that we do not have high enough standards, having protected all those ministers during their time in government, is just bizarre.

MR C.J. BARNETT (Cottesloe) [5.53 pm]: This is private members' time, and I am very conscious that the minister, the member for Cannington, has spoken for one hour. This motion was moved by the National Party, so I am going to make a comment for not more than a few minutes, and I hope that the National Party will get the opportunity to speak to its motion in private members' time.

I will not refer to some of the things that have been said; I will just let them go by, but I do not believe for a moment that Hon Alannah MacTiernan sought in any way to do something wrong. However, it comes down to the role of a minister, cabinet responsibilities, and dealing with perceived or potential conflicts of interest. Many people who are in cabinets today, and will be in the future, will always be vulnerable to accusations of a conflict, for the simple reason that many people, particularly as they come in as members later in their careers, will probably have superannuation funds from previous employment. Those superannuation funds will typically have shares in the ASX top 100 companies. We will all probably find that our super funds have some interest in major mining companies in Western Australia. I do not think that that is a conflict of interest, because a decision is unlikely to in any way affect the value of an ASX top 100 company. However—this is the problem that I think Hon Alannah MacTiernan faced—a decision can affect the price of a smaller company such as Carnegie Clean Energy. Indeed, when the company was seen to be the preferred developer of the wave energy project in Albany, that had a material effect on its price. That was the problem.

The shareholding by the minister, which was indirect, was probably negligible in value. The share price of Carnegie changed, but the minister's holding, I suspect, was negligible. I do not think there was any financial interest at all, realistically. She gave away the shares, and they probably were not worth all that much; I do not know. However, the point is that she clearly had had an involvement with Carnegie, and the group she was involved in, Energy Made Clean. She clearly had an involvement with the company. She was an enthusiastic supporter of the technology, and she found herself in the position of indirectly having a share ownership. For that reason alone, the correct decision for her and/or the Premier to have made—not to pursue a conflict of interest issue, because I do not think that was significant—was for her not in any way to become involved with that project as a minister. She should not have been the minister who went down and announced and promoted it. That responsibility should simply have been handed to another minister. Indeed, if there was any discussion in cabinet about it, she should have simply exempted herself from that discussion. I do not accuse her in any way of doing anything wrong; I do not think that that was in any way her motive, and I do not think that accusation has been made, but the process here was not right. I do not think it was a deliberate conflict of interest in any sense, but she should not have been given responsibility to be involved in that project. I dealt with lots of those issues as Premier.

Ms M.M. Quirk: Badly or not at all.

Mr C.J. BARNETT: I dealt with many issues as Premier relating to conflicts of interest and relating to potential conflicts.

Ms M.M. Quirk: Your view of conflicts of interest was that there was only a conflict if there was a profit made.

Mr C.J. BARNETT: I cannot believe that, as someone who is legally trained, the member for Girrawheen would be so stupid as to say that.

I am actually speaking on behalf of Hon Alannah MacTiernan, but I think it was an error for her to have had any involvement in that project. She should have simply been exempted from cabinet and exempted from participation. I do not think she sought any pecuniary gain at all from it. That is the problem, and it is not always easy.

Mr M. McGowan: I don't know if you followed it closely, but she offloaded her shares before she became a member of Parliament.

Mr C.J. BARNETT: It does not matter.

Mr M. McGowan: She did not have any shares.

Mr C.J. BARNETT: I know, and I understand that totally. However, she had an involvement with the company as a supporter. For that reason alone, she should have simply exempted herself from any cabinet discussion that took place, and she should have exempted herself, or the Premier should have exempted her, from playing any role in that project. There have been lots of examples like that, and the Premier will get many more in his time as Premier. That was the error. It was not a huge error, but it was wrong, and if there is anything to be learnt out of it, that is what should be learnt.

Mr M. McGowan: So let me just clarify—if you've ever owned a shareholding in anything, you can't involve yourself in an issue as a minister?

Mr C.J. BARNETT: No, I am not saying that.

Mr M. McGowan interjected.

Mr C.J. BARNETT: No, I am not going to debate with the Premier.

Several members interjected.

Mr C.J. BARNETT: No, you do not get propriety, and as I faced some accusations then, I can tell members right now, and they will all laugh, that in my 27 years in this house, I have never taken a dollar and never misappropriated one dollar of government spending, and I have never given a dollar to any company in Australia, Western Australia or internationally.

MR V.A. CATANIA (North West Central) [5.58 pm]: I rise tonight to echo what the Premier just said. I want to read out the motion —

That this house condemns the Premier for appointing ministers that have demonstrated a lack of public accountability and transparency.

The Premier is leaving the chamber, but I just wanted to ask him a question that I asked the Minister for Mines and Petroleum: has he ever participated in any promotion with Carnegie since we have been talking about Hon Alannah MacTiernan and her involvement? The answer from the minister was clearly no. The lead speaker for the government clearly said that he had engaged in no promotion for Carnegie, or the Minister for Regional Development. Unfortunately, the Premier has left the chamber, but in his answer today in question time he said —

Under the standing orders, I am under no obligation to answer matters occurring before the government was sworn in. However, it is worth noting that WA Labor's release mentioned Carnegie as "a likely" not "the likely" proponent.

I will come back to those two things because it is interesting as we delve in and look at what is going on. The PerthNow website published an article titled "First cabinet meeting for WA McGowan government". The media report states —

"I want to make sure we run a transparent, accountable government that is characterised by decency, and ministers and members who behave properly."

It is pretty fair and pretty standard for a Premier to make those statements. I know we are getting to the end of private members' business, but perhaps the Premier will come back into the chamber. I go back to what the Premier said. He said "a likely" not "the likely". I looked at media statements from when the Premier said this and one

Mr Terry Redman; Mr Vincent Catania; Mr Bill Johnston; Mr Colin Barnett; Mrs Liza Harvey; Ms Rita Saffioti

from 23 February 2017 titled “Jobs boost: New facility to allow Albany wave energy to become a reality”. That is a pretty good headline. The article states —

A McGowan Labor Government will invest \$19.5million to develop Albany as a globally recognised energy hub to create hundreds of WA jobs.

...

A McGowan Labor Government will also work with the University of Western Australia ... Carnegie Clean Energy and other stakeholders to develop a Wave Energy Centre of Excellence in Albany.

...

Comments from WA Labor Leader Mark McGowan:

“A new common user facility will allow Carnegie Clean Energy and others to establish wave energy in Albany, to help power households and create jobs.

I looked for where the Premier said “a likely” not “the likely” but I could not find it. I kept on digging and I found the “WA LABOR: Plan for Albany And the Shire of Jerramungup”. Have I not said that right? It is in the south.

Ms M.J. Davies: Jerramungup.

Mr V.A. CATANIA: Jerramungup. The plan states —

Wave Power for Albany

...

Carnegie Energy is now trialling the world’s first renewable micro grid power station using wave energy as one of its sources. If the trial is successful, the micro grid model could be used in Albany, powering thousands of households with renewable energy.

A news clipping from *The West Australian* titled “Total green power plan for Albany” states —

Wave energy company Carnegie Clean Energy has been identified by Mr McGowan as the likely proponent of Labor’s project after demonstrating success with the technology off Garden Island.

As I said, I asked the Minister for Mines and Petroleum, who is still in the chamber, whether he has participated in any promotional material with Carnegie with the Minister for Regional Development. The answer was no. We have Facebook, and people with phones can take photos at the drop of a hat. Suddenly, I see this photo on 23 February 2017. I could see the shine off the top of his head; it is the minister for mines, the Carnegie CEO, Michael, the Premier—and who is that in the red top? It is Hon Alannah MacTiernan. What are the signs behind and in front? It says Carnegie. That photo is from 23 February 2017. Would members like me to table it? Did the now minister have a shareholding at that time? By her account, yes. Did the minister for mines just deliberately mislead Parliament and say that he did not participate in any promotional material with Carnegie? Did I ask that question? What was the answer? No. Did the Premier say “a likely” not “the likely” proponent? There he is announcing \$19.5 million if the Labor Party is elected to government.

Mr W.J. Johnston: No, it’s not true.

Mr V.A. CATANIA: It is not true but it is a photograph of the minister.

Several members interjected.

Mr V.A. CATANIA: Is that not the Minister for Mines and Petroleum? I think he is wearing the same tie as he is wearing now. It is unbelievable, members. There we have it. Can members see? Would the member like me to table it?

Mr W.J. Johnston: You can’t table it. Give it to me and I will table it.

Mr V.A. CATANIA: I cannot table it. Fine! I will show everyone again. Hon Alannah MacTiernan, now Minister for Regional Development, on 23 February had shareholdings in Carnegie. The Premier said it was “a likely” not “the likely” proponent. I think it was pretty likely because I can see the CEO of Carnegie in this photo. Members can see the minister for mines was actively looking on and nodding.

Several members interjected.

Mr V.A. CATANIA: Hang on a second. Government members come into this place, cry foul and start accusing the former government of this and that. The Premier sets a standard for ministers from day dot and suddenly we see this potential conflict of interest. Quite a few members have been councillors in local government. A councillor who had shareholdings or who had divested shareholdings or had been a part of a \$19.5 million announcement who then had to vote on the matter, would simply declare an interest and step out of the chamber. What is the

Mr Terry Redman; Mr Vincent Catania; Mr Bill Johnston; Mr Colin Barnett; Mrs Liza Harvey; Ms Rita Saffioti

difference here? My understanding is that this \$19.5 million did not go to cabinet. The Minister for Regional Development solely made the decision.

Mr W.J. Johnston: No, that is contrary to the answer you were given in question time. Go read the answer.

Mr V.A. CATANIA: The whole point is to minimise the potential conflicts of interest. I know that the Minister for Regional Development is passionate about this. I know that and I admire her for that. But the process has not been open and transparent. Clearly, the Minister for Mines and Petroleum claimed that neither he nor the Minister for Regional Development partook in any promotional material.

Mr W.J. Johnston: That is right.

Mr V.A. CATANIA: But here we have it. The Premier said it was “a likely” not “the likely” proponent, but we realise it was pretty likely when we see this photo. I will show members.

Mr W.J. Johnston: What was the announcement?

Mr V.A. CATANIA: That was on 23 February. Perhaps I can table the media release of 23 February 2017, which states that the government “will invest \$19.5 million”.

Mr W.J. Johnston: In what?

Mr V.A. CATANIA: It will invest it in wave energy. There is a photo. It will create hundreds of jobs. Here it is— wave energy, Carnegie Clean Energy —

Several members interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Members! Thank you. This is highly entertaining but let us settle down.

Mr V.A. CATANIA: I will read the rest for the member —

Comments from WA Labor Leader Mark McGowan:

“A new common user facility will allow Carnegie Clean Energy and others to establish wave energy —

It refers to wave energy —

Several members interjected.

Mr V.A. CATANIA: Clearly, the member wants to mislead. I agree with the former Premier; I do not think that the Minister for Regional Development has done anything untoward. The issue is that her attendance on 23 February, while she had a shareholding, is a potential conflict of interest. The fact is she divested her shares a couple of days after the election result and was member-elect for the North Metropolitan Region, and was going to be made Minister for Regional Development, and the share price was going up. Come on, guys! Members of Parliament, come on! Clearly that shows that there could be a conflict of interest being portrayed out there in the community.

Mr D.T. Punch interjected.

Mr V.A. CATANIA: It is not a point about giving to charity. The point is that on 23 February Hon Alannah MacTiernan participated in a photograph, announcing \$19.5 million —

Several members interjected.

Mr V.A. CATANIA: Hang on a second. The now minister knew that she was going to be a minister if the Labor Party was elected.

Mr P.C. Tinley: Commonsense!

Mr V.A. CATANIA: It is commonsense, I agree, because we all knew that she was going to be a minister in the McGowan Labor government, if that was going to be the case.

Mr W.J. Johnston interjected.

Mr V.A. CATANIA: The minister had his chance. He answered the questions perfectly. He said that he had no involvement, but the photo shows otherwise.

Mr W.J. Johnston interjected.

Mr V.A. CATANIA: The photo shows otherwise.

If we have a look at the time frame, how can we say there is no potential conflict of interest? I just do not understand that.

Mr W.J. Johnston interjected.

Mr Terry Redman; Mr Vincent Catania; Mr Bill Johnston; Mr Colin Barnett; Mrs Liza Harvey; Ms Rita Saffioti

Mr V.A. CATANIA: Madam Acting Speaker, I cannot even hear myself.

Several members interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Thank you! Member, if you perhaps just direct your comments through me, they might be less likely to interject.

Mr W.J. Johnston interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Thank you, minister.

Mr W.J. Johnston interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Thank you!

Mr V.A. CATANIA: He is giving me a headache!

Several members interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Members, thank you! Member, making a comment like that is not helpful in trying to get him to behave, so through me, all right? Thank you.

Mr V.A. CATANIA: Like I said, if I look at the timeline and the photographic evidence—something that the Minister for Mines and Petroleum denied here, probably only 40 minutes ago—I just cannot believe it. If a councillor in local government lives next door to something that they are going to talk about and make a decision on in council, they declare an interest and walk out. If they have a friendship with someone, they declare an interest and walk out. If they have had any business associations, they declare an interest and walk out. What is the difference here? The Minister for Regional Development has created a perception, and if we look at the timeline, it is concerning. It is concerning that the open and transparent nature of making this decision has been marred by the photographic evidence and by the then member-elect divesting her shares, knowing that she was going to become a minister, after making an announcement of \$19.5 million on 23 February.

I think we have said enough. I think Hon Alannah MacTiernan is a good person and would not do anything untoward, but this decision-making process lacks openness and transparency. I know the member for Warren–Blackwood has touched on a few other issues. It is important that, as an opposition, we keep the government accountable and make sure that the government is open and transparent, as the Premier said when he first became Premier of Western Australia. It is a very important position. Members who become ministers take on a very important position, and it is important that transparency is upheld.

When we look at some of the media coverage of Lotterywest —

Dr A.D. Buti: Will you take an interjection?

Mr V.A. CATANIA: I have only five minutes.

Dr A.D. Buti: I took yours last time.

Mr V.A. CATANIA: I will not say no.

Dr A.D. Buti: You've got to separate a conflict of interest from a bias. We all have biases. Hon Alannah MacTiernan has a bias towards renewable energy, but that does not disqualify her from any decision to do with renewable energy.

Mr V.A. CATANIA: It is a fair point the member makes, but the point I am making is that the now Minister for Regional Development was participating in a photoshoot with Carnegie in the background, announcing the money—\$19.5 million—back in 23 February 2017 when she had shares, and then she became Minister for Regional Development and made the decision about the \$19.5 million. Can the member see that it is not open and transparent?

Dr A.D. Buti: It's very open and transparent, because you said she's in the photograph!

Mr V.A. CATANIA: The member will know—we are on the Public Accounts Committee, and he is the chair—that we disclose any potential conflicts of interest in that committee when we are doing an inquiry, including even relationships with family members who may work for unions. We make that declaration straightaway and ask for advice straightaway about whether we need to leave the room. Am I correct, member for Armadale?

Dr A.D. Buti: You have an outstanding chair!

Mr V.A. CATANIA: If we do it at a committee level and at a council level, surely we must do it at a government level. I think it is important. I am not saying that anything untoward has occurred in that situation, but it is important that decisions are of an open and transparent nature so the whole community can see how they are made. I think the member for Cottesloe is right: the decision to award money to Carnegie Wave Energy should have been

Mr Terry Redman; Mr Vincent Catania; Mr Bill Johnston; Mr Colin Barnett; Mrs Liza Harvey; Ms Rita Saffioti

made by another minister; perhaps the Minister for Transport could have taken that decision and signed off on it so that people could see that it was at arm's length. That is what we are saying; it needs to be at arm's length.

Mr D.T. Redman: In fact, the Minister for Energy could have done it.

Mr V.A. CATANIA: The Minister for Energy, because it would actually create one megawatt of energy. That is right, member for Warren–Blackwood. That would have been a more sensible, open and transparent approach than the situation we have here.

The Premier has refused to answer a lot of the questions the member for Warren–Blackwood has asked over the last couple of days by batting them off and dismissing the opposition, and I urge him to make sure that the government is accountable. That shows a lot of arrogance, because it shows that he does not want to be held accountable. That is our job, and that is the job that the Labor Party did in opposition. The member for Cannington I think did it quite well; he stood up and screeched nearly every day about this very issue.

Mrs M.H. Roberts: That's not what you said at the time!

Mr V.A. CATANIA: The member for Midland is probably right, but she also jumped up about that as well! All we are doing is our job. The Premier says he is open and transparent, but when we ask questions in Parliament about potential conflicts of interest or issues that just need to be cleared up for the sake of public scrutiny, he just bats them off. Perhaps that is the arrogance of having 41 members and thinking that he is going to be in government forever and a day. I will just say this: as we know, things change, and who knows what will happen in four years' time, but I am confident that there will not be 41 government members.

MRS L.M. HARVEY (Scarborough — Deputy Leader of the Opposition) [6.18 pm]: I, too, rise to support this motion —

That this house condemns the Premier for appointing ministers that have demonstrated a lack of public accountability and transparency.

I have some further information to add to this, and I would like to go over some issues that have been previously canvassed in this place. I think it is indicative of the sensitivity of the government that during private members' business we had a minister of the government stand up and consume an hour's worth of private members' time. There are 41 members on the other side and the opposition has limited opportunities in this place to debate motions, bring forward issues and represent our constituents. Those opportunities are limited to questions without notice, debates on particular bills, private members' business for three hours on a Wednesday afternoon, the occasional suspension of standing orders, and debates on matters of public interest. It makes things difficult when a government minister filibusters for an hour. Two motions were listed for debate today and it is clear now that the opposition has the time to interrogate only one. This goes to the heart of transparency and accountability. A number of our members wanted to canvass issues as part of this motion and they have been silenced because the member for Cannington, the Minister for Mines and Petroleum, consumed our time this week.

Ms M.M. Quirk interjected.

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: Why does the member for Girrawheen not get up and contribute something?

Several members interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Members!

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: Honestly, the interjections are not even intelligent.

Today, there was a debate to suspend the standing orders so that we could debate a motion about the actions of the Minister for Police and the political interference in the appointment process of the Commissioner of Police. When we talk about transparency and accountability, we really are talking about ministers and the Premier just being straight with the community of Western Australia and honest in the Parliament. When a government wins a landslide victory in an election such as this government did on 11 March this year, it has a mandate in the community. If the government wants to effect cultural change in the public sector, that cultural change must start at the top. If it wants to move on director generals and senior executives in the public sector so it can put its footprint on the public sector and start its cultural change agenda in the public sector, why not just say to the community, "We've been elected. We want change in the public sector, and we are going to move a lot of directors general on. If they are not going to help us effect cultural change, they don't have a place in this new government."

Instead of doing that, what did we see the government do? We saw a difficult, truncated process to get a straight answer from the Premier around the removal of a number of senior public sector positions. Instead of being honest and saying, for example, in the case of Paul Andrew, the former CEO of Lotterywest, who was moved on, "The CEO and I had a disagreement. I need to have a close relationship with the CEO of Lotterywest. I don't believe we can work together; it's time for him to move on", we had a painstaking process extracting information through this house of Parliament and through questions without notice in the other place and through the FOI process. The media was asking about it. Finally, after several months we found out that the former CEO of Lotterywest Paul Andrew did not leave by mutual agreement with the government. A decision had been made

Mr Terry Redman; Mr Vincent Catania; Mr Bill Johnston; Mr Colin Barnett; Mrs Liza Harvey; Ms Rita Saffioti

early on that it was time for him to move on. A media statement was prepared well in advance of the CEO even being notified. We do not know as yet whether the board of Lotterywest was involved in the decision-making process. Paul Andrew's name was dragged through the mud. He was then made to look as though he was incompetent and not able to perform his role, even though he was keeping up with all his key performance indicators and, in fact, was ahead of achieving some of them. Instead of the Premier saying, "The CEO and I don't get on. He doesn't have a place in the new government. I've got a mandate to do this", he dragged that man's name through the mud. He then tried to inhibit him from his rightful expectation of a payout of his contract. He had set up his life for five years, expecting he was going to be running Lotterywest as CEO, earning a certain salary, and instead that was cut short. That is a pretty significant financial decision for a family to adjust themselves to.

Point of Order

Mr W.J. JOHNSTON: I do not want to interrupt the member because I do not want it suggested that we are trying to hide something, but I draw attention to the motion that this house condemns the Premier for appointing ministers that have demonstrated a lack of accountability and transparency.

Dr M.D. Nahan: She is talking about the Premier.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Thank you, Leader of the Opposition!

Mr W.J. JOHNSTON: Unless that is the argument the member is developing, that she is somehow talking about the Premier as a minister, not the Premier as the Premier—I do not think the Premier appointed himself. I think we need to get back to the motion, rather than going off on a tangent about somebody who apparently must be friends with the member for Scarborough and is disappointed that his career did not take the pathway that he expected.

The ACTING SPEAKER: That is not a point of order.

Debate Resumed

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: There we see it again. The member for Cannington has stood up and consumed more of our private member's time. What did he do? He cast a slur on the former CEO of Lotterywest again and on me as the member for Scarborough because I am going to the heart of the accountability of the Premier and transparency. The Premier should have just come out and said, "I don't want that guy there." That happens in companies every day of the week. A new member will be appointed to a board, the board decides the CEO does not fit anymore, they have an adult conversation, the CEO moves on and a declaration is made. Everyone gets on with it.

We had the same process with Mr Kim Papalia, the former Road Safety Commissioner. We still do not know what happened there. We know from the debate today that the police minister separated herself from the entire process. We know from the suspension of standing orders motion today and the 40-minute debate in this house that the minister had to defend herself for the entire 20-minute government allocation. The Premier did not stand up and defend his minister. That is appalling. When Colin Barnett was Premier, in every single one of these types of debates, if any of his ministers was under attack, he came in and defended his ministers. That happened every time the Labor Party scurrilously attacked ministers during our time in government.

We still do not know what happened or who had the conversation with Mr Papalia, telling him that he was moving on. What did we see? We did not see a process whereby the Premier or the Minister for Road Safety came out and said, "We're not happy with the performance of this guy", or, "We're not happy that he is going to effect the changes that we want in the Road Safety Commission; we need to part ways." What did we get? Mr Papalia's reputation was dragged through the mud. We had a painstaking process of trying to draw out information. We still do not have information because the Premier is withholding documents that we have requested under the FOI act, and we now have to go through a process with the commissioner to determine that. That is the process. It is not a normal process, for members who are new to this place. The FOI process is very straightforward. For all those government backbenchers, the Premier was elected on the basis of a new level of gold-standard transparency. Listen to what we are saying. Does what we are saying sound like gold-standard transparency? Trying to get information from the Premier and the ministers is like extracting teeth; it is a very painful process.

Look at the comments of the former police commissioner Dr Karl O'Callaghan.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order, members! I am having difficulty hearing.

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: Former commissioner Dr Karl O'Callaghan's comment's in the media —

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: The Deputy Leader of the Opposition does not appear to be taking interjections. I am having difficulty listening to her.

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: Thank you, Acting Speaker, for your protection.

Mr Terry Redman; Mr Vincent Catania; Mr Bill Johnston; Mr Colin Barnett; Mrs Liza Harvey; Ms Rita Saffioti

When the minister was given an opportunity in question time to clear the air about what was on the front page of *The West Australian* today, which shows that the former commissioner is apparently at odds with the selection process for the current commissioner, she did not clear the air. We did not get the minister's perspective on that whatsoever. We got no comment, no clarity—nothing. That is what we expect in this place. The minister sat down and refused to answer a question. When I was a minister, the current Minister for Police used to ask me all the time, “Do you agree with this? Do you agree with that? Do you agree with your commissioner?” Do you know what, Acting Speaker? I took those questions and I answered those issues. Sometimes those issues were really tricky because sometimes the commissioner and I did not agree, but I answered those questions. I did not take the coward's way out by sitting down and deciding that I would not speak and not clear the air or improve transparency and accountability for my government and for my Premier. The Minister for Police probably knew that her Premier would not stand to defend her. He was going to throw the Minister for Police under the bus. He had no problem doing that. He did not defend her. We are not really sure whether it was the Premier's office that decided to remove the Road Safety Commissioner. Perhaps the Minister for Police was not involved in his removal—we do not know, because the Premier's office will not release the documents. Hopefully, the Freedom of the Information Commissioner will help us bring transparency and accountability to this process. All this is unnecessary because all the Premier had to do was say that the Road Safety Commissioner was on a tangent to the purpose of government and that it was time for him to move to a different place. That is all he had to do.

Then we had the estimates process—talk about painstaking. It was a debacle. I was in estimates with the minister representing the Minister for Education. The minister representing is on leave today. I asked a simple question, which was: of the senior executive service positions that are being removed from the Department of Education, how many of those individuals are women and how many are men? I wanted to know the gender breakdown. The officer sitting behind the minister was waving a piece of paper. He handed it to the minister but the minister refused to answer the question and said that I needed to put the question on notice. We argued backwards and forwards about whether we could have the number of SES positions that have been spilt. Still the minister said no, even though it was an estimates process in which the opposition gets to examine the activities of government. That information was denied us during the estimates process. Some of it was provided by way of supplementary information, but I was told to submit the rest of it as a question on notice. We waited for 30 days. When the member for Dawesville submits questions on notice, we wait for 90 or 100 days. If a minister decides that he or she does not like the member and thinks that he is contemptible because of his age and that this “young thing” is asking too many questions, they might refuse to answer them at all. That is what we hear from these ministers and that is why this motion is before the house today. This is the lack of transparency and accountability we are talking about and why this motion has been brought to this place.

The Minister for Mines and Petroleum stood and talked about local government elections and made a range of veiled accusations against members of the Liberal Party and their involvement in local government elections; indeed, he took a very holier-than-thou attitude. I will read into *Hansard* some material that has gone out for local government elections. The material is headed “A message from Rita Saffioti” and reads —

Dear Residents

2017 has been an extremely busy year in politics, with the WA State General Election in March delivering a change in government. I am focused on delivering the new McGowan Government's election commitments for the local area both as the member for West Swan and as a minister.

Local government elections are beginning this month and Brabham residents will have an important decision to make.

You should soon receive a postal vote form for the City of Swan Council elections in your mail box.

I am urging you to vote to re-elect **Councillor John M McNamara** to the City of Swan.

As your local member of State Parliament I have been able to work closely with **Councillor McNamara** on a range of issues affecting the community.

Over the years he has joined me in advocating for safer communities, higher quality roads, improved aged care and better support and services for the local area.

John McNamara has a proven track record and will fight for what is right for Brabham.

I urge you to vote for **John McNamara** and place a tick next to his name on the ballot paper.

Kind regards.

Rita Saffioti MLA

Dr A.D. Buti interjected.

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: Member for Armadale, thank you for your interjection. Who did authorise it? It is not clear. Contrary to the Electoral Act, there is nothing on the bottom of the material to indicate that it was written and authorised by a particular person. When you look after the pennies, the pounds take care of themselves. This is

Mr Terry Redman; Mr Vincent Catania; Mr Bill Johnston; Mr Colin Barnett; Mrs Liza Harvey; Ms Rita Saffioti

a small thing, but the Electoral Act states that during a campaign, campaign material needs to identify who wrote the material and who authorised it.

Several members interjected.

Point of Order

Mr D.T. REDMAN: The member for Girrawheen is calling out across the chamber but she is not in her seat. I ask you to put it right.

The ACTING SPEAKER: There is no point of order.

Debate Resumed

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: Talk about a double standard. I will go to some of the other comments made in this place.

There was an accusation today that when I was the Minister for Police in the former government, the process for the reappointment of the former Commissioner of Police, Dr Karl O'Callaghan, was inappropriate. I inform Parliament and make it very, very clear that the Public Sector Commissioner was involved in the process of the reappointment of Dr O'Callaghan. Dr O'Callaghan's performance had been monitored. The Public Sector Commissioner made inquiries of me as the minister, the Premier and other cabinet ministers about whether the commissioner was doing an appropriate job. During that process, a recommendation was made by the Public Sector Commissioner to the then Premier to reappoint Dr O'Callaghan twice and twice Dr O'Callaghan was reappointed. Cabinet was informed of the decision. It approved the decision to make a recommendation to the Governor and, as is appropriate, the Governor reappointed the Commissioner of Police and renewed his contract. It was not an open selection process. An appraisal was done on the performance of the person in the job and a decision was made to renew his contract and, appropriately, the Public Sector Commissioner was involved in that deliberation. It is incorrect to say that there was some kind of bizarre, renegade process when we were in government.

Mrs M.H. Roberts interjected.

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: The Public Sector Commissioner —

Mrs M.H. Roberts interjected.

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: There she goes again! The Minister for Police is slurring the reputation of somebody who said something she does not agree with. She does not agree with what Dr Karl O'Callaghan said but it was not enough to say that she did not agree with him. Instead of the Premier saying that he did not agree with him, he said that he is suffering from relevance deprivation syndrome and insulted him and undermined him.

Mrs M.H. Roberts: When did I say that?

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: I said the Premier, Minister for Police. Perhaps if the minister stopped talking she might be able to hear what I am saying.

The commentary that we hear —

Mrs M.H. Roberts interjected.

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: Acting Speaker!

The ACTING SPEAKER: Thank you, members. Deputy Leader of the Opposition, I have to say that your last comment did not encourage people to listen in silence. I will get you to direct your comments to me.

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: Thank you for your guidance, Acting Speaker.

What I am trying to point out is that a pattern is emerging with this government. When accountability and transparency are challenged, there is an attack on the person who delivers the message. When the accountability and transparency of the removal of the CEO of Lotterywest became apparent, there was an attack on the former CEO of Lotterywest.

[Member's time extended.]

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: When the Road Safety Commissioner as an individual pushed back and used the protections of the Public Sector Management Act to seek advice about a direction that he had been given to break convention and release documents that he believed had cabinet in-confidence, he was moved off into purgatory on the fourth floor of Dumas House to await his fate of a new appointment. We then saw an attack on the individual, Mr Kim Papalia, around his integrity and whether he made the right decision in requesting legal advice about a direction that was given to him by his employer. That was what we saw; an attack on an individual. The former police commissioner, Dr Karl O'Callaghan, has an outstanding reputation not only in this community generally, but also in policing across regions of Australasia and in the United Kingdom. We saw an attack on the police

Mr Terry Redman; Mr Vincent Catania; Mr Bill Johnston; Mr Colin Barnett; Mrs Liza Harvey; Ms Rita Saffioti

commissioner in which he was accused of having relevance deprivation disorder and that he should step down. I cannot remember the comments but they were not particularly kind. That is the kind of attitude we see.

If this continues, I expect it will probably be good news for the opposition in 2021. We would like to see the gold standard of transparency that the Premier promised. We would like to see accountability with ministers appropriately responding to questions and not putting slogans into their answers. We would also like to see the Premier and members on the other side just being open and saying why they are doing things instead of going through this exhausting, drawn-out process of trying to extract information and get on the public record the reasons for the decisions government members have made. That is not a big ask. It is what being in government is about. We ask members opposite to step up and provide that transparency.

MS R. SAFFIOTI (West Swan — Minister for Transport) [6.41 pm]: The member for Scarborough wanted to educate the new members about transparency and accountability. Let me educate the new members in this house about transparency and accountability. The current opposition never provided information to the then opposition. Even the Perth Freight Link business case is still hidden. This opposition is demanding transparency and accountability but it will not release a business case for a project that is not going ahead. It is incredible! The opposition tries this all the time, saying: “Oh, new members; your government’s hiding information and we were so much better!” Everyone knows that is not the case. I am glad that the member for Scarborough raised the estimates process. I remember being in opposition and the current opposition used to start the estimates hearings with dorothy dixers. Do members remember that? I will tell new members how it used to work.

Mr Z.R.F. Kirkup: Good times.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: I am enjoying myself now too; I will tell members that.

When we were in opposition, we used to prepare; that is number one. We used to have questions and sometimes the first question was asked by the then government side. That is how it happened. When we talk about standards of accountability and transparency, business cases—for example, for the Perth Freight Link—are still hidden and there was an absolute abuse of the estimates process. Opposition members knew that. Most of the time, more than 50 per cent of the questions were asked by members on the former government’s own side.

Several members interjected.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: In every committee I was involved in, a significant—in some cases, over 50 per cent—percentage of dorothy dixers were asked by the other side. That is a little bit of history for new members.

The other key point is that when opposition members make allegations, they need to build a case. The opposition has failed to do that today. Let us start at the opposition’s initial point. It reflected on the Minister for Corrective Services’ comments about Roe 8 negotiations before the election. That is how it all started. What happened? We won government and we negotiated with the company. We were criticised for negotiating with the company and getting a great outcome. Opposition members went from saying that we had to work with these companies to saying that we should not be working with these companies. We renegotiated a good outcome and there are jobs out there and projects are underway. That is how it started. Then there was an attack on Hon Alannah MacTiernan. I still cannot understand the opposition’s case. I have been in opposition and yes, I went through a lot of issues in opposition, but a case has to be built. This is where the opposition’s argument is fundamentally flawed. The minister did not own shares when she made her decision. Now the scope for a potential conflict of interest is that if a member had an interest in something before they became a minister, then they should absent themselves from all decisions!

Dr A.D. Buti: Or you have a passion about something.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: Or having a passion. The member for Warren–Blackwood used to own a liquor store. Did he absent himself from all liquor licensing decisions in cabinet?

Mr D.T. Redman interjected.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: Of course they did. There were variations to the Liquor Licensing Act and issues to do with dry communities. There were a lot of issues but it is absurd to say that because the member for Warren–Blackwood had a passion or an interest in an industry before he was elected, then somehow he should have absented himself from decisions. The former Premier used to say that he was proud of the experience and knowledge that members brought to jobs when they had been active out there in the private sector. He wanted people with experience and industry knowledge around the cabinet table.

Dr A.D. Buti: Minister, I presume under their rationale, if you were a farmer, you could never be a minister for agriculture.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: Of course; clearly! Under the new criteria, as the member for Armadale said, if a member had been a farmer, they could not become a minister for agriculture because they would know too much about it and they would be too passionate about it! I have studied conflicts of interests and I have been through these debates.

Mr Terry Redman; Mr Vincent Catania; Mr Bill Johnston; Mr Colin Barnett; Mrs Liza Harvey; Ms Rita Saffioti

There needs to be a real conflict or a potential conflict, which is that a member benefits from a decision being made; that is the line. I have been through it time and again when I have come into this place. Sometimes, I have prepared my stuff and been to see my strategy group but it has said, “No, no; it’s a stretch.” That is fair enough but members opposite have none of that. They have no clearing process. They just come in and say anything. There is no clearing process. This type of private members’ business is not talking about issues in members’ electorates. This is alleging impropriety against the Premier and the cabinet—that it is okay and we should be standing up and defending our record and what we are doing.

Again in relation to Hon Alannah MacTiernan, she gave away the shares to a leprosy foundation. I cannot even begin to think that members opposite would think that was a bad thing. As I said, she did not hold those shares when those decisions were being made. The Minister for Mines and Petroleum raised issues about the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr V.A. Catania: Minister, I take what you said about decisions not being made while the minister had that shareholding, but I showed you a photo of the announcement of \$19.5 million on 23 February when she had the shares.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: I understand what the member for North West Central is saying but that is like any candidate standing in front of a business and then ultimately, that business wins from a policy. In opposition and in elections, members do things everywhere. Members stand in front of something—they might be supporting a particular industry—and if they win government, that industry gets money. That is what happens. If ministers do not personally benefit from that, or do not have the potential capacity to personally benefit, there is no conflict of interest. As I said, the new bar members opposite have set is impossible. We might as well all pack up and go home because everyone has had an interest in something before. That is what happens. Everyone has interests before they enter this place. Hon Alannah MacTiernan had a particular shareholding, which she disposed of. She disposed of it basically before she was sworn in to the upper house. There is absolutely no case in this case. Members opposite came in and wasted all that time—I think the Minister for Mines and Petroleum made a great contribution—but they made no case. None of the members opposite made the case. Like I said, the opposition has to line it up. It has to do the research. The opposition cannot just come and say, “She had an interest.”

Mr J.N. Carey: “I got a random email”!

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: Yes.

I have watched politics over a long time. Labor is held to higher standards; it is as simple as that.

Several members interjected.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: It is. I am telling members opposite that if the Leader of the Opposition was in a Labor cabinet —
Several members interjected.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: Let us go through this: if the Leader of the Opposition was in a Labor cabinet and held Telstra and QBE shares while Treasurer, making decisions for those companies, he would not have stayed!

Several members interjected.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: Because the pressure on us would have been more. It is as simple as that.

Several members interjected.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: The pressure on us would have been more.

Mr Z.R.F. Kirkup: Remind me how many Premiers of the Liberal Party have gone to jail.

Mr W.J. Johnston: Dozens.

Mr Z.R.F. Kirkup: From the Liberal Party in WA?

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: Yes. Yes. Yes.

So the standards are always higher. The opposition thinks it can just come in and say whatever. Some weird accusations have been made, and now this random email from someone who is fighting to be a mayor. They send it to—what?—“info@”. I do not even know who “info” is, but I would think if it were serious, they might have sent it to the state secretary. But “info@” —

Mr W.J. Johnston: “walabor”.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: “walabor”. The opposition comes into this place and asks the Premier why he is not across it! Members know how many emails we all get, and the opposition would be the same. We get spurious emails about everything—everything! I could not imagine sitting there saying, “Oh, strategy group, I have a great question. There was a random email by someone who’s disgruntled, fighting in a council election, to a party email about an allegation that no-one is really understanding. Why don’t we ask the Premier of the day—that’ll get ‘em.” I would

Mr Terry Redman; Mr Vincent Catania; Mr Bill Johnston; Mr Colin Barnett; Mrs Liza Harvey; Ms Rita Saffioti

have been laughed out of that room. Sometimes I was! But on that occasion I seriously would have been laughed out of that room.

The new standard is if someone—any small business person—had an interest. The member for Warren–Blackwood said he could not make decisions on Jacob’s Ladder because he used it, but he made decisions on liquor licensing and he held a liquor store. Is this crazy? “Oh, I was so pure I excluded myself from decisions on Jacob’s Ladder”, but as a former liquor store owner—I suspect the member knows the industry and has good friends there because I suspect that is what happens when someone participates in an industry—he made decisions regarding the Liquor Control Act. The member represented —

Mr D.T. Redman: Member!

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: No.

Mr D.T. Redman: You are making some accusations. You can be assured —

The ACTING SPEAKER: Member. Thank you.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: The member for Warren–Blackwood represented the Minister for Racing and Gaming in this house. That is what the member for Warren–Blackwood did. I am not saying he should not have participated, but I am using his new bar. I never thought he should not participate. Of course, if a small business person who was a minister who no longer has an interest should participate.

Mr P.C. Tinley: We wouldn’t function otherwise.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: It would not be functional if that person did not. I am not saying the member for Warren–Blackwood should not have, but I am now going to set the same bar that the opposition has set today in this spurious attack on Hon Alannah MacTiernan to everything I have seen across my desk. The National Party comes in here talking about relationships after what you guys acted like in government! It used royalties for regions up and down the state—the reports are everywhere. There were informal agreements. Do you know how many times I meet with companies and say, “Look, I don’t think we could possibly do that”, and they say, “Well, we had sort of an agreement with a former minister.” I am trying to work through many of those agreements to try to get the public interest back, because the National Party had these informal agreements up and down. We are trying to work through that. The opposition’s attack is as bad as I have ever seen. There is obviously no strategy group to go through and assess these things. There are a lot of other issues.

If we want to start talking about amending declarations to this Parliament, there are some interesting new developments on that front. If we want to talk about people owning property near government investments, let us talk about that. Let us talk about people who own investment properties that back onto a \$100 million development. Let us talk about that. Let us talk shareholdings if the opposition wants to come in and start doing this. I am not going to go into all those details, because, honestly, the opposition’s attack is not worthy of it. But if the opposition wants to keep going through all this—all the potential conflicts of interests the opposition had when in government—let us go through them. I know where I stand on this and I know where the opposition stands on this.

I have said to new members that this is part of the continuing education process. Everything the member for Scarborough said about transparency and accountability was wrong. The former government was not accountable or transparent. It fought freedom of information applications every bit of the way. When I sent a letter to the Minister for Transport, he would not even sign the letter back. I have had meetings with members of the other side. I do not even think I could have dreamt of asking for meetings with former ministers, but I have had meetings with a couple of members—members who treat me with respect and are serious about their electorates—but I never had a meeting with one of the former government’s ministers. I could not even have imagined asking for a meeting.

Mrs L.M. Harvey: Did you request one?

Mr P.C. Tinley: Don’t start!

Mrs L.M. Harvey: I’m just asking. I never had request for a meeting with you.

Several members interjected.

Mrs L.M. Harvey: I had a request for a meeting with the member for Collie–Preston, and I held a community forum with him when I was a minister.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: I will tell you what you did—it was the politicisation of the police service. You came into my electorate, held a police community forum with the candidate for that seat and a member. You did not invite me and you did not inform me. That was your politicisation of the police service back then! That is what you did!

Several members interjected.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: That is what you did! There was a community police forum in Ellenbrook before the election.

Extract from Hansard

[ASSEMBLY — Wednesday, 18 October 2017]

p4888a-4918a

Mr Terry Redman; Mr Vincent Catania; Mr Bill Johnston; Mr Colin Barnett; Mrs Liza Harvey; Ms Rita Saffioti

Mrs L.M. Harvey: Were there police officers there? There were no police officers there. There were no uniforms there, and you know it. There were no uniforms there.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: There were uniforms—we have photos!

Mrs L.M. Harvey: No. There were no uniforms at the political ones with the candidates.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: That is how political the former government used to run the police service. A few months before the election they would come into a then part of my electorate—Ellenbrook—with the candidate for the area, and did not even inform me. That is what they did—and they talk about politicisation of the police service!

Mrs L.M. Harvey: I never did that with the commissioner. You were invited to all the ones with the commissioner.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: No, I was not!

Mrs L.M. Harvey: Yes, you were! Yes, you were!

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: I was not.

Mrs L.M. Harvey: You were so!

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: You used to do it all the time—politicise the police service for your own benefit.

Mrs L.M. Harvey: The member for Armadale came to the ones with the commissioner —

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: That is what you did.

Mrs M.H. Roberts: You did that with the opening of police stations and didn't invite the opposition!

Mrs L.M. Harvey: That's not true at all.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: The now Minister for Police told me that story about when she was not invited to the opening of that police station.

Several members interjected.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: We talk, as opposed to you guys.

As for the whole idea that members opposite are purer than snow, why do they think they lost by so much? It is because everyone saw that they were unaccountable, they did not deal with the public properly, and they never, ever justified their decisions. Like I said, there were agreements up and down.

[Member's time extended.]

Mrs L.M. Harvey: You've used half of private members' time—good on you!

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: If the opposition comes in and moves private members' business about some key issues in its electorates, we will discuss it properly. The opposition came in and made allegations about our accountability and probity. That is what it has done. It has done it through private members' business so, yes, we are going to fight back, and yes we are going to put our point of view.

Several members interjected.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: Of course we are going to do that!

As I said, the National Party has found the words “probity” and “accountability” in the dictionary. Let us go through what it did in relation to Pelago. Shall we go through that? Shall we go through what it did up and down the state? The National Party is having a go at Hon Alannah MacTiernan for holding shares before she had any capacity to make a decision and raising an email not once in this place—I would think that after the first time they would realise they were not getting anywhere—but two or three times. It is an email all about a local election. The National Party is still hurting because it lost the seat of Pilbara. This is all about the loss of Brendon and the impact it has had on the National Party's way to move forward. It just cannot do it. The big issue it has brought into Parliament is related to the loss of the seat of Pilbara. That is what it is about. It is not about the current Premier and probity; it is about the National Party still not being able to handle losing the seat of Pilbara. Even though the current member for Pilbara comes in here every day, they still see Brendon. He is like a mirage in this place! They still see Brendon, and they come in every day wanting Brendon.

The education process for new members is nearly complete, but we might need to continue. When the opposition stands and tries to tell new members that the government is being very secretive, it is not right.

Debate adjourned, pursuant to standing orders.