

Extract from *Hansard*

[COUNCIL — Thursday, 22 September 2016]

p6543b-6557a

Hon Sue Ellery; Hon Nick Goiran; President; Hon Darren West; Hon Peter Katsambanis; Hon Lynn MacLaren;
Hon Michael Mischin; Hon Kate Doust; Hon Simon O'Brien

LIBERAL–NATIONAL GOVERNMENT — PERFORMANCE

Motion

HON SUE ELLERY (South Metropolitan — Leader of the Opposition) [10.10 am] — without notice:
I move —

That this house expresses its concern at the impact on the community of the Liberal–National government’s ongoing dysfunction.

Over the past six months, and probably going back a bit before that, we have seen National Party member versus National Party member, Liberal Party member versus Liberal Party member, Liberal versus Liberal, and Libs versus Nats. In that process, this government has completely lost sight of how to govern and properly deliver services. Members of the government have in recent days described themselves in extraordinary terms. Actually, that is not true; it has been in recent weeks, if we look back to the leadership changes within the National Party. At the beginning of August, when the now Leader of the National Party declared that the Barnett Liberal–National government does not have an effective plan to deal with the economy, he said —

I currently do not believe the Liberal–Nationals Government is in a winnable position to succeed in the March 2017 election.

He continued —

I don’t currently believe we have a policy position to enable us to challenge, to win, in 2017.

More recently, in the last week or so, we have seen the resignation of two ministers. That began on Saturday with then Minister for Local Government Tony Simpson saying that he was kept in the dark by the Premier’s office and that he had to second-guess the Premier’s policy positions by listening to talkback radio. He said this about the Premier’s office —

“The office doesn’t seem to convey back (to us) what each minister is supposed to be doing from the Premier’s point of view,” ...

“That is one of the key issues if I’d raise it, that’d be it, his office around him.

“I would listen to talkback radio to hear what the Premier had said about my portfolio in the case of local government. And then I’d have to try to find a way to adjust, and work off that.

“Second-guessing, knowing what to do, was always a challenge in all the time as minister.”

We heard allegations from Hon Helen Morton, a former minister herself, about a bullying culture in the Premier’s staff. She described publicly the way a particular member of the Premier’s staff had treated her staff. She said —

“The issue was really ... about a particular member of staff who I felt so strongly about was having such a demoralising and destructive impact across my staff that I banned that member of staff from having any further contact with me, my office or my staff.”

We have seen, of course, the former Minister for Transport announce his resignation. He said —

“There is no logical coherent framework on how we move forward in the current economic climate ...

He went on to refer to the Premier —

“Colin is making irrational decisions without consultation with respect to ministers or Cabinet.”

We have seen the story reported out of the Liberal Party meeting room on Tuesday, which states —

Former child protection minister Robyn McSweeney recounted how she was told by Mr Barnett’s director of strategic communications Dixie Marshall that “given my background, I must feel privileged to be a minister”. Mrs McSweeney replied that given Ms Marshall’s background reading a teleprompter, a reference to her former career as a TV newsreader, Ms Marshall must feel lucky to work in the Premier’s office.

They are extraordinary words. Then, of course, there was Hon Liz Behjat’s comment, referring to those members behind the spill motion that went before the Liberal Party room on Tuesday, which included, one presumes, some members in here, “Rats and cockroaches have to go.” That is an extraordinary way for members of the government to describe themselves.

That leads us to the conclusion that people have felt that they have no other option except to express themselves in such strong language. Imagine what has been going on beneath the surface for, obviously, a considerable period, that people feel so frustrated that that is how they have to describe themselves. The essential part of the motion —

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Several members interjected.

Hon SUE ELLERY: I am going to ask for your assistance today, Mr President. I do not have a strong voice today, so I am not going to be able to yell over people.

Hon Nick Goiran: You do not have a strong argument.

Hon SUE ELLERY: I have a very strong argument, Mr President: disarray and dysfunction, so much so that the government cannot keep it behind closed doors and extreme language is making its way out into the public. Meanwhile, instead of service delivery and getting on and governing, it is clear what the government's preoccupation has been.

We find ourselves in this situation at the same time as the Perth Children's Hospital has asbestos in the ceiling, lead in the water and ongoing delays, and we have the worst set of crime statistics that WA has had in a very long time. The jobs issue is increasingly worrying people across our suburbs and towns, but this government has no plan for diversification. We have worse unemployment figures than Tasmania. It is extraordinary. More effort is being expended by members of the government on protecting their own jobs or fighting for other peoples' jobs within government than actually addressing the scariest thing facing Western Australians wherever they live in suburbs and towns across the state. We have had conversations about education on the last couple of Wednesdays when debating motions listed on the notice paper. This government has stopped building enough schools to keep up with population pressure in the growing outer ring of suburbs in the metropolitan area and in the higher density inner-city areas as well. We have seen most recently an Auditor General's report about information and communication technology in schools. The government has lost the ball and we are going backwards. My colleague Hon Kate Doust also has raised in this place on a number of occasions the matter of subcontractors. Increasingly, subcontractors have to fight to get their payments and there is the growing phenomenon of late payments and avoidance of payments. This government has scrambled to try to put together a strategy to address that, while subcontractor after subcontractor has gone to the wall or worse for some of the families caught up in that. The privatisation agenda of this government has resulted in a public hospital in the eastern suburbs at which women cannot get the full range of services they should expect from a public hospital.

Hon Nick Goiran interjected.

The PRESIDENT: Order! We have a couple of members who might be speaking on this motion who have issues with colds and flus, so I think it is reasonable that we give them the opportunity to express themselves without interjections.

Hon SUE ELLERY: Thank you, Mr President. While this government is focusing on its internal arguments, the delivery of sound, stable and responsible government has been left to drift away.

I turn to what has really become a farce—the Perth Freight Link. In 2008, there was an election campaign commitment from the Liberal Party to build Roe Highway stage 8. In 2009, the now Treasurer, then member for Riverton, said that he expected that bulldozers would be working on the site before 2013. In 2012, he reaffirmed the Liberal Party's commitment to the Roe 8 extension from the Kwinana Freeway through to Stock Road. In 2013, the member for Riverton's commitment was to build the Roe 8 extension to alleviate traffic congestion. This is the man who said the bulldozers would be in place before 2013, but clearly they were not!

The federal coalition government's infrastructure policy released in 2013 did not mention the Perth Freight Link at all. In 2013, the Premier said that Roe 8 was not on his agenda in this term of government. The Premier said —

“We haven't put money aside for the construction of that, so I think Roe 8 as it is known, I believe will happen, but it is not a project in the timeframe in this term of government.”

In 2014, the Premier said about Roe 8, “... we simply don't have those funds.” He said —

The Liberal–National Government does support Roe 8, but we did not commit during the election campaign to build it.

That is despite the member for Riverton committing to its construction on several occasions. The Premier continues —

It costs probably about \$800million and we simply don't have those funds. But hopefully we can reach an agreement in the future with the Commonwealth to share the funding ...

In May 2014, the Abbot federal government committed \$925 million to the Perth Freight Link in a joint announcement with the Western Australian government. Around the same time, in August 2014, the Premier said that he had not committed to the Perth Freight Link. He said —

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“Roe 8 is an important road project ... but it’s very expensive, I think running up towards \$800–\$900 million. We’ll never recover that sort of money. We’re optimistic that the Commonwealth will provide the lion’s share ... but I think it’s still some way away.

...

We haven’t committed to it. I hope that sometime in the next few years we can commit to it.

That was in August. The midyear review in December that year reported that all works on the Perth Freight Link should be completed by mid-2019 and that some \$650 million had been put aside for the Perth Freight Link.

In 2015, enter the then Minister for Transport, Dean Nalder, who said —

However, while the most obvious route for Section 2 had undergone robust planning, it will continue to be refined.

“In this next phase we ask the proponents to also look at innovative solutions, including the potential for a tunnelling option.”

That was in May 2015. Basically, at that point, the former minister is saying, “We have no clue; you tell us how we should do it.”

The following week, in response to concerns from people who lived on what people assume is the roadway, Mr Barnett said about demolishing people’s homes —

“Unfortunately that does happen in major projects, there will be some houses or some private commercial property that will be in the way.”

The then transport minister Dean Nalder said —

“I’m still not convinced that that is the best possible route so I’ve asked the proponents to explore innovative ways ...

About two weeks later, on 21 May, after the Premier had told people that they would have to demolish some houses, he said that the resumption of properties was probably “not handled well”. A draft proposal for an alternative tunnel route was revealed on 31 May, from Clontarf Hill through to High Street. The then Minister for Transport, Dean Nalder, acknowledged that the Stirling Bridge needs were not included in the project budget. He stated —

There’s always been plans to do work on Stirling Bridge. It is known it’s quite busy now.

But no further plans have eventuated.

In July 2015, the Premier cast doubt on the December deadline for signing the second stage of the construction project. At that time, the Premier said —

The project ... should be looked at in two stages ... Now, whatever the future of the port may be, Roe 8 is needed, both to service the Fremantle Port and a future port at Cockburn.

Later in July, the Minister for Transport revealed that the state would take on the private sector’s share of the project, with plans to sell the income stream at a later date. He said in *The West Australian* on 22 July 2015, “It won’t cost the state a cent.” Then there was the revelation that the port expansion could not proceed until the Fremantle Traffic Bridge is replaced at a cost of some \$250 million. That was just days later on 29 July. Later that day, the Premier reaffirmed the lack of commitment to the second phase of the Perth Freight Link when he said —

“We haven’t got the stage of committing to how we are going to connect to the port, ...”

In August 2015, the then Minister for Transport Dean Nalder said —

“We’re still working towards that timetable, ...

...

I don’t see that at this point in time. We’re working [on it] and still working through it to make sure it stays on track,” he said.

“I haven’t had any indication from the department ... that I need to change [the timetable] from the end of this year.”

Then on 6 August 2015, the transport minister fell in line with the Premier at a press conference. He said —

We are working through the freight link in two completely separate projects. Phase 1 is the Roe 8 section ... We expect to go to contract in October. With regard to phase 2, there is added complexity in the sense we haven’t finalised the route ...

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Just a few days later, on 12 August, the same Minister for Transport said that it was his understanding that all environmental processes had been signed off, including federal, and that the government could proceed with Roe 8. Again, the Premier intervened to throw doubt on stage 2. Just days later, on 13 August, he said —

I don't think we are going to be building a road very soon. Roe 8 is our priority. Now that's a big project. We haven't started construction on that. We're heading towards construction.

Freight Link, if it is built, —

I emphasise “if it is built” —

will divert more of the trucks to the south through the specialised freight area itself.”

The federal Minister for Finance, Mathias Cormann, said on 15 August —

“We expect that stage 2 of the Perth Freight Link will begin next year as agreed between the Australian Government and the WA State Government,”

At the same press conference the Minister for Transport said —

... we are committed to commencing both stages of the freight link ...

This is two days after the Premier said “if” the Perth Freight Link goes ahead. The federal Minister for Finance said it was going ahead, and standing next to him was the then Minister for Transport who was saying that both stages are going to go ahead two days after the Premier said “if it was built”.

Hon Nick Goiran: Are you sure it is two days?

Hon SUE ELLERY: The quotes I have show that this occurred between 13 August and 15 August. I am going to keep going, Mr President. An Infrastructure Australia audit revealed substantial risks and a lack of alternatives had been examined. It puts the total bill at \$1.74 billion, the cost–benefit ratio had dropped to \$2.50 and that no other options were examined on the future outer harbour. It describes the cost–benefit-ratio analysis as “rapid”.

Further on, in October 2015, there was an announcement that Leighton was the winning bidder for Roe 8 and that the project would now proceed. Those decisions were made and completed. Then we find on 1 November 2015 the Premier confirms long-held rumours that stage 2 of the Perth Freight Link would be shelved. It was reported in *The Sunday Times* on 1 November that transport minister Dean Nalder presented the stage 2 options to Mr Barnett on the Tuesday; however, the Premier decided the state had enough on its plate at the moment. This raises questions about the commonwealth funding. Despite the Feds insisting that funding was contingent on milestones, Acting Treasurer John Day said that there were “no terms and conditions” attached to the commonwealth funding that the project must commence in this term of government. He said that the government “Might see where we're at in 12 months' time.” Then on ABC Online on 1 November 2015, Mr Barnett stated —

“So I'm not going to rush into a decision on a link from the end of Roe 8, yet to be built, to the Fremantle Port. Because it is incredibly complicated, ...

In 2016, the government announced a revised route at an extra cost of \$326 million. A new route was announced in April 2016. The Perth Freight Link project “Developing Transport Networks; Delivering Safer Roads” was the document put out by Main Roads WA. It involved a tunnel from the intersection of Stock and Winterfold Roads to Stirling Highway and the High Street intersection, but did not address the failure to get traffic across the Swan River. The federal government confirmed that \$1.1 billion of funding would be withdrawn unless the Perth Freight Link was done as one project. The Australian government would not agree to any suggestion that it would provide funding to a standalone section 1, Roe 8 project. Should the Western Australian government decide to abandon section 2 of the project and only carry out section 1, the Australian government funding would not be available to support this project. This was in the letter from federal minister Paul Fletcher to Minister Nalder on 20 September this year.

An article reported in *The West Australian* on 20 September 2016, titled “Premier still lukewarm over freight link”, stated that the Premier said that Perth Freight Link would “probably proceed”. It also stated —

“There's been no decision yet made on whether it's a tunnel, whether it's a road, what alignment a tunnel might take,” ...

The Treasurer, Mike Nahan, said on 20 September —

“No, it has not been abandoned,” ... “We are building Roe 8 and we are looking at options beyond Roe 8.”

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That is despite federal funding being contingent on stages 1 and 2 being done as one project.

Former Minister Nalder is cited as saying that cabinet had signed off on the full freight link and made an agreement with Canberra over funding. The Perth Freight Link has descended into a farce. It is a function of the dysfunctionality of this government. It is a function of the fact that government members are too busy fighting over their own jobs and too busy being cross about the way they are being treated by the office of the Premier to focus on delivering good government and sound services—the services that the people of Western Australia expect. It is now beyond this government to actually focus on what any good government should do. There is a whiff of the smell of death about this government, and the events of the last week or so have made that absolutely abundantly clear.

HON NICK GOIRAN (South Metropolitan) [10.31 am]: What a truly hollow speech by the Leader of the Opposition this morning. This honourable member, the Leader of the Opposition, the so-called leader of members opposite, the most experienced of the members opposite, has decided to try to lecture the Liberal–National government about dysfunction. It is truly unbelievable. In the seven and a bit of years that I have been in this place, never before have I heard such hollow words and such a hollow speech. If dysfunction was an —

Hon Sue Ellery interjected.

Hon NICK GOIRAN: Is it not interesting, Mr President, that the member seemed to protest about any interjections because of an illness but is quite happy and seems robust enough to interject on my speech! If dysfunction was an Olympic sport, without a doubt Hon Sue Ellery would be the gold medallist.

Hon Sue Ellery interjected.

The PRESIDENT: Order, members! Everybody gets the same treatment in this house. We started this debate on the understanding that we would do it without interjections so that members could get their points across. That is the way I intend to continue to supervise.

Hon NICK GOIRAN: If dysfunction was an Olympic sport, Hon Sue Ellery would be the gold medallist; she would be the world record holder. I have three words for her—Royal Perth Hospital. When we talk about dysfunction, a true gold medal–winning performance by that member was on display on 8 September 2016. On 8 September 2016, the most experienced member of the opposition, the so-called Leader of the Opposition, put on a gold medal performance by showing this house the disregard she has for accurate information. According to the Leader of the Opposition —

Royal Perth Hospital means that part of the public hospital of that name situated on the land being any of the following —

The Leader of the Opposition had us believe on that day, 8 September, that Royal Perth Hospital consists of three certificates of title. I quote —

(a) Lot 915 on Deposited Plan 183229, being a portion of the land the subject of Certificate of Title Volume 2726 Folio 337;

This house knows this week that that certificate of title does not even exist—it was cancelled. Despite the fact that questions were asked of the member, she showed no interest whatsoever in —

Point of Order

Hon SUE ELLERY: I question the relevance of Royal Perth Hospital to a motion about the dysfunctionality of this government.

Several members interjected.

The PRESIDENT: Order! I just had another look at the motion. The member on his feet has used the word “dysfunction”, which is used in the motion, a few times. I assume he is using it as an example to demonstrate dysfunction and I assume he might use a few other examples along the way.

Debate Resumed

Hon NICK GOIRAN: We will get to the silver medal performance by Hon Amber-Jade Sanderson in a minute. I know that Hon Sue Ellery is very impatient for that and wants us to move speedily off her gold medal performance and dysfunction. Since Hon Sue Ellery thought it was important enough for us today to debate so-called dysfunction during non-government business, I want to expose the hollow words and the hollow speech that she has just made to this house.

We know that the certificate of title volume and folio that the honourable Leader of the Opposition would have us believe is part of Royal Perth Hospital has been cancelled. This was brought to the member’s attention, but this member refuses to provide an apology to the house. I interpret that to mean that this member seems, in

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effect, to have a frivolous attitude towards this particular issue. This is a very serious issue because paragraph (a) of the definition was categorically incorrect—I would call it a dysfunctional performance and a dysfunctional definition—but let us move to the second definition according to Hon Sue Ellery. Paragraph (b) states —

Lot 916 on Deposited Plan 183230, being a portion of the land the subject of Certificate of Title Volume 2726 Folio 337;

So far we are none out of two. That is how good the Leader of the Opposition is going. But credit where credit is due: in this gold medal performance by the Leader of the Opposition she did get one out of the three definitions correct, so we want to give credit to the Leader of the Opposition where it is due. Of course, the third definition is —

(c) Lot 500 on Deposited Plan 58617, being a portion of the land the subject of Certificate of Title Volume 2726 Folio 339.

How do we know that that is correct? Of course yesterday the Minister for Planning representing the Minister for Health tabled all of the certificates of title that make up the land on which Royal Perth Hospital is situated. One out of three might be seen by the Leader of the Opposition to be functional—one out of three. We are going to define as a law in this state what Royal Perth Hospital consists of and we will get one out of three of the definitions correct. That might be seen as the gold standard and as functional by the Leader of the Opposition, but I think that is absolutely appalling. I do not want members today to give the Leader of the Opposition credit for getting one out of three correct, because the actual result was one out of 10. That is how pathetic the response was, and the performance by the Leader of the Opposition. In support of my assertion that it is one out of 10, I draw to members' attention the response that we received yesterday from the Minister for Planning representing the Minister for Health, which, as I say, lists all the certificates of title. The Leader of the Opposition got only one correct; the other nine are completely missing from the definition and, worse, the Leader of the Opposition gave us two that have been cancelled—they are not even in existence. Members who were here, or those who have had the benefit of reviewing *Hansard*, will well recall the flippant response that I received to the questions on the day. I asked that proceedings be adjourned so that this could be checked. The answer was no. I even put the assertion to the member opposite, "Is close enough good enough?" but there was no response. There was a reluctance to stand to respond to my questions, all of which has now been proven to be the standard that Hon Sue Ellery wants everybody to adhere to. It is important to note that she is the Leader of the Opposition, so she sets the tone and the example for the rest of the members.

I have limited time, and I certainly would not want to finish without mentioning the silver medallist for dysfunction. Hon Amber-Jade Sanderson, interestingly enough also on 8 September 2016—I do not know what was in the water on that day!—took the lead from Hon Sue Ellery and decided that that was the standard by which members opposite provide information to the house. They can just speak words, and it does not matter whether or not it is accurate; close enough is good enough. What did Hon Amber-Jade Sanderson have to say for herself on that day? She made gross assertions about the Minister for Women's Interests. According to the *Hansard* of that day, she said —

In the Legislative Assembly this week, the Minister for Women's Interests admitted that she had not set any targets for female representation on boards—none at all ...

That is what the silver medallist said. I have examined the *Hansard* and I have found no such admission whatsoever. I brought this to the attention of the house last week, and Hon Amber-Jade Sanderson has refused to rise to correct the record. This silver medal-winning performance by Hon Amber-Jade Sanderson is hardly surprising when the Leader of the Opposition sets the tone for dysfunction on the other side, and yet she seems to think it is appropriate to come in here and lecture, and to try to give a definition of "dysfunction". What a joke; what hollow words; what a hollow speech. I regret that, particularly after last night's contribution by Hon Sue Ellery, I am not sure that I can believe anything that she tells me anymore.

This is a matter of grave concern, because this is the house of review, and it needs to be functional. In order for it to be functional, the person who sits in that chair needs to do more than tell us that she is going to get two bottles of wine from her colleagues. We are totally disinterested in how much wine she will drink with her colleagues. We are interested in making sure that the information she provides to this house is correct.

HON DARREN WEST (Agricultural) [10.42 pm]: The Olympic analogy is interesting, in reference to the dysfunction of the Liberal-National government, but I will keep my remarks inside the 10 minutes. The government is a rabble; we do not need to point that out to the people of Western Australia. Everyone who has picked up a newspaper or listened to the news over the past week, and has heard the comments of Liberal Party members about the Liberal Party, its staff, or other ministers, will know. We all know; we have been talking about this for quite a while. It is very poor government.

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It is interesting looking across the chamber at the body language. Members opposite look a little like a team that is 15 goals down at three-quarter time and has to kick into the wind. Their heads are down, and they are all glum and sad looking. They are starting to blame each other and the umpires.

Point of Order

Hon NICK GOIRAN: It is totally out of order for the member opposite, and he knows it, to refer to the body language of members opposite, and to try to have that recorded in *Hansard*, particularly when it is inaccurate, which is, of course, the standard we expect from members opposite.

The PRESIDENT: I do not think that is a point of order; it is a point of view.

Debate Resumed

Hon DARREN WEST: We have heard from Hon Sue Ellery and every media commentator. I was watching Twitter intently over the weekend, as we do, and I noted that poor old Jessica Strutt did not even have time to do her washing! There was so much dysfunction and rabble going on in the government that she did not even have time to get her laundry done. That gives a little bit of an indication of what a weekend it was. I just make that little observation, but I do not want to talk about all the bickering, infighting, undermining and bullying. I do not want to talk about that because it is all depressing and sad and it turns the public off.

Several members interjected.

The PRESIDENT: Order, members! Let me go back to the rules that were set at the outset of this debate. They apply to everybody.

Hon DARREN WEST: Meanwhile, in the community—the people we represent—the debt is soaring and the AAA credit rating is long gone, and it is going to be a long time until Labor can get it back. It has been gone a long time. The Court government lost it, and Labor regained it; now this government has lost it, and we will have to regain it again. The community is concerned about the level of debt that the government has got us into.

Hon Jim Chown: It's the other way round; Labor lost it and we got it back.

Hon DARREN WEST: No, it is not the other way around, Hon Jim Chown—have a read!

The PRESIDENT: Order! I am sure that the honourable parliamentary secretary might want to contribute to the debate, but he cannot do it sitting down.

Hon DARREN WEST: Unemployment is the issue that the community is concerned most about, and that keeps coming back from the surveys we do in the community. We are out there listening to the community; it is something the government might want to try from time to time. The unemployment rate is over six per cent, which is higher than that of Tasmania. People are most concerned about their jobs. Members opposite are concerned only about their own jobs, but we are concerned about the jobs of people in the community. The runaway train of unemployment in Western Australia is an indictment of this government. The Minister for Water gets the gig for water. I do not want to pick on the Minister for Water, because she is not a very strong minister, but the first thing she did as minister was sack 300 staff, including 120 in the regions. This all adds to the unemployment rate in Western Australia. The government is not leading by example.

The poor old National Party has reverted to telling lies about Labor. Rather than get out and do some good in the state, and try to get some people back into the regions and get some employment into the regions, the Nationals have reverted to everything that we see pop up on Facebook and Twitter, having a go at Labor. That is a sign of where the government is at. It is three-quarter time, they are down and kicking into the wind. They blame the umpire and the other team; they blame everyone except themselves. That is what we are seeing with this government today.

I do not want to talk about that for too much longer; everyone knows about that. The public is now thinking that this mob is a mess and its days are over, so what is the alternative? Today I want to talk to the house about the alternative. I do not want to be like Hon Nick Goiran and pick on some tiny little details about something that happened two weeks ago.

Several members interjected.

The PRESIDENT: Order! None of your comments get recorded by Hansard if there is a chorus of them. Hansard cannot possibly record them all, so you lose the effect of any interjections you might want to put into *Hansard*. Let the member on his feet have his say.

Hon DARREN WEST: I want to have a broader debate, with some lateral, outside-the-square thinking, so to speak, about the alternatives. I will start with the leader of the Labor Party, Mark McGowan, the member for Rockingham. He is the longest serving opposition leader in Australia. That is not something that you would want to be as an opposition leader, but it brings forward an experienced alternative for the people of

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Western Australia, who are looking for a safe pair of hands to lead the state. Mark McGowan is a country person; he grew up in the regions of New South Wales, so he has a deep understanding of what it is like in regional Australia and regional Western Australia, and I think that is a very good thing. He has taken on the regional development portfolio and done it well. Boy, have we got some ideas!

Several members interjected.

The PRESIDENT: Order, members!

Hon DARREN WEST: I will refute one of the biggest lies coming out of the National Party camp over there—that Labor is opposed to royalties for regions. That is an even bigger lie than all the promises the Nationals made and did not keep. Labor is committed to royalties for regions. We have a detailed plan about how we are going to roll out royalties for regions. I have seen the plan, and it is a lot better than the government's plan.

Hon Donna Faragher: Will you table it?

Hon DARREN WEST: Of course we will not be tabling it. We will be announcing it to the public. We will announce it to the people of Western Australia.

Several members interjected.

The PRESIDENT: Order! Come on, members have got to be fair in these debates. If members have had their say without interjection, they have to allow another member to have their say without interjection.

Hon DARREN WEST: We will be announcing this plan, but we will not be announcing it to the government.

Hon Nick Goiran interjected.

The PRESIDENT: Order! Hon Nick Goiran, it is just as well you have spoken, because if you had stood to speak after that little interjection I do not think I would have seen you!

Hon DARREN WEST: Ultimately, the plan that we will be releasing is not to be judged by members opposite. We all know how they are going to vote, but thankfully they do not determine who the next government of Western Australia will be. The people of Western Australia will determine who the next government of Western Australia will be, and regional people will vote with the political party that they think best represents them. When they hear about our plans for royalties for regions and what we are going to do with that royalties for regions funding, which we support, I think the government will be surprised at how they vote. Ultimately, as the Liberal–National government seems to have long forgotten, the people of Western Australia determine who is in this Parliament. It is not the Liberal Party, it is not us; it is the people of Western Australia. Members should mark my words: there will be a big swing back to Labor in the regions because we are listening to them and we have some plans for the future of royalties for regions; we have some other plans that I will detail further in my contribution. I wanted to touch on that and have that on the public record: Labor is supportive of royalties for regions, and anyone who says different is willingly lying.

We have a united team behind our leader and, more importantly, members —

Hon Alyssa Hayden: At the moment!

Hon DARREN WEST: No, we have a united team behind our leader. I do not think that even Hon Alyssa Hayden can argue about that. We are unanimously behind our leader. That is a big difference between us and the government, and the people of Western Australia sense and know that. They have seen the internal bickering and division, and they now want a team united behind their leader. They sense and know that, and I think they will vote for that. I hope they will vote for that.

In the field we have the most amazing suite of candidates I have ever seen. I have been around the Labor Party a long time. I am a 20-plus —

Several members interjected.

The PRESIDENT: Order! Hon Darren West is the person I have given the call to—nobody else.

Hon DARREN WEST: We have an amazing suite of candidates. I heard someone mention Alannah MacTiernan: I think the voting public is very excited about the return of Alannah MacTiernan.

Hon Donna Faragher: Are you?

Hon DARREN WEST: I am very excited about the return of Alannah MacTiernan! I think she has made an outstanding contribution to Western Australia. Anyone who goes down that railway line to Mandurah—a project opposed by the National and Liberal Parties—appreciates Alannah MacTiernan, as does anyone in Geraldton who sees the dramatic renovation of the port and the southern transport corridor, and the taking of that railway line from along the foreshore of Geraldton; everybody knows who did that. It was the member for Geraldton at

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the time, Shane Hill, and Alannah MacTiernan. The voting public is very excited about the return of Alannah MacTiernan.

Hon Donna Faragher: Yes, but you're not!

Hon DARREN WEST: I am very excited! We are all very excited about the return of Alannah MacTiernan!

Several members interjected.

The PRESIDENT: Order, members! Order! We do not operate like some other places around the parliamentary jurisdiction; we operate with a bit of civility and courtesy, and that is the way I want to keep it.

Hon DARREN WEST: We have other outstanding candidates. We have an outstanding candidate running for the seat of Geraldton. Keep an eye on that seat, members, during the run-up to the election.

Hon Simon O'Brien: Can you remember his name?

Hon DARREN WEST: It is actually a lady. In 126 years a woman has never represented Geraldton. It has been a Labor seat —

Hon Simon O'Brien: Can you remember her name?

Hon DARREN WEST: Her name is Lara Dalton, and she is an outstanding candidate. Hon Simon O'Brien will hear her name again.

Labor has a plan for jobs. I am sure all members have been to the Mark McGowan website and read the plan for jobs. Labor has a vision for Western Australia, and that includes a plan for jobs. I have just pointed out the Liberal–National government's desire to sack public servants and sack —

Several members interjected.

The PRESIDENT: Order! If a member on their feet is being unruly I will sit them down, but if members who are already sitting are being unruly I really have only one option—that is, to either not give you the call or put you in a place where you cannot get the call.

Hon DARREN WEST: We have a plan for jobs, and everybody knows about it. Our community surveys —

Hon Donna Faragher: What is it?

Hon DARREN WEST: It is on the website. Hon Donna Faragher has her laptop there.

Several members interjected.

Hon DARREN WEST: The website address is www.markmcgowan.com.au. If members go to that site, they will see our "Plan for Jobs". We do not mind if the government steals our plan for jobs because it clearly does not have one. It has sacked thousands of public servants and put plenty of good people out of work with its economic irresponsibility. Not only that, we have a rather detailed plan that can also be found on that website—"Jobs for the Regions". Did anyone ever think about having a plan for jobs for the regions? We have a plan for jobs for the regions. We have a vision for regional Western Australia that includes royalties for the regions, and we have a plan for jobs for the regions. We also have a plan to support small business. If I had more time, I could tell members about what a failure the Buy Local policy has been —

Several members interjected.

The PRESIDENT: Order! You have to defeat people in this chamber on the strength of your argument, not the volume of your voice.

Hon DARREN WEST: Can I have a free run at this in my last 30 seconds? We are supporting small business. The Liberal–National government's Buy Local policy is the laughing stock of the regions. People in Geraldton and the regions are angry that building companies cannot get local work—the fire station, the multifunction centre down the foreshore; even much of the Foodbank building was sourced outside of the region. Why can the government not support local businesses with local content policy?

Finally, we have our vision for Brand WA. We have our plan for jobs, Brand WA, and how we are going to better market Western Australia. We have a plan for the future, we are the alternative government—the Liberal–National government is hopeless!

The PRESIDENT: I have a dilemma. I had Hon Peter Katsambanis down to speak next, but a minister is standing. It is private members' business, so I will give the call to Hon Peter Katsambanis.

HON PETER KATSAMBANIS (North Metropolitan) [10.55 am]: I do not want to push up the order, but I have to follow directions from you, Mr President!

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Hon Michael Mischin; Hon Kate Doust; Hon Simon O'Brien

I rise to speak on this motion, and I want to thank Hon Sue Ellery for bringing it to the house. Obviously, I do not support it, but I welcome the opportunity to speak on it. Hon Sue Ellery wants to talk about ongoing dysfunction. This is the sort of motion in which we find the pot starting to call the kettle black. Not so long ago all we were talking about in inner political circles was the ongoing dysfunction of the Labor Party in Western Australia. Only a few short months ago people in the Labor Party in Western Australia felt so strongly about the negative direction of the Labor Party that they were very, very keen to bring someone in from outside of Parliament to lead the Labor Party in Western Australia. Do we remember Stephen Smith? Where is he conveniently buried today? It was only a few short months ago.

Hon Simon O'Brien interjected.

Hon PETER KATSAMBANIS: If Hon Simon O'Brien waits a few minutes, I will get to the other shadows from the past that are coming out to haunt the Labor Party.

There was dysfunction in the Labor Party. Earlier this term we saw one of shadow ministers in this place, Hon Sally Talbot, choose to walk away from the shadow ministry and sit on the back bench. We recently saw the person who, as far as I am concerned, was undoubtedly the best performer in the state Labor Party in either house of Parliament—Hon Ken Travers—walk away. He might have had very good reasons for walking away, and I do not want to cast any aspersions on those reasons. But it goes to show how weak the Labor Party has become in the absence of Hon Ken Travers that all they can bring to this house in non-government business today is this shallow, useless motion. It was brought by its leader, who I would expect, a few months out from an election, to be bringing forward ideas and policies that would help make Western Australia better.

Why does the Leader of the Opposition in this house want to focus on the Liberal–National government, rather than the ideas of the Labor Party? I will tell members why: the dysfunction I just spoke about—the internal dysfunction of the Labor Party—tickles people like us in this place who are involved in the political process. But the people out there—the people we represent and are meant to be providing good government for—want to see good government. They do not want dysfunction in their government. When we start talking about the Labor Party record in government, we then see dysfunction that does not tickle the political aficionados but actually impacts on people's lives.

Let us start thinking about what the Labor Party did in government. As Hon Darren West rightly pointed out, an election is coming up and some people have perhaps not thought about what the Labor Party was like in government. Many, many people—young people or people who have moved to this state in the last eight years—have no idea of the sort of dysfunction that a Labor government can bring to the people of Western Australia. Just yesterday we were speaking about the fact that in a First World country in the First World state of Western Australia, the previous Labor government could not put a teacher before every class in every school in this state. That is real dysfunction that impacts on the lives of people. That is the record of the Labor Party in government—it could not put a teacher in front of every class in every school in this state. If we return to a Labor government, that is what the people of Western Australia are going to get—real dysfunction that hurts them and their families. We have looked at that. Then we can look at electricity. In this First World country in this First World state of Western Australia, the lights went out under the Labor Party, not metaphorically and not as a figure of speech, but as a result of its ineptitude and dysfunction. In government, the Labor Party stood by as the lights went out in homes and businesses across this state.

Hon Simon O'Brien: Yes, I remember that.

Hon PETER KATSAMBANIS: Hon Simon O'Brien does remember that. It was international news, not just national news.

Several members interjected.

The PRESIDENT: Order!

Hon PETER KATSAMBANIS: That is real dysfunction that affects real people, and the people of Western Australia —

Several members interjected.

The PRESIDENT: Order! Let us bring the temperature down again.

Hon PETER KATSAMBANIS: Thank you, Mr President. The people of Western Australia will remember that and will not reward the people who bring that sort of dysfunction and harm to this state, costing jobs and harming people in their everyday lives. Let us also remember Perth Arena. The Labor Party did not build much when it was in government—it did not build much at all—but it tried to build Perth Arena. The arena itself is a great idea and a great project that works very well, but it cost triple the budgeted cost and took three years

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longer to build than was originally planned. If people have forgotten, they can go back to 2010. They do not have to take my word for it. They can go to the Auditor General's report from 2010.

Hon Alanna Clohesy interjected.

Hon PETER KATSAMBANIS: Hon Alanna Clohesy can get her turn and she can get up and speak.

Several members interjected.

The PRESIDENT: Order! It is impossible for Hansard to follow a debate when there are interjections coming from everywhere. Let us be fair to Hansard if nothing else.

Hon PETER KATSAMBANIS: Thank you, Mr President.

Perth Arena cost three times the budgeted cost and was built three years late. Do not take my word for it; go back to 2010 and read the Auditor General's report about the dysfunction in government that harmed this state and the people of this state. But you ain't seen nothing yet! One of the major architects or prime movers of that government that could not put a teacher in front of every kid in a classroom, that sat back as the lights went out and that sat back on major cost overruns on Perth Arena, is coming back to this place—Hon Alannah MacTiernan. If people have not seen dysfunction yet, just wait! Does anyone truly believe that Hon Alannah MacTiernan is going to be happy to sit back at spot 11 on the Labor Party backbench in this place? If they do, they are absolutely and utterly kidding themselves.

Several members interjected.

The PRESIDENT: Order!

Hon PETER KATSAMBANIS: Hon Alannah MacTiernan is coming back. She is coming back for one job and one job only—the job of Leader of the Labor Party in the upper house. If we have not seen enough dysfunction —

Several members interjected.

The PRESIDENT: Order! Look, there are a couple of people interjecting who have not spoken yet. Members do have the opportunity to contribute to the debate, but under the rules—under the standing orders and the conventions—we have a civil debate in this house.

Hon PETER KATSAMBANIS: Thank you, Mr President.

I welcome the opportunity to continue talking about the dysfunction that is going to come to this place when Hon Alannah MacTiernan comes here to claim the position that she has been promised. What is the deal? Which shadow minister is she going to replace? Is she going to run for the leadership or deputy leadership of the ALP in this place? Let us see some real dysfunction. It is going to be absolutely hilarious to watch!

Several members interjected.

The PRESIDENT: Order!

Hon PETER KATSAMBANIS: Unfortunately, it is again going to impact on the people of Western Australia. If the people of Western Australia really want to return to a dysfunctional government—the sort of government that made the lights go out, could not run a project on time or on budget and could not put teachers in every school at the start of every year—and a party that is totally divided and where people are jumping off ship and others are coming on who want the prime position —

Several members interjected.

The PRESIDENT: Order!

Several members interjected.

The PRESIDENT: Order! I am starting to question exactly where I am and which chamber I am in. I am in the Legislative Council, so I want the debate to be conducted in the normal way that we conduct debates.

Hon PETER KATSAMBANIS: Thank you, Mr President. It is quite clear that the people most threatened by the return of Hon Alannah MacTiernan are the people sitting on the Labor Party benches.

Several members interjected.

The PRESIDENT: Order! That took exactly five seconds before there were multiple interjections. At least allow a member on their feet to get a few more words out than that before you interject.

Hon PETER KATSAMBANIS: Thank you, Mr President. I have observed in this place before that it is interesting that when someone on this side of the house gets up and wants to make a point, if the people on the

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other side do not like what they are hearing, they continually and utterly interject to stop them from saying it. It is what we have seen recently in this country, and it continues today—the left do not even want to have a debate. They are not interested in listening to any other point of view. I have the call and I am going to make my point—Hon Alannah MacTiernan is coming and she is coming for one of your jobs.

Several members interjected.

The PRESIDENT: Order!

Hon PETER KATSAMBANIS: Thank you, Mr President. The sadder thing would be if someone like Hon Alannah MacTiernan and the Labor Party, with their previous track record in the Gallop and Carpenter governments, were allowed to slink into government by accident to wreak more havoc and more dysfunction in this state, which is why the people will choose wisely and reject this useless Labor Party at the election.

The PRESIDENT: The question is that the motion be agreed to.

Hon MICHAEL MISCHIN: Mr President.

Hon LYNN MacLAREN: Mr President.

The PRESIDENT: I am going to give the call to Hon Lynn MacLaren in the interests of balance.

HON LYNN MacLAREN (South Metropolitan) [11.06 am]: Thank you, Mr President; I do appreciate that. I have been listening to the debate as it has unfolded, or that of it that I could hear over the interjections. I also want to try to inject some kind of decorum. I am not going to be inflammatory, hopefully, in my language, because I think there are a lot of members who want to speak on this motion and it is a passionate issue. As you would know, Mr President, in my inaugural speech in 2005 I raised the spectre of Roe 8 and how the then ALP government had failed to delete it from the metropolitan region scheme, which is why, a decade later, we are still debating this issue. I am in furious agreement on this occasion with Hon Sue Ellery, who has brought on this motion, because in all of its eight years we have not seen a reasonable solution from the Liberal government. What we have seen is that it continues to defend the metropolitan region scheme and the Stephenson–Hepburn plan when it suits it. That is the reason it gives for ploughing that \$600 million road through the Beelihar wetlands regardless of all the evidence that it should not be done, and then it throws the Stephenson–Hepburn plan out the window when it becomes difficult to get from Stock Road to the port, and it starts this idea of a tunnel underneath White Gum Valley and Beaconsfield. Frankly, this is the most important infrastructure project ever in my region and it deserves some kind of reasonable consideration and some transport planning for the future. It does not deserve this kind of oppositional shouting match back and forth when we are talking about \$1.1 billion of scarce taxpayer funding both at a federal and a state level. This is serious. The fact that the transport ministers since the time the Liberal government has been in power have changed and never had a consistent vision for this area and never put together the transport planning to be able to solve this problem, is a failing of this government. If there is any failing, this is it. I agree that the Liberal–National government’s ongoing dysfunction is something that the community is concerned about. I will be on a panel with Hon Alannah MacTiernan today, so I will ask her what she thinks about Roe 8 and if she is thinking about the leadership. It might come up when we are on a panel at Edith Cowan University. That is fine; I will put the question.

I finish by saying that in six months there will be an election. We know what the Liberal–National government wants to do; we know that it is committed to building Roe 8. The community is completely opposed to that. We know that it wants to find some kind of last-minute solution from Stock Road to the port of Fremantle. The community is opposed to that. It wants some forward-thinking planning for the outer harbour whether or not it is Cockburn Sound. We want to know how long we can keep Fremantle port. As the Maritime Union of Australia said today, it can last a lot longer with proper transport planning. We want that planning done.

Finally, if the ALP is running a serious campaign against Roe 8, it needs to commit now to tearing up any contract that the government signs between now and March. That commitment has to go on the public record, because any company that signs a contract between now and then needs to know with surety that it will be torn up otherwise anything else is just noise. We have to hear the ALP say that it will take to the election the commitment to tear up those contracts. The sooner we hear that the better it will be for taxpayers, because they will know what the liability will be if it fails to give that commitment.

The PRESIDENT: Before the Attorney General gets started, I welcome to the public gallery guests on a public tour. Welcome to a debate on general issues!

HON MICHAEL MISCHIN (North Metropolitan — Attorney General) [11.12 am]: I will address the motion as opposed to a number of other factors that have been raised. So far as Hon Lynn MacLaren is concerned, it seems that the only evidence of dysfunction she referred to is with one issue with which she

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passionately disagrees. That was also the focus of the mover of the motion. I will make a few comments about the motion itself, which reads —

That this house expresses its concern ...

“Concern” means either anxiety or worry or an interest in a particular subject matter. I presume, because it is one of the most overused words in this chamber, that in this case it means anxiety or worry. It continues —

... at the impact on the community of the ... government’s ongoing dysfunction.

There are about four or five elements to this motion and none have been established by any evidence as opposed to simply rhetoric. I have not heard any evidence of the community being concerned about anything in respect of this government. I have heard nothing about any impact on the community as opposed to an impact on the Labor Party and its interest in the way the government has been operating or the media being interested in it. As for dysfunction, “dysfunction” is the opposite of “function”—the efficient operation of something. There has not been an inefficient or ineffective operation of anything. In fact, if members look at the government’s record over the last eight years, they will see that there has been an influx of something in the order of 450 000 people into this state and an investment in expanding our infrastructure and rebuilding the state to accommodate that. Many of those came here on the back of an increase in the resources industry and the benefits of that and, of course, when there is a downturn there will be a loss of jobs.

Hon Darren West seems to acquire most of his information from Twitter. He might want to go something called the government of Western Australia website because there he will see media releases. There are about half a dozen —

Several members interjected.

Hon MICHAEL MISCHIN: Mr President —

The PRESIDENT: Order!

Hon MICHAEL MISCHIN: I listened in patience and silence to those on the other side of the chamber and I expect the same courtesy from them.

Several members interjected.

The PRESIDENT: Order! Members, we know that is the way we set out on this debate and that is the way we intend to continue.

Hon MICHAEL MISCHIN: Thank you, Mr President.

Members opposite may wish to get some information from the government of Western Australia’s website on which there are probably about half a dozen or so media releases every day announcing new initiatives in a variety of portfolios that will help the people of Western Australia. I will give members some examples. On 19 September there was a media release about a stroke service attached to Fiona Stanley Hospital that will be extended to 24 hours a day. On 18 September there was a media release about the Ocean Reef marina redevelopment, which is a major redevelopment in the northern suburbs, one that has been pending for many years and is being done by this government. An alcohol interlock campaign has commenced and playing fields in Ellenbrook are being developed. The Koombana North precinct is ready to be developed, another initiative of this government that is being done. There is no dysfunction. In every portfolio of this government, something new is announced every day and being done every day.

The Labor Party seems to focus on its record by bringing back Hon Alannah MacTiernan, who has jumped from one life raft to another since the 2008 election. The only thing that she managed to achieve—this is the opposition’s selling point about her and why it wants her back—is the Perth to Mandurah rail link.

Several members interjected.

The PRESIDENT: Order!

Hon MICHAEL MISCHIN: And even that managed to miss Rockingham. That is her only achievement and the only achievement of the Labor government in eight years. Mr President, do you remember the campaign in 2008? It asked people to name three things that the Labor government had achieved and no-one could name anything.

The Labor Party is recycling old ministers whose only achievement is the one thing on which they are being brought back. Alannah MacTiernan’s greatest achievement in federal politics was as shadow parliamentary secretary to a non-existent portfolio. When it looked as though she was on a loser there, she left. She jumped ship and has now found a berth here along with other celebrity candidates who have been selected—the captain’s

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calls as they are called. In the meanwhile, the opposition has lost two performers from its front bench in this chamber. Hon Sally Talbot decided that she could not cut it anymore and jumped without bothering to tell the leader of her party in this place and Hon Ken Travers got off the front bench, too.

Hon Sue Ellery: You're scared of Alannah.

Hon MICHAEL MISCHIN: I am not afraid of Alannah. She will be ready for a telegram from the Queen before we become worried about her.

The PRESIDENT: Order! I know it is a bit of sport sometimes, but we have to conduct our debates according to proper rules and regulations and that means no continuous interjections.

Hon MICHAEL MISCHIN: Thank you, Mr President. As I said, I sat in silence to learn what the other side had to say. I came out of that poorer, but nevertheless I expect the same courtesy from them.

The opposition is recycling old ministers and it has its captain's calls. There was a leadership challenge when Stephen Smith came forward with all the disaffected in the Labor Party. They said that they were entirely behind Steve, but they were so far behind him that they were invisible.

Hon Sue Ellery: What about the rats and cockroaches—are there any in here?

Hon MICHAEL MISCHIN: They are still crawling around in the caucus room by the look of it because they have not been outed, have they?

The PRESIDENT: Order, members! I think you have often heard me say that I will intervene when the debate stoops to a personal level. It is getting close.

Hon MICHAEL MISCHIN: We have heard about supposed policies on the other side of this chamber. They are effectively ideas. It seems that the small business policy is to get a big business and turn it into a small one. I tried to find some Labor Party policies by looking on its website the other day and I could not even get in without having to log into it. That is how accessible these policies are.

In any event, the acid test of whether a government is functional or dysfunctional is whether it is performing. As I have indicated, something is happening every day in every portfolio. We have seen an enormous number of achievements over the last eight years, and those achievements will continue in the future. We have reshaped the education system, we have put a teacher in front of every classroom, we have built umpteen schools and we have increased funding for them. We have dealt with the hospital issue by investing more money into our hospitals. We have rebuilt, apart from anything else, court and police infrastructure across this state. All those things have been done for the benefit of Western Australians. The policies that we have announced are for the long-term benefit of Western Australians and the stresses that this state is under. To focus on small issues in the course of a construction project and say that that is somehow evidence of government dysfunction is pathetic.

Hon Kate Doust: Asbestos on the site, roofs leaking.

Hon MICHAEL MISCHIN: That shows the smallness of the vision of members of the ALP. They will stop problems happening on a work site. Goodness me, if that is all they are going to micromanage without regard to bigger policies in this state —

Several members interjected.

The PRESIDENT: Order, members! I have Hon Kate Doust listed as a potential future speaker. I hope she gets the chance.

Hon MICHAEL MISCHIN: This government has continued to deliver services. This government has continued to name initiatives and execute those initiatives over the last eight years. If one takes an objective look at it, whatever the tensions may be from time to time in a dynamic government, a dynamic party and a dynamic alliance with another party, in which there are bound to be differences of opinion because that shows that we are not a one-size-fits-all mob that raises our hands in caucus and follows instructions, it shows that we are actually thinking things through and are prepared to entertain different views and to create policy and ideas as a process from that. There will be differences of opinion between people who are free thinkers.

I am sorry that Hon Tony Simpson and Hon Dean Nalder resigned in the manner that they did, but if they felt that they could not get on with the job, other people can quite rightly step into their place. When we look at the record of the last Labor government, I invite those opposite to tell us about Norm Marlborough —

Hon Kate Doust: He's a good bloke.

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Hon MICHAEL MISCHIN: Yes. He was great as a small business minister! Whom was he getting instructions from? Look at the corruption in that last government, and the inactivity. One of those members is now the Leader of the Opposition, who wants to be the Premier of this state. He has no vision and nothing to offer.

HON KATE DOUST (South Metropolitan — Deputy Leader of the Opposition) [11.24 am]: I am very pleased to support the motion moved by Hon Sue Ellery. Last weekend we saw the culmination of the dysfunction of this government with the resignation of two ministers—Nalder and Simpson. Hon Sue Ellery is absolutely right: the community has the right to be very concerned at the end of the eight years that this government has been in place. We have seen a conga line of ministers dismissed. We only have to go through the backbench of this place to see Baston, O'Brien, McSweeney, Morton and Faragher, though she is back. If we look at the other place, there was Buswell. Let us talk about Buswell and the dysfunction and uncertainty that occurred there. He was a Lazarus. He came back a couple of times. He was rejuvenated. Let us talk about Graham Jacobs and Murray Cowper being dumped, along with Rob Johnson, who decided that he had had enough and he exited the party. We still do not know whether Mr Britza, the member for Morley, will stay in the party because I think he has been referred to as part of the rats and cockroaches group by members opposite. All those events that happened over the last few years happened because the government had a Premier who was so used to making unilateral decisions, popping out pipe dreams and thought bubbles, that his ministers never knew what was going on. The local government minister would make an announcement and the Premier would go out and say something different. That is why Tony Simpson quit. He never knew what was going on because there was no proper communication between him and the Premier. All these things have been happening.

It is no small wonder that the Premier is referred to in the community as the emperor, because he is seen to be arrogant and unilateral in his approach to government. In the media over the last week we heard Hon Helen Morton talking about the treatment that she, and others, was meted out by the Premier's office. The community has the absolute right to be worried about not just the internal politicking of the Liberal government and the dysfunction, but also the fact that that has led to bad decisions being made. Our community is now bearing the brunt of the fact that this government blew away the opportunities of the boom. It has now put us in a position in which our community and our families will be paying off the debt that this government has incurred and will continue to incur in the future. At some point over the next few weeks we will be dealing with a Loan Bill, in which the government is seeking to borrow another \$1.7 billion to tide it over for another year. Let us face it; I think there is more to come. I do not think the government has been open and transparent with the community about how bad things will get. I look forward to that debate when we get to it.

We could go through a whole raft of things. Look at the debacle that has happened in education around education officers and support for families. Look at the ambulance ramping. Look at the subcontractors. If the Minister for Commerce thinks that that is a small issue and it is appropriate that people do not get paid, that people suffer health consequences and that their families are put in dreadful situations, that speaks volumes about this government. The fact that this government has taken four years to try to address those issues for those subcontractors and still has not resolved the issues with the Construction Contracts Act 2004 is on the minister's shoulders because he is the steward in charge of that portfolio. If he wants to talk about dysfunction and functionality of government, he should look in the mirror. He should look at what is sitting on his desk. He has not dealt with residential parks, he has not resolved the problems associated with retirement villages and he has not fixed the Construction Contracts Act. He has a range of matters on his desk. He is only now starting to bring them into the chamber and roll out legislation such as the Limited Partnerships Bill 2016, which more than likely will not even get through both houses before we rise and will disappear into the ether. We could go through every portfolio and find problems. The minister has not done his job. He has not delivered. The government deserves to be in opposition after March. This government has failed this state.

Let us look at the coalition. Let us call it a coalition because that is what the Liberal Party entered into. It is not just about the Liberal Party; it is about its partners. We have seen the changes there in recent times and the dysfunctional relationship between those partners. We have seen cabinet ministers from the National Party not falling into line and not voting with their government partners. We have seen that happen on a couple of bills. We have seen the arguments. We have seen the new Leader of the National Party put forward a policy that his government partner does not agree with. If that is not dysfunction, I do not know what is.

The government has brought this state to a dreadful situation with debt and deficit. It is something that we are all going to have to bear. The government has a Premier who cannot manage his own team. The only way he manages it is by sacking ministers or replacing them. Some of them have been refreshed a couple of times. He does not consult. The weekend fiasco with ministers quitting gave our community a very clear example of the level of dysfunction that the government has got to. It is incredible that those ministers quit without telling the Premier. The last time I heard of someone in a parliamentary party who quit without telling their leader was when Vince Catania quit the Labor Party and went to the National Party. That is only other time I have come

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Hon Michael Mischin; Hon Kate Doust; Hon Simon O'Brien

across that type of discourtesy. If the Premier does not have a wake-up call about the dysfunction in his government, the government deserves to lose. It has not delivered.

The government is mortified about the Poynton poll. Polls are conducted all the time, but the Premier has taken an aggressive tone. It is obvious that those businesspeople saw the dysfunction and inability of this government to govern, to manage the finances appropriately, and that led them to take some sort of action. It is coming at the government from all angles. If the Liberal–National government does not take this as a proper wake-up call, it does not deserve to hold the government benches. I know that come 11 March next year the taxpayers of this state will acknowledge that due to the dysfunction in this government, the Liberal–National government does not deserve to hold the position and they will vote it out.

HON SIMON O'BRIEN (South Metropolitan) [11.31 am]: I shall be brief, Mr President.

The PRESIDENT: Order! You have run out of time. I gave the call to Hon Simon O'Brien, but then I sat him down.

Hon Simon O'Brien: That is the briefest speech I have done in this place.

The PRESIDENT: Order! It is a great pity, but time has elapsed for this debate and the motion lapses according to standing orders.

Motion lapsed, pursuant to standing orders.