

FREMANTLE OUTER HARBOUR — TASK FORCE

280. Mrs L.M. HARVEY to the Minister for Transport:

Before I ask my question of the Minister for Transport, I would like to acknowledge the former member for Murray–Wellington in the Speaker's gallery.

The SPEAKER: There must be a by-election.

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: I refer to the Maritime Union of Australia's fact sheet titled "The Truth about the Flawed Outer Harbour Plan", written by Westport Taskforce member Christy Cain, and I quote —

Government treasury predicted another 25 years of growth potential for Fremantle ...

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Members! I want to hear this. Start again.

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: I will start again. Thank you, Mr Speaker. When I next contact Mr Cain, I will note the laughter from the government benches.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order! It is not funny.

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: I refer to the MUA's fact sheet "The Truth about the Flawed Outer Harbour Plan", written by Westport Taskforce member Christy Cain, and I quote —

Government treasury predicted another 25 years of growth potential for Fremantle ...

It states that artificial capping would result in earlier capital investment in the outer harbour and related road and rail infrastructure, imposing an unnecessary financial burden on the Western Australian government, container trades and the community. Given that Mr Cain is well informed about this issue and is a member of the government's task force, does the minister accept that Mr Cain is right about the outer harbour?

Ms R. SAFFIOTI replied:

I thought I had heard everything in this place! We have heard a few things today. The question to the Minister for Tourism was about hundreds of years of science to try to understand why whales beach themselves.

Point of Order

Mr S.K. L'ESTRANGE: The minister is not addressing the question. She is talking about another matter.

The SPEAKER: That is not a point of order.

Questions without Notice Resumed

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: There was a question about hundreds of years of research to understand why whales beach themselves, and today we heard that it is the Minister for Tourism's fault that whales beach themselves. The member for Scarborough is now out there in solidarity with the MUA. I know that on Sunday she was down at Fremantle marching with the MUA. I did not know that she also had the opportunity to go through some economic analysis undertaken by the MUA. The problem with that analysis is that it was based on some work undertaken when the previous government was privatising Fremantle port. Of course, there were overinflated expectations about how this port would operate into the future and the volumes.

Dr M.D. Nahan: The MUA supports privatisation—is that what the minister is saying?

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: The Leader of the Opposition should ask the member for Scarborough what the MUA is thinking.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: I am sure it was a very serious question from the member for Scarborough, so I want a serious answer, please.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: If members want to ask me what the MUA is thinking, they should ask the member for Scarborough because she is in constant dialogue with Christy Cain. I welcome that dialogue. It is unusual, but in this Parliament we have seen the most unexpected things in the past days, and the member for Scarborough's alliance with the MUA just adds to that list of peculiar things that we have seen.