

Mr Mark McGowan; Acting Speaker; Dr Tony Buti; Ms Lisa Baker; Mr Mick Murray; Mr Sean L'Estrange; Mrs Michelle Roberts; Deputy Speaker; Mr Troy Buswell; Mr Vincent Catania; Mr Chris Tallentire; Mr Chris Hatton; Mr Dave Kelly

BARNETT GOVERNMENT — PERFORMANCE

Motion

MR M. MCGOWAN (Rockingham — Leader of the Opposition) [4.00 pm]: I move —

That the house condemns the Barnett government for its poor economic management and appalling failures across a multitude of portfolios in 2013.

It is terrific to stand and lead a range of my colleagues who will use this final private members' business of 2013 as an opportunity to set out some of the broken promises and failures of the government over the past year, in particular since the election in March 2013. It is true that the government was elected, as the Premier keeps reminding us, and it did achieve a significant majority in the election. It is also true that the government was elected on the basis of promises that it made. People read those promises. People took note of what the government said before the election. They looked at the advertisements, they looked at what was reported in the press, and they voted on the basis of that. People in Western Australia were lied to before the election. They were lied to on multiple occasions. What was said before the election is now not coming to pass in a range of areas. We have a Premier who will say and do anything from one day to the next. I do not think he remembers what he said the day before because it is often contradictory. In fact, it is often contradictory in the one sentence, but he says it with such bravado and confidence that even he believes what he is saying is truthful when it is not. It happens daily; it happens constantly; it happens hourly. One day after another, one thing is said and then another thing happens. The contradictions are endless and ongoing.

In the last nine or 10 months since the state election we have identified 40 broken promises by the government. That is an enormous number of broken promises. I find the chaos, dysfunction and dishonesty of the government quite extraordinary. I think the Premier should be in this place to answer to these things. I think he should come into the chamber instead of sitting in his office watching me on television, no doubt interjecting wildly. He is probably watching me on the telly, yelling stuff at the TV. At the moment, he is no doubt over there in Dixieland, as he describes it, yelling at the television, saying, "You know, if I were there, I'd be sorting him out." He should come in here and sort me out. He has number two in here. The Treasurer is sitting here, number two. Yesterday he deigned to stay here.

Mr T.R. Buswell: How big's a billion?

Mr M. McGOWAN: I know how big a billion is; the Treasurer has cost us 20 of them. He should know how big they are.

Yesterday the Treasurer deigned to sit in here for the matter of public interest debate and then he unleashed the clowns.

Several members interjected.

Mr M. McGOWAN: I can hear them again.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr I.M. Britza): It is the Leader of the Opposition I want to hear.

Mr M. McGOWAN: Yesterday the Treasurer deigned to stay in here, and then he unleashed the clowns to have a go—the minions, the henchmen. We cannot get a good henchman these days.

Several members interjected.

Mr M. McGOWAN: The clowns are at it again. Listen to them, Mr Acting Speaker. I do not know what they are saying.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Members, if the Leader of the Opposition takes interjections, I cannot rule, but if you are going to interrupt, both member for Joondalup and member for Forrestfield, I will call you.

Mr M. McGOWAN: It is very disappointing that the Premier will not come in here and answer for his poor economic management and appalling failures across a range of portfolios. I think this last seven-week sitting period has been too much for him. The reaction he engages in on a daily basis and the extraordinary conniptions that he has daily in this place are all too much for him to cope with. I do not know how he will cope when Parliament is not sitting and he cannot scream and yell at us. We have witnessed the reactions that he engages in when we deign to raise matters and deign to ask him a question in question time. "How dare you ask me a question about something I said this morning" was his reaction today. What an incredible thing to do, to ask him about something he said this morning about the issue on which the government won the state election. Imagine

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the opposition doing that! Yet he stood in here screaming and yelling about me deigning to raise matters that he raised on ABC radio this morning. It is a pity he is not here because he might respond to these things.

I will talk about economic management in a moment but I will also talk about the failures in portfolios. The main failure I want to talk about first is these rail promises upon which the government was elected. It was the central issue of the election campaign. The government responded to our plan with its own plans—\$4 billion worth of light rail and heavy rail to the airport and to the northern suburbs and across to Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital and out to Victoria Park. I want to talk a little about the budget as well. The government released its plan in February. Then, in the budget, three months and 26 days ago, the Treasurer, who is far more reasonable than the Premier, made a statement. He is statesmanlike by comparison. No doubt something has been thrown at the television over the road there by the Premier. He is throwing things at the television right now as I speak. In his budget speech three months and 26 days ago, the Treasurer said —

At an estimated total cost of \$2billion, the airport rail line comprises the construction of a spur from the existing Midland rail line to the future consolidated Perth Airport terminal, and continuing on to Forrestfield. Three new stations will be built along the airport rail line (including 3,000 additional parking bays), and 18 new railcars will be purchased to service the expanded rail network. Construction is set to commence in 2016, and scheduled to finish in 2019. Project costs of \$174million are reflected in the current forward estimates period.

That was said about the airport rail. In relation to the Metro Area Express, the light rail proposal, he said —

Construction will start in 2016, and is scheduled to finish in 2019. Project costs of \$432million are incorporated in the current forward estimates period.

Both of those rail promises upon which the government was elected were mentioned in the budget as having slipped a year. The budget was brought down three months and 26 days ago. The government changed its promise from 2018 to 2019 but the Treasurer said he allocated money in the forward estimates. It is right up-front on page 3 of the Treasurer's budget speech. Yesterday and today I asked a simple, straightforward question about each of those commitments. Yesterday, if I recall correctly, the Premier said, "Oh, well, to build at the airport, of course we've got to cross the river." As far as I recall, the Swan River has been there for the entirety of recorded history in Western Australia. I even recall that in the diary of Captain Stirling, when he arrived in 1827, he mentions that he rowed up it! As I recall, it was a river he was rowing on and it was the Swan River. It was then that a European settlers colony was established in 1829, called the Swan River Colony.

When the government launched its policy on building an airport rail line in February, I suspect the Treasurer knew that the Swan River was there. I also suspect that he knew an airport was there because it was the airport rail line. Now the Premier is saying, "It's all very difficult because there's a river there and there's an airport there." That is what the Premier said yesterday, no doubt softening up the public for the slippage in time frame on this promise—even though it was in the Treasurer's budget speech! No doubt the Premier is softening up the public for the slippage. Then we have the MAX light rail promise. In the budget speech, \$432 million was allocated to the project. From a simple question asked today, "Does the budget stand? Does it stand three months and 26 days on?" The Premier would not answer. The Premier said, "Oh, well, you know, you have to wait for the midyear review in relation to that." It was only three months and 26 days ago! We now have to wait for the midyear review. However, when asked this morning in the now infamous ABC radio interview, which he obviously did not enjoy, this is what the Premier said —

Geoff Hutchison: Are you and the Treasurer at odds over the light rail project?

"No. But it's a very expensive rail project. It's got a lot of complications to it, going through established areas and we've also got the rail commitment to go out to the airport, more significantly, to the rapidly growing areas of Forrestfield."

GH: You seem to be saying different things, though. Last week you were saying the line might stop at King's Square in the future..

"No, I never actually said that."

GH: But the future branches of the network may have to be secondary..A secondary plan. Well Troy Buswell told Channel 9 yesterday there was no consideration of splitting it into two stages.

This is interesting in light of what the Treasurer said in question time today. This is the Premier's response —

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“It’s obviously better to do the whole project in one go, but when we’re looking at trying to make sure our debt stays under control, those might be some of the decisions we might have to get to by either delaying or staging some projects.

He has been asked about the MAX light rail and he talks about staging. The Treasurer today says, “Oh, no, we’re not doing that.” The Premier says one thing this morning, the Treasurer says another thing this afternoon. What is absolutely clear is when the midyear review comes along, no doubt there will be another broken promise. What has slipped to 2019 will slip a lot further! Let us imagine, when will the Premier or Treasurer reveal it? Today I asked the Treasurer that question. He said that it would be by the middle of the year. The middle of the year is 31 December. The Treasurer obviously knows what is contained within this project. When we ask all these questions about the cost of having the patientless hospital in Murdoch, about the slippage in the two most significant promises the government made in the election campaign—massive slippage and/or staging—all it does is hold off to the midyear review.

The Treasurer should be revealing this information now. He should be able to say whether or not the budget he released three months and 26 days ago is accurate. It is not a hard question. He should be able to answer that very simple and straightforward question. It is plain that not all is well in the state of Denmark, across the chamber. Why this dichotomy between the Premier and the Treasurer? Why is the Premier saying one thing this morning and the Treasurer is saying another thing this afternoon? Why is that? What could possibly be going on to create this division between the Premier and the Treasurer on matters as important as the most significant election promises made by the government? They had three days of this confusion on this very important issue. The reason I say this government is dysfunctional and chaotic is the three days of confusion on the most significant promises made by the government in the lead-up to the election between the most senior person in the government, the Premier, and the second most senior person, the Treasurer. How can that be? What is going on behind the scenes? Why the glum faces over there?

Mr R.H. Cook: They are glum, aren’t they!

Mr M. McGOWAN: They are very glum!

There are very glum faces over there! There are some very unhappy people over there!

Several members interjected.

Mr M. McGOWAN: They are alive! I am reminded of what Paul Keating once said about John Howard, “Like lizards on a rock, looking dead but actually alive”!

Mr T.R. Buswell: Didn’t Howard beat Keating?

Mr M. McGOWAN: Not if the minister watched the documentary last Tuesday night, no.

I love the Premier’s excuse for the dishonesty. He said, “We will deliver our promises; this government will deliver the promises.” There may be changes to the scope and there may be changes to the timing. If we were to deliver a rail line in 30 years that we promised three years or five years hence, that is a broken promise. If we promised a rail line in 2018 and it is delivered 10 years after that, that is a significant broken promise. The Premier tries to justify all these things. I heard his reasoning this morning. No wonder he hated this ABC interview; it is quite extraordinary. This is what he had to say this morning; I will quote again —

“One of the problems that’s happening in election campaigns now is that if you say you’re going to build a project, a museum or whatever it might be, the media then say ‘give us a start date or start time’.

The Premier is shocked that someone might actually ask him when he will deliver his promise. It is absolutely incredible that the press would actually ask the Premier that! Although I am told that sarcasm does not work here. Therefore, I will just reiterate that I was being ironic and sarcastic! The second part of the Premier’s quote is absolutely brilliant.

Mrs M.H. Roberts: Not!

Mr M. McGOWAN: Yes, once again, irony does not work! Here is the quote —

Now, the reality in both the government in private sector — projects —

Ms A.R. Mitchell: Spit it out!

Mr M. McGOWAN: This is what the Premier said. I am actually quoting him; it is hard to interpret. He states —

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Now, the reality in both the government in private sector — projects rarely run exactly. And I think as politicians we've fallen into the trap of being too specific. Making all sorts of detailed announcements about projects in election campaigns without really having the information available.

When the Premier was out there making promises that were fully funded and fully costed—I have got numerous of them—he fell into a cunning trap. He did not plan to go out there with fully funded and fully costed promises, of course. He was led into it. He was enticed by the tricky media. Or perhaps it was Ben Morton down at the Liberal Party office; he made him do these things! It was not the Premier, a bloke of 23 years' experience in this place, who did it of his own volition. He was led into it by those 20-something journalists upstairs who made him undertake these promises. That is the logic. That is what we are dealing with when the Premier makes promises. I will also add his amazing statement; that is, "We're gonna deliver our promises, but they may be delayed or the exact parameters or the details surrounding them might be changed." That is his definition of a promise. That means that when all of these things are delayed, it is not actually a broken promise. This is just some of what has been delayed since the state election: the extension of the Mitchell Freeway; the North Ellenbrook secondary school, delayed by three years; Roe 8 has been promised at two elections and now, not only is the government going to deliver it, but it is not even setting a time frame on it, but according to the Premier, at some point in time it is going to build it; the Malaga Drive intersection—I visited there this morning—is delayed beyond the time it was promised; and the rapid bus transit to Ellenbrook has been delayed so far it is off in infinity.

Mr F.A. Alban: You lost five seats because of Metronet at the last election.

Mr M. McGOWAN: Be very careful; the election is coming around, my friend.

Several members interjected.

Mr M. McGOWAN: I did not say it last time. I have said it since the last election and the member and I both know that is true.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr I.M. Britza): Members! You were doing pretty well there for a while.

Mr M. McGOWAN: The point I am making is that the government cannot say it is delivering election promises in the way that the Premier does, and then change the time frame so that it can be off at any point in the future. That is breaking a promise. We cannot change the parameters or details of the promise in a negative way to what was promised before the election and then say that we are delivering exactly on the promise that was made. Unfortunately, the Premier's grasp of the basic concepts of English seems to be pretty poor. Because if he is going to make those promises and then change them after the event, he is breaking his word. That is what the Premier does every single day. His excuses, like the ones he raised on the radio this morning in an infamous interview, are quite incredible. He said he was led into a trap by being too specific in his promises. He was trapped! According to the Premier's logic, what he should have said was that at some point in time we are going to build a railway somewhere, full stop. Then, according to his own words, he would not be trapped because he has made the commitment, people understand what it is and he does not need to put details around the timing. That is the logic that the Premier is adopting with these election promises.

I now come to the economic issues. The Treasurer said in question time again today, "You blokes keep going on about state debt and AAA and then you keep saying that we have to deliver on our promises. You cannot have it both ways." Actually, oppositions can.

Mr T.R. Buswell: No, you cannot.

Mr M. McGOWAN: Yes, we can. We will go out there and hold out the government's promises every day of the week because those opposite are the ones who went to the election saying that they were all fully funded and fully costed. I should not point, I suppose. I was on the ABC the other night pointing, so I will stop pointing. They are the ones who went to the election and said to people that their promises were fully funded and fully costed. They put time frames around them and we will hold them to those promises. The government losing the AAA credit rating is the Premier's political legacy. I actually think that these days the Treasurer is a much more reasonable person in this place. Funny that, is it not? He is much more reasonable. I have heard people comment about how much more reasonable and more statesmanlike he is now than he was. There is something funny going on, but maybe it is just Christmas cheer. I do not blame the Treasurer for this as much as I do the Premier.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Members on my left, I asked members on my right to keep quiet during this debate and I also expect it from you.

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Mr M. McGOWAN: Except I will say that the Treasurer should have kept some sort of rein on the Premier. They have lost the AAA credit rating and increased state debt by 700 per cent—that is two zeros—in the last five years, from \$3.6 billion to \$221.9 billion in this financial year. They have lost the AAA credit rating regained by Geoff Gallop in 2003. What else have they done in economic management? I will talk about one thing that has not received a great deal of attention, but I think is a fact that should be placed on the table. In August 2008, the last occasion on which unemployment figures came out during the term of the Labor government, the seasonally adjusted unemployment rate was 2.7 per cent in Western Australia. The total number of unemployed Western Australians, seasonally adjusted, was 32 800. What is it now? The unemployment rate now, seasonally adjusted, is 4.3 per cent, and the total number of unemployed persons, seasonally adjusted, is 60 100. The participation rate has declined and the number has nearly doubled. The number of people who are unemployed in Western Australia over the course of the last five years has gone from 32 800 to 60 100. They have nearly doubled the number of people who are unemployed in Western Australia.

Mr T.R. Buswell: The economy is growing and the population.

Mr M. McGOWAN: It has been growing and it was then, too.

Several members interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Members!

Mr M. McGOWAN: In fact, it has been growing, believe it or not, since 1829 when Captain Stirling rowed up the river. The river was there then, too. The unemployment rate has gone from 32 800 in August 2008 to 60 100 in the last lot of figures. It has nearly doubled. We have had a 700 per cent increase in state debt, loss of the AAA credit rating, a near doubling of the number of unemployed and the tax take has gone through the roof. In the case of tax increases, the L-A-W tax cuts—legislative tax cuts—were withdrawn. The transfer duty on non-real business assets was taken back. An amount of \$530 million or thereabouts in tax cuts for non-real business assets—basically small business goodwill—has been greedily taken back by the government. There was a 12 per cent increase in land tax in the last budget and numerous other costs of living increases over this period.

Then we have the big project losses of Browse and Oakajee. When the Premier interferes, capital runs away; when the Premier puts his nose in, capital runs away. That is what happens when we have an interventionist 1970s-style Premier. He lost Browse and he lost Oakajee. That is a record; he lost both and that is incredible. A 700 per cent increase in debt, a lost AAA credit rating, virtually twice as many people in the unemployment line as there were five years ago, the loss of Browse and Oakajee, and this massive group of broken promises in the last nine months. Is it any wonder that Western Australians constantly say, “What has happened to our government?” The government was elected on the basis of a certain set of commitments and is now not delivering those commitments. The government that was elected on the basis of the Premier’s capacity to deliver projects has lost the two biggest projects in Western Australia. The Premier personally intervened and lost them. This is the government with the worst set of debt figures ever seen in Western Australia by a massive, massive amount. That debt will inhibit and hinder future governments.

I come back to the central point—there is a lot of material. In 2013, lots of promises have been broken by a government that has more than lost its way after being elected on the back of dishonesty and promises it never had any intention of delivering, including the most major of them all—its rail promises. We will, despite the government’s protestations, hold the government to those promises every single day.

DR A.D. BUTI (Armadale) [4.30 pm]: I also rise to contribute to the motion of the Leader of the Opposition. It would probably come as no surprise if I went on about the shambolic nature of the Barnett government in regard to education, but I will not go on about education because I think we have covered that a number of times.

Mr T.R. Buswell: What about event funding? You did the ironman!

Dr A.D. BUTI: I will not go on about that either, but I thank the Treasurer for his support on Sunday.

I wish to talk about the issue of domestic violence and the police resources devoted to it, which does not receive a lot of attention in this place. It is a shame the police minister is not here. It is very interesting that when the other side of the house asks the police minister a question, she always says, “I thank you for your question and also for the interest you have in police matters and crime in your area.” When we ask a question we get, “I thank you for your question”, and that is the end of it. I wonder why she never says, “I really appreciate your concern and interest in police matters”; it is because she is very embarrassed by the way she administers her portfolio.

Domestic violence is very interesting in that it traverses two portfolios of the Minister for Police—namely, police and women’s interests. A question was posed either last week or the week before to the Minister for Emergency Services, and the police minister turned around to the Minister for Emergency Services, after the

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member for Girrawheen interjected, and said to the Minister for Emergency Services—if he wants to challenge this, he can, because the police minister is not in this place—“Why don’t you tell her about the quotas in the Labor Party?” I wonder whether the police minister would reject that allegation. The Minister for Emergency Services does not remember that?

Mr J.M. Francis: I know what I said. I don’t recall her saying that.

Dr A.D. BUTI: The minister does not recall her saying that? She whispered to him—I saw her—and then the Minister for Emergency Services said to the member for Girrawheen, “You’re the reason we shouldn’t have quotas.”

Mr J.M. Francis: That’s not quite what I said.

Dr A.D. BUTI: Okay; but I will stick by my allegation because the Minister for Emergency Services mentioned something about quotas after the Minister for Police talked to him, and that is disgraceful for a Minister for Women’s Interests.

I turn to the more important issue of domestic violence. As members know, domestic violence is a major issue in our society. Before the last election, the Minister for Police mentioned that she has a major interest in trying to curb domestic violence, and I am sure every member of this house is concerned about the increase in domestic violence. I would not say that the police minister is not interested in trying to reduce the rate of domestic violence, because it is an absolute crisis. For instance, there was an article in *The West Australian* of 22 November that reads —

The number of domestic violence incidents in WA has risen almost 60 per cent over the past four years, with police attending more than 44,000 calls for help in the past year.

There has been an increase in reporting, which explains some of the increase, but there has also been an increase in the number of domestic violence assaults.

Although I am sure the police minister has a keen interest in and desire to reduce that rate, she is not doing anything to try to decrease the incidence of domestic violence. As we know, the police announced to great fanfare the model it is trialling out in the south east metropolitan area in regards to the front-line 2020 operational model. This will be a system with two different squads—one is a response squad that will seek to respond to reports of crime; the other will seek to engage with troubled families that may be causing most of the crime in a particular area. When the police minister and the Commissioner of Police rolled out this new front-line 2020 operational model, they failed to mention that the specialised domestic violence unit based in the south east metro area had been closed down and disbanded. Of course, there are specialised DV units across the metro area, and the south east metro area is the trial centre. If the government and the Commissioner of Police view this new model as a success, it will go to other areas. I point out to backbenchers on both sides and ministers who have a domestic violence specialised unit in their area that it is likely to go. That is appalling when there has been a 60 per cent increase in domestic violence in the past four years; it is even more appalling in the south east metropolitan district, which consistently has the highest rate of domestic violence. I asked a question of the minister on this point on 26 November, and her response was —

(1)–(2) In the south east metro area—indeed, a community forum was held in the member for Belmont’s electorate, which is also part of the south east metro area—we are looking at the way that police are reforming the service delivery to all those people who live in that area. The member for Armadale is right: there is an issue with domestic violence not only in south east metro, but also right across the state. The way that we and WA Police are tackling that is by breaking the teams into response teams and local policing teams. The local policing teams will be interacting with families that are creating the demand for services from WA Police and will be working to better connect them with services.

That was nothing to do with domestic violence—nothing at all! The member for Belmont knows that the Minister for Police was referring to those troubled families with juveniles who cause problems. That is what that local policing team is; it is nothing to do with domestic violence! How dare the Minister for Police; Women’s Interests stand to answer a question on domestic violence and try to cover up by talking about the front-line operational model that has nothing to do with domestic violence. How is a 19 or 20-year-old male who has just come out of the Police Academy going to communicate with a woman, particularly a woman who may be from a different culture—especially many of the African cultures—who will not report or speak to a male officer about domestic violence? I know this because a couple of years ago the former Minister for Police gave permission for the domestic violence specialised unit based in Armadale to come to my office. I was incredibly impressed by

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that unit, and those people told me of the cultural issues in trying to communicate with women from different cultures who have been subject to domestic violence. How dare the Minister for Police try to just cover that over by saying the local policing teams would deal with the issue. They will not deal with the issue; they cannot deal with the issue. That is an appalling response by the Minister for Police; Women's Interests.

Those specialised units—the one in Armadale has been disbanded but units are still operational in other areas—are dedicated to addressing the issue of domestic violence. All members of this house would of course have an interest in trying to curb domestic violence, but the Minister for Police, in her advocacy of this front-line operation, is abrogating her responsibility with regard to domestic violence. I refer to an article from 20 December 2011, titled “Bad news for thugs”. It states —

A team of detectives based in the south-eastern suburbs is the State's first dedicated to domestic violence cases.

The Family Crime Team was set up this year to manage cases in the sub-district covered by the Cannington, Gosnells and Armadale police stations.

The article continues —

“Perpetrators and victims need to realise it is a crime and will be treated as such

The Family Crime Team's 11 full-time detectives —

Eleven full-time detectives! —

three of whom are female, manage about 100 cases at any given time.

How will the local policing team replace this specialised domestic violence unit? It is an impossible task, so shame on the Minister for Police and shame on the Barnett government for presiding over a new policing model instead of specialised DV units that try to address the crime that is constantly increasing in our society. Since the Barnett government was elected in 2008—it is not because the Barnett government was elected in 2008 that there has been an increase in domestic violence; I am not trying to say that—there has been an increase every year. I think there has been an up to 85 per cent increase in reported instances of domestic violence.

Mrs G.J. Godfrey interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr I.M. Britza): Member for Belmont!

Dr A.D. BUTI: It is the only crime that has increased every year in the last five years. It probably was increasing when Labor was in government. It is a crisis that is not due to the —

Mrs G.J. Godfrey interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Member for Belmont, he is not taking your point.

Mrs G.J. Godfrey: I'm just trying to correct something he's saying.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Do not speak when I am on my feet. If he is not taking your interjection, you cannot continue.

Dr A.D. BUTI: It is not a crime that is caused by any political party and I would never say that it is. However, it is a responsibility of the government of the day to address it. The specialised DV units that were set up by the previous police minister in this government—kudos to him and kudos to the Barnett government for setting up those DV units—were doing an outstanding job in Armadale and the surrounding areas. For those units to be disbanded and for us to hear from the police minister that local policing teams will be able to do the job of DV units is absurd, police minister.

Mrs L.M. Harvey interjected.

Dr A.D. BUTI: It is absolutely absurd to think that the local policing teams can do the same work that these specialised DV units were set up to do. Why were they set up? The Commissioner of Police, the previous Minister for Police and presumably the Barnett government as a whole agreed that there was a domestic violence crisis and that something needed to be done, so these specialised units were set up. It is like the police specialised child abuse units and there are specialised police units to address other areas of crime. Domestic violence is a crime that is increasing at a phenomenal rate; it is a crisis. That is why the police need specialised teams. The local policing teams may be a good idea to try to interact with problem families, but they interact with problem families in the main. I have spoken to police in Armadale and I am sure that the member for Belmont has spoken to the police in her area. Their main focus is to try to address those families who have groups of individuals who cause crime in the area, it is not on domestic violence crime. It may be a part of that,

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but overall those teams are not addressing domestic violence. The domestic violence units were addressing domestic violence. I have spoken to those police officers; I have spoken to many police officers. They are incredibly disappointed that units such as these have been disbanded.

Mrs L.M. Harvey interjected.

Dr A.D. BUTI: If the police minister wants to, she can get up and respond. But to say that local policing teams can do the work of these specialised DV units is absurd, and shame on the police minister, who is also the Minister for Women's Interests, for allowing such a situation to develop.

Mrs M.H. Roberts: Those DV units were set up following Sue Gordon's report and they were set up under the Gallop Labor government.

Dr A.D. BUTI: Were they? Okay.

Mrs L.M. Harvey interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Excuse me, members. Member for Midland and others, unless the speaker on his feet takes your interjection, I will regard your comment as out of order and I will call you.

Dr A.D. BUTI: I thank the member for Midland for correcting me on my history of the matter.

I plead with the Minister for Police to rethink this situation. In my supplementary question to her, I asked her for a commitment that if it was found that the front-line operation trial in the south east metropolitan area was not dealing with the domestic violence crisis in our area, she would look at having those specialised units back in operation. All the minister would say is that she would work closely with the police commissioner. We need a lot more than that. Working closely —

Mrs L.M. Harvey interjected.

Dr A.D. BUTI: Talking to the police commissioner on its own will not solve domestic violence. I am not trying to make a political point about this because it is a serious issue. When the minister was out of the chamber, I said that every member in this place, including the minister herself, takes this seriously. All I am saying is that the government's policies will not address the issues. This is a crisis. The minister knows it is a crisis; I know that she said, before the last election, that it was a crisis. To take away specialised units would be like us—imagine it—taking away the specialised child abuse units. There would be an uproar! Those units are there because they have special skills and special dedication to address the crime of child abuse. The specialised domestic violence units have dedicated individuals who have a special interest in addressing domestic violence. I congratulate the former Minister for Police in respect to these units. The minister should reinstate these units or speak to the police commissioner about having them reinstated. Local policing teams were not set up under the front-line operation to deal with the domestic violence crisis. The minister knows that and she should not try to cover up the problem of disbanding these specialised DV units. Local policing will not solve the issue.

MS L.L. BAKER (Maylands) [4.45 pm]: When I was reading through the motion this afternoon, it occurred to me that I could talk about my electorate. I could talk about some of the areas specifically relevant to this motion that have not been delivered in the electorate and how that has impacted on my constituents, but I thought perhaps I would rather talk at a bit of a higher level about some strategic issues that have not been pursued by this government. In some respects, I feel a bit guilty that I might be accused of having been caught in smoke and mirrors because members will remember that this government put a substantial amount of funding into the social services sector five years ago. For that, I am personally very grateful and I acknowledge that contribution. However, what I see happening now is deeply concerning to me. I had been focused on how it is good that the non-government organisation sector got all that extra money, but now I am worried about some of the areas in social policy that have been ignored under this government. Therefore, I will run through some of the failures in this government's approach to social policy in the state.

I will start with some of the bleeding obvious, I might suggest, one of which is the failure of this government to appoint a Commissioner for Equal Opportunity. I think the hint has been that when the commissioner retires, someone may go in as an acting commissioner, but we have no definite direction about what will happen with the equal opportunity commissioner role. We are talking about a significant lever in trying to move towards a more diverse workforce and a more balanced and fair society. I am just cautioning, and it worries me deeply to think that the work of the Commissioner for Equal Opportunity may not be afforded the level of significance that I and certainly many Western Australians would think it should have into the future. It does not take much to look at some of the statistics that support my concern about the need to continue with a focus on equal opportunity in this state. To start, there is the pay equity unit in the Department of Commerce. In case members

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did not know, Western Australia has a significantly bad reputation for the gap between the salaries of men and women. There is a 26 per cent difference in Western Australia, whereas the national average difference is 17 per cent. That is particularly interesting given the sectors that are predominant in our economy. It may be that some portion of that gap reflects the fact that the mining industry has historically been dominated by male employees, particularly at executive levels, and that could have some play in these figures. However, these figures have not been decreasing. The pay equity unit in the Department of Commerce is down to 1.5 full-time equivalents and has been struggling at that level for a number of years. To not address what is a significant problem in our workforce—namely, a 26 per cent pay differential between the pay of our women and our men—is a clear dereliction of duty. I believe that we are also looking at changes in the substantive equality unit, and that also concerns me. At one point in my career I worked on the state's first diversity policy with the then Public Service Commissioner. I am certainly aware that the substantive equality unit came out of that initial work on diversity policy for the state. If the substantive equality unit is being downsized or removed—I am not saying for a second that the world will come to an end if it is—it will be another chip out of what was strong social policy infrastructure in our state. That should be a concern to everyone in this house.

A very vulnerable area at the moment is the role of the Commissioner for Children and Young People. Members will remember that both sides of this Parliament supported the legislation to establish the Commissioner for Children and Young People and the subsequent appointment. Members will all know of the incredibly valuable work of the children's commissioner. Unless members were in the house the other day when I was talking to the annual report of the Joint Standing Committee on Children and Young People, they may not be aware that the commissioner has resigned. The then commissioner, Michelle Scott, resigned 12 months ago, when she was not reappointed to the position. Instead, she was reinstated in an acting capacity. The children's commissioner has been acting for 12 months in a position that she started six years ago. The office of the children's commissioner is now a very well respected organisation that does some remarkable work. Children are talked about and considered and parents' rights are considered. As Commissioner for Children and Young People, Michelle Scott has implemented some remarkable initiatives in this state in relation to the place of parents and children in our society and in giving children a voice so they can be better heard. All that work was not enough for this government to appoint a children's commissioner 12 months ago. At the time, the government said that it would review the office. That was correct; the legislation dictates that should be done. The review was completed in May this year. More information was sought and that was delivered more than a month ago. The commissioner resigned from the acting role a couple of weeks ago.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr I.M. Britza): I need the conversations to be down a little bit please. Thank you.

Ms L.L. BAKER: Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker.

I read in the paper on the weekend—that is how I found out about it—that the Attorney General has appointed another person as acting Commissioner for Children and Young People. I know the person who will take on the role; she is a fine woman and I am sure she will be very good in the position. However, that is not the point. I am talking about changes in the social fabric and social structure of our community and the protections put in place during many years of a Labor government. Indeed, some of the initiatives were supported by the Liberal government at the time. How can we in this house possibly allow the role of the children's commissioner to be downgraded any further? It has already been an acting role for 12 months. Members should remember the Blaxell inquiry into the abuse of children at the Katanning hostels, which commenced at the beginning of this year. Members opposite should remember Justice Blaxell's recommendations, which the government accepted. He recommended the office of the children's commissioner be asked to look at managing a complaints function so that people who were abused as children have a place of referral as either adults or children. That is a massive job. Justice Blaxell's recommendations were not about only that; they were more extensive and more comprehensive. Members opposite all sat here and wholeheartedly agreed that they needed to be adopted. Do members opposite know what? Nothing has happened. We are in this room with colleagues who, in 12 months, have done nothing about implementing the Blaxell recommendations. What does that say about how much members opposite value children in our community? Look at what is happening with the national commission into child abuse at the moment. Members opposite should read some of the testimonies and some of the evidence. If they think abuse happens in other states and is reported only to that national inquiry, they are wrong; it is not. It is still happening in our state. The government has done nothing to appoint a new Western Australian children's commissioner. Instead the government has obfuscated even more by appointing another acting commissioner for 12 months. I do not think that is something any government should be proud of, certainly not a government that supported the legislation when it was passed and certainly not a government that recognised the need for and supported the implementation of the Blaxell recommendations. That is not the kind of social policy in this state that I want to see progressed. When we talk about the failings of this government, I choose to focus

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on strategic social failings that I can see, and I am asking that they be addressed. It is not okay to sit silently and allow the downgrading of important structures in our society that are put there to protect children and the most vulnerable. It is not okay to have acting roles; it is not okay to delay the appointment of those positions. It sends a very strong message to the community that the government does not care. Five years ago, the government gave the community sector some money for reforms, but meanwhile we are watching Rome burn. There is still no structure in place to which children can go to report what happens to them, and that is a very grave situation.

Another area I think is worth pointing out is the Western Australian Council of Social Service pre-budget submission for 2014. I want to highlight the incredibly problematic area of housing and homelessness in this state. I acknowledge that significant funding has been provided, firstly, by federal Labor for new housing development in this state, and the state also has provided millions of dollars for it. Let us see what WACOSS says about the situation for 2014. What are the gaps? In identifying the priorities in the sector, WACOSS points to the need for expanded pathways by which people can secure affordable housing. People need access to affordable and appropriate sustainable housing to avoid homelessness and financial hardship situations. On the cost of living, WACOSS says —

Targeted and integrated financial and household efficiency services for Western Australians on low, fixed or insecure incomes, vulnerable to utility hardship and financial stress.

That is what is required to address some of the cost-of-living problems. We all know that, because people come into our electorate offices every week and say that they cannot pay their bills. It is definitely an area that needs significant investment. It might even need policy intelligence; these matters are not always about money. Their solution often requires only a different way of thinking. WACOSS says further —

People experiencing multiple forms of vulnerability need to be supported to achieve positive outcomes through effective and efficient delivery of services.

That is WACOSS's way of describing how to deal with people with complex needs, and that is an increasing issue in our society. WACOSS has pointed out gaps in what it calls "the housing continuum". I think that is a clever way of describing how housing in our community is functioning or, in some cases, not functioning for people at the low end of the income spectrum or are vulnerable for other reasons. It makes some key observations about each of the levels on its continuum. It states that the housing continuum moves from homelessness through to homeownership.

Mr T.R. Buswell: That continuum was part of the work of the Social Housing Taskforce that was established. I am pretty sure that a whole pile of people were involved in that back in 2008. It is really interesting. It is actually the policy foundation of the Department of Housing. I am sure it did not invent it.

Ms L.L. BAKER: The housing continuum?

Mr T.R. Buswell: Yes. I am sure it has been around for a long time. It became part of the public policy debate in WA at that time. That was under Ian Carter, the head of that task force.

Ms L.L. BAKER: Yes. I remember when it first came out. I think it is quite a sensible way of looking at it. I know it is controversial and I know the housing sector does not always agree with the movement up, down or across the levels of the continuum. The point I am making in today's debate is about where I think some of the gaps and omissions are in social policy. The points that the Western Australian Council of Social Service makes are descriptors around homelessness. It points to the 15 000 homeless people in WA who sleep rough in cars, tents or insecure housing or who rely on social networks for temporary shelter. It also refers to institutional care. It is very clear that there is no easy way of transitioning people from mental health institutions and prisons in particular back into the community. I know it is a particular problem in electorates such as Kalgoorlie, where there are grave issues with ex-offenders who come out of incarceration, are put into the community and are expected to survive but there is no housing for them. If they can be transported to their community or to their homes, there is no guarantee that that housing is secure.

Crisis accommodation continues to be a problem in this state. This is not new, but this government is not focusing on it. When somebody's world explodes for whatever reason—they become ill or they lose their income—and cannot pay the mortgage or the rent and the family ends up being chucked out of their accommodation, they then have to find crisis accommodation, which is short-term accommodation. It should be only for up to three months. Good luck with that. It is impossible to find it. It is particularly impossible to find youth accommodation in the crisis area. It has always been really difficult to find accommodation for young

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pregnant women in crisis situations. I know that the issues around crisis accommodation and transitional housing for people who come out of institutionalised settings and are looking for housing are very complex.

The median private weekly rent in Perth is approximately \$475 a week. Over 44 000 renters in WA are estimated to be in housing stress, spending more than 30 per cent of their income on housing. The proportion of the minimum wage required to meet the median rent has grown from 35 to 75 per cent over the past decade.

[Member's time extended.]

Ms L.L. BAKER: There are 45 000 WA homeowners in the lowest two income quintiles who are estimated to be in housing stress—that is, they spend more than 30 per cent of their income on mortgage payments.

I want to talk in fairly specific terms about the social policy gaps. The motion seeks to condemn the Barnett government for its poor economic management and its failures across a multitude of portfolios. I choose to specifically look at social policy failures, as I see them. These things are accelerating and getting bigger and they will not go away. The more the government takes its eyes off the social policy failures, the more endemic and complex to resolve they become. We know that poverty is at the heart of social exclusion, and social exclusion is commonly known to drive antisocial behaviour, criminal activity and homelessness. Society struggles to cope with a range of things, and I do not think this government has a handle on that. These are real failures in how the government is addressing the state's development. If we look only at the economic issues, not the social issues, we miss a massive part—the human part—of the development of society and the cohesion that holds us together. If we look only at the economics of the situation, we end up talking about human capital. I prefer not to think about people in terms of capital; I prefer to think about people as the backbone of our society and about their relationships and wellbeing.

Before I sit down, I also want to mention the particular failures that have played out in my electorate. I point specifically to the education cuts. So far, the state cuts alone have had a major impact on how the education system will be run next year in my electorate. Each school has had significant cuts. The cuts consist of about 15 positions across the board and about \$1 million, and that is a fairly conservative estimate. This is not information that I have made up; this is information that has come directly from schools. I have this information from talking to the Aboriginal education officer, who used to work four days a week but now works only two days a week. Why? It is because the school does not have the budget to pay for it. The language programs have gone and the school support program resource allocation programs have gone. All the other things that were on offer in my community have gone. The loss of the language programs is particularly concerning. One of the schools in my electorate comprises 63 nationalities, and many members would have similar situations. A lot of time is spent on the English as a second language program and the like. These programs in schools need to be well funded for children so that they can achieve at the very best level for their future and they can make good contributions to the community and to the economy.

One of the items on the Bayswater council meeting agenda is the recent rejection of its application for funding under the riverbank grant application scheme. The council asked for some funding for restoration work at the Clarkson and Bath Street Reserves and was knocked back. They were not significant amounts of funding. The council has been working hand in hand with the Swan River Trust on these things for some 10 years. Of course, now this government has removed not the social infrastructure of the state, but the environmental infrastructure and the policy framework around the environment, the things that keep the Swan River safe and the things that made us look more broadly at the Swan River, not just that part of the river that flows through our electorates. The riverbank at the Clarkson and Bath Street Reserves will not be fixed. Plastic fencing is being put up instead of repairing the riverbank. That situation is not sustainable in the long term. The most important question for me is: who will ensure the health of the river in the future? I have no faith now that the Swan River Trust will be absorbed into a bigger department. History has shown—I have been in departments in which this has happened—that there is a loss of focus and the area slides by and becomes so diffuse that it no longer registers in anyone's job description. This is bound to happen. People in my electorate are very concerned about the future of the Swan River and what the abolition of the Swan River Trust holds in store. More importantly, we are already seeing knockbacks for funding for small community groups and the like that are struggling. On the weekends they are out planting sedge, picking up rubbish off the riverbank, reporting boat speeding and checking that the flora and fauna are safe and well, but they no longer have the support of the small amount of funding that was provided under the Swan River Trust. Where will that go? How will my constituents know that the river will be healthy in the future?

I cannot go on without mentioning mosquitoes. A significant funding commitment was promised by this government for the control and management of the mosquito population. I know that many members live near areas that are mosquito prone—I note the member for Swan Hills has indicated that he does. I am sure that

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members hear the buzzing from the mosquitos, and the buzzing from the residents about the problems with the management of the mosquito population. This is a big issue in my electorate because the Liberal Party promised funding of \$1 million a year for four years to the electorate of Maylands. I thought it was bizarre when it came out in black and white in a media release, and was then printed by all the newspapers. The Liberal's candidate for Maylands said that this funding would happen and how fantastic it was. After the election, when the council followed up on how it could access some of this money—it wanted only \$130 000, not \$1 million; it was not really batting at a high enough average for that—it basically got stonewalled. The Minister for Health, the Deputy Premier, said “We did not really mean that. That is not what we meant.” I am sorry, but the government needs to start saying what it means and not print mistruths. If the government makes a promise and costs it in this fashion, it should make damn sure that the promise is correct and that it abides by the promise. It is not fair, it is not truthful and it is not something that gains the government, its individual members or its candidates the respect of the members of my community. The community will not forget that promises have been broken.

The Bayswater precinct is another area on which I am just about to write to the minister. The Bayswater precinct is a very tired, sad part of the Bayswater area. During the election campaign, the Minister for Transport was there having photographs taken.

Mr T.R. Buswell: At the school?

Ms L.L. BAKER: No, not Hillcrest Primary School; that was on another occasion. I think the minister had some photographs taken with a candidate just near the Bayswater train station and the car park. That area of shops is pretty tired and sad because not only is the infrastructure old and grotty —

Mr T.R. Buswell: Hillcrest Primary School?

Ms L.L. BAKER: No, not Hillcrest. Hillcrest is gorgeous. I am talking about the Bayswater shopping precinct, which needs redevelopment and a real sense of the future.

Mr T.R. Buswell: I would not talk it down that much. It seemed to me to have a lot of potential. I will talk to the mayor.

Ms L.L. BAKER: Could we start with a toilet?

Mr T.R. Buswell: That is a bit radical.

Ms L.L. BAKER: I know it is a big ask, minister, but the train station there has no toilet. As the minister knows, the Bayswater train station is set for some minor remodelling and the minister's development assessment panel told the Department of Transport that all train stations should have toilets, and it got a good slap across the cheek and had to withdraw that comment.

Mr T.R. Buswell: The remodelling in Bayswater has been deferred. We wrote to the former mayor and let him know.

Ms L.L. BAKER: There we go then. My point is that the precinct's entire redevelopment was predicated on or linked in very closely with the airport rail link, which is coming in a bit higher. A person can write to council about how the area is tired, the shop owners are sad and better facilities are needed around the stations and the shopping area, but they are told that nothing will be done until the airport rail link is built. The government promised to provide an airport rail link, but it has moved it out a little further than the end of the universe. This is a bit like *The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy*. We need one of those fish we stick in the ear to translate what the government means when it says something, because it surely is not what the citizens in my electorate are thinking.

Mr W.J. Johnston: They are called “Babel fish”.

Ms L.L. BAKER: Thank you, member for Cannington.

Mr T.R. Buswell: What was the name of the character in that book?

Ms L.L. BAKER: Zaphod Beeblebrox, but please do not ask me to spell that. Rather than digressing into far-flung parts of the universe, the Bayswater precinct redevelopment has now ground to a halt. There are no toilets so people are relieving themselves outside the doors of shopkeepers and in the corridors, and the coffee shops are also closing down, making it a very sad area. The area's remodelling has been predicated on the redevelopment of the airport rail link and, as the minister has now put on the public record, the redevelopment of the train station and airport link will not go ahead but have been deferred.

Mr T.R. Buswell: I did not say that at all.

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Ms L.L. BAKER: The minister said that they had been deferred.

Mr T.R. Buswell: No; I said that the planned works for the train station, which were to happen now, will be rolled into the airport rail link project. I did not say that the airport rail link project had been deferred.

Ms L.L. BAKER: So when will that happen?

Mr T.R. Buswell: We will all find out soon.

Ms L.L. BAKER: There we go. I do not believe or have a lot of confidence in what the minister just said. He would not be at all surprised to know that I am sure that the residents and the shop owners around that area think the same thing—they would not accept those comments from the minister either.

All in all, this is about not just the economic problems, but the fact that the government is letting deep and complicated social failures creep into the way this state is being managed, and we will see the outcome of that very soon.

MR M.P. MURRAY (Collie–Preston) [5.16 pm]: The last comments by the previous speaker are exactly right; this is about not just the issue of finance, but the many social issues that are being ignored by this government, one of which is housing. Members know of empty houses around the place that have not been repaired so that people can have accommodation. People come into my office on a regular basis and tell me there are 10 houses in Collie and five houses in Carey Park, but no-one can move in because they are locked up and waiting for maintenance to be done. Some of them are old stock and certainly need some work but, at times, any accommodation is better than none. We must work with the system, using the money we have, which is not happening. The most disappointing thing is that this government does not have the will to solve the problem. It is just bumbling along and not doing much at all really. Legislation that could solve some of these problems has been very slowly coming through this house. Yet, here we are, like last night, sitting on some trivial type of legislation about boundaries that has been in the air for five and a half years, and still we cannot get it sorted in a reasonable time because the government has not got its house in order. This is about not working the system that is available and not making sure that the policies put forward are good. Looking around the chamber tonight, I note that the leadership of the National Party must have some function on again.

Mr V.A. Catania: I have taken over.

Mr M.P. MURRAY: The member for North West Central is the new deputy leader—I will tell his colleagues when they come back! The National Party's seats are commonly empty these days, probably because its members are not overly keen about being part of the coalition because they are no longer relevant to this house and, in their own words, they have lost the balance of power. Even their leader has jumped ship and said that he does not want to be here anymore. He is no longer the king of the castle and cannot belong in this place, so he is just going to sit on the back bench after Christmas. In my view, that is very poor and very disrespectful to the people who voted him in.

In relation to alcohol and how we control its effects, one of the ministers played a major part in voting down the secondary supply laws which could have given parents some comfort through the summer months. His excuse was that a review is coming up and it was supposed to be in the house in June. That review has not yet surfaced. It was supposed to be in this house before the end of this week. He told me by way of interjection across the chamber earlier today that he does not have to table that review and he probably will not table it. He worked very hard to ensure the opposition's position was voted down. He is now embarrassed because of the support that has come out from many areas. That is a concern about where this government is headed.

I think the Treasurer is about to walk out of the chamber. We will see if we can keep him here a bit longer. If he does walk out, that would mean that no senior person will be opposite me while I stand here and speak. That shows absolute contempt for what is happening in this house. It will come back and bite the government. I remember a person who showed a lot of contempt around the place. He was the Premier at the time and could not be beaten. That was Alan Carpenter. He did not go the distance because in my view he did not pay due respect to Parliament. We now have the same thing happening directly opposite here with this government. We have one minister in the chamber.

Mr V.A. Catania: The Leader of the Opposition's never in the chamber.

Mr M.P. MURRAY: The Leader of the Opposition will not be called that after the next election; he will be called the Premier. He will be on the other side of the house.

Several members interjected.

Extract from Hansard

[ASSEMBLY — Wednesday, 4 December 2013]

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Mr M.P. MURRAY: Members can laugh and interject; they can do the lot, but they need to do the hard work. They need to convince the community, they need to be relevant and they need to be up-front in what they are doing. They are not doing that. They are putting things off. The Liquor Control Act 1988 needed upgrading. It is unfortunate that lobbyists have too much to say along those lines. That is why we have a minister who does not have the gumption to stand up to those lobbyists—they are quite good donors to the Liberal Party—and be counted on many of those issues, including the second review he has done since the Liberal–National Party has been in government.

Further down the line, but under the same Minister for Racing and Gaming, the jockeys and their legal team have come to see us regarding the appeals system because the minister is out of step with what happens on the east coast. Sure, it is not a big ticket item but 3 500 people work directly in that area. The government is treating people with contempt again. What happens when the whistle starts? It goes through like wildfire in the political scene. It has already started in the racing industry. I was at the racecourse the other day. Quite surprisingly, a person I would have picked to be very favourable of the government said the one good thing about the Labor Party is that it looks after the racing industry. I was surprised at who made that comment. If that is being said now, by the end of this government's four-year term, another 3 500 people will be strongly considering voting for the Labor Party and not the Liberal Party. What does that mean? It means that there will be a change in government. We will be flagging over time that this government has not played its role in Western Australia. We have seen the AAA credit rating disappear. We still hear the regurgitation of WA Inc that occurred years ago. We have our own WA Inc here. We have our own government that cannot manage its finances. It is exactly the same. I cannot see how this government can criticise people of the past when it has the same problem now.

Also in the racing and gaming area, we have had areas that are consistent. I mentioned the appeals system. There is also a stay of proceedings. If a jockey has been considered to be doing the wrong thing, in other states he can ask for a stay of proceedings. He can be stood down or the stay of proceedings will allow him to ride until his appeal is heard. The appeal system is very expensive in this state. I hope that over time we will be able to fix that. I can give members a very strong guarantee that if it is not done under this government, it will be done under the next Labor government.

Further on sport, I move on to the trail bike strategy. My colleague has left the room now after running a battery flat. The trail bike strategy has been around since 2007. We have seen so many people injured and killed while riding recreational bikes, mainly in the forests or on beaches. We regularly see the helicopter going in to pull out people who have had accidents in inaccessible places. There is only one small area north of Perth and another one in the making east of Perth for these trail bike riders—55 000 of them. For this government to ignore 55 000 recreational trail bike riders is political suicide yet we have seen absolutely zero money go towards the recommendations of the trail bike strategy, which has been on the cards since 2007 when it was brought into this house. At the same time we spend millions of dollars repairing people's legs and arms and attending to their burns. People are dying from their injuries because we do not have areas for them to ride like the east coast does, yet we have the biggest areas available. Pine plantations, natural forests and beach areas could be designated for these people. Signs could tell them to ride one way so that people are not going up the track and coming back. That is how a lot of the accidents happen, at their own doing. There have been two deaths and many serious injuries in my area over the last few years. The riders get out on the forest tracks for a ride and run into cars coming the other way. That can be fixed if there are designated areas to ride but we have heard not a peep from the National Party minister. He has said not one word other than saying that he knows about it and he is going to fix it, but he is not putting any money in the budget. They are the types of things that change people's views of a political party, from either side. We know who is in government and we know what is going to happen.

I move on to broken promises, which I have spoken about many times in this place. I will not go through the whole list because I have only nine minutes left and I would use it all up. Promises were made at the last election. I still have the ads in my office, saying that the policies were fully costed and fully funded, along with the stamp that went with them. Any time someone asks me, I say, "There it is; that's what you voted for. There is the ad." What a furphy that was. It has been said many times in this place, but it was the biggest con job around the place. It would be highly embarrassing for my opponent to put her head up now after going down that line to find out that she was conned by her leadership group and the money is not forthcoming. I have heard the statement, "We will wait for the full four years." I will, but how do we move forward in the meantime? A huge amount of money has been taken away—\$7 million for Collie Senior High School, \$16 million for the Millbridge–Treendale bridge that was promised. It was supposed to be started but the planning is going. The government has spent \$200 000. That is absolutely not good enough. The effect of that promise was reflected in the polling booths at the election. People voted down that line. I watched that closely because I have always been elected on a very slim margin. I know that my vote went down in Eaton because of that promise. The Labor

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Party did not promise the bridge because we could not afford it. We showed restraint and honesty but this government showed no restraint or any honesty to the people in that area. Time will tell. The bridge might be built by 2019, but the government promised to build it in this term of government and it has not been done. Those are two major issues. Working backwards, we can see what effect that issue has on jobs. A small truck driver with a bobcat could have been employed on a \$25 million project. People are really struggling, especially in the south west. I have not heard many statements from either the National Party or the Liberal Party about what they are doing for the south west. There is the silent member for Bunbury—he is not here again—who, as I said last night, has been rotated and has not taken it too well. He did bring in a couple of petitions. I was glad to see that he tabled United Voice petitions; it was quite ironic coming from a member on the other side of the chamber. It was good to see that he brought in those petitions but he has said nothing about what is happening in the Bunbury region.

Let me jump from how Bunbury has been treated with contempt and look at the money put into the Busselton region. There has been \$23 million spent to get rid of seaweed on the beach. That is wonderful. There is a cancer unit in Bunbury without staff; there are no doctors or specialists because there are not enough incentives to attract people. People are dodging the hospital in Bunbury because they cannot get the services they require. Those services need to be provided before we deal with smelly seaweed. I know there is a problem with seaweed in Busselton, but anyone with knowledge of the sea knew right from the start that that problem would happen.

There is the issue of the Coalfields highway. Although I welcome the work that has been done, it is utilising old money that was not spent prior to the election. That money is being used well, but the government cannot get its department in order. The badly needed excision from the national park, which is where all the accidents happen and the deaths occur, has not happened. There have been excisions to allow trees to be cleared to fix roads in Margaret River, Boyup Brook and in the wheatbelt. Why has the Coalfields highway excision not happened? The reason given is that the stakeholders have a problem with it. Do members know who the stakeholders are? It is the Department of Parks and Wildlife. The government cannot fix its internal problems to work through this. Again, this is an absolutely dysfunctional government. I am glad the Minister for Fisheries has walked into the chamber because I do not know whether he has listened to all that. The stakeholders opposing the changes to Coalfields highway are internal; there are no external stakeholders as we were led to believe. It is the department that is saying no. Can the stakeholders not all sit at the cabinet table and work through that? Major road works in an area where there are major problems are being held up. I have spoken about this many times.

Mr T.R. Buswell: That is in Wellington National Park.

Mr M.P. MURRAY: Yes. As I have only a couple of minutes left I will move on to something that annoyed me when I was talking to the minister in the corridor about fishing licences. People from Collie who are not online now have to travel to Bunbury to get a fishing licence. Yesterday, the minister was patronising. The press release states that the Department of Fisheries will do its own processing and no longer have agencies. I am annoyed that the Bunbury office says that if a queue forms out the front, it reserves the right to shut the doors. That is from the Bunbury office. The doors will be shut on people who travel from Collie and tourists who want to go marroning or fishing when there are too many people queuing outside the office. What kind of a service is that providing for the tourism industry of Western Australia, particularly tourism in the south west? I am sure it will happen in other areas once it has started in Bunbury. That is the type of service we are getting from this government.

Mr T.R. Buswell: A fishing licence.

Mr M.P. MURRAY: Yes, for a fishing licence. There are queues when people go in to the office over the Christmas period. When people come into town, they realise they need a licence for marroning. In this state, 85 000 people get a fishing licence, and they are not all done online. People who were invited by their friends to go fishing for the day will not be able to go. There is supposed to be a 24/7 service, except it is shut at Christmas. Off the top of my head, I think that the press release states that it will shut on 24 December and open on 4 January. This service has been taken away from a tourism industry that is battling. The minister was very patronising and pretended that he did not know anything about this, but it is quite obvious from the press release that he knows more than he said he did. He just gave me a pat on the head and was cursory. He did not give me a kiss on the cheek but he certainly told me in an indirect way to get on my way. Let us look at where we are going with these cuts to departments. Struggling country towns will struggle more if money is not spent on promised jobs and if agencies are shut and people are unable to access government departments. Although this is not a state government issue, the Centrelink office is to be removed from Collie.

Extract from *Hansard*

[ASSEMBLY — Wednesday, 4 December 2013]

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Mr Mark McGowan; Acting Speaker; Dr Tony Buti; Ms Lisa Baker; Mr Mick Murray; Mr Sean L'Estrange; Mrs Michelle Roberts; Deputy Speaker; Mr Troy Buswell; Mr Vincent Catania; Mr Chris Tallentire; Mr Chris Hatton; Mr Dave Kelly

MR S.K. L'ESTRANGE (Churchlands) [5.36 pm]: It was interesting to listen to members opposite talking about this matter of public interest. The subject heading is about economic management and just about anything else. It made me think that the speeches from members opposite were end-of-the-year address-in-reply speeches.

Mr F.A. Alban: It's not a maiden speech; it's a granny speech!

Mr S.K. L'ESTRANGE: That may be so, member. I would like to focus on the economic management aspect of the opposition's attempt to discredit this fantastic government's efforts in its term so far. The Labor Party's performance in opposition and in government is a great paradox. The Labor Party professes to be a sound fiscal manager and an advocate for sound fiscal indicators such as economic growth, low inflation, low unemployment, strong private sector investment —

Mrs M.H. Roberts: We won the AAA back, didn't we?

Mr S.K. L'ESTRANGE: Yes, member for Midland. It also professes to support targeted microeconomic reform to tune those specific sectors of the economy. The Labor Party really talks it up and espouses to be the leader of the west that draws big international investors to our shores and opens up opportunities for all Western Australians. Alas, the reality is somewhat different. I find that in opposition, members of the Labor Party are dreamers. I have said it before that in opposition the Labor Party is not accountable. It can say all sorts of things in opposition. It can put out grand plans for what it would do if it were in government and criticise the government for getting on with the job.

Mr M.P. Murray: Fully costed and fully funded.

Mr S.K. L'ESTRANGE: It is interesting that the member for Collie–Preston should say “fully funded and fully costed” because I remember during Labor's election campaign it put out an amazing kaleidoscope of what looks like spaghetti and called it “Spaghettinet” or something. It was unbelievable; it had red, black, yellow, green, blue and purple lines going absolutely everywhere.

Several members interjected.

Mr S.K. L'ESTRANGE: Let me share a story with the member for Collie–Preston about “Spaghettinet”. A young university student was doorknocking with me and I explained to her the different proposals for light rail. I asked her whether she knew about the “Spaghettinet” thing the opposition has got and she said that it was very exciting. I asked her what it reminded her of and she replied that it looked a bit like the London Underground. I said, “Exactly; it's a very clever piece of marketing. It looks like the London Underground.” I said, “But do you know what? It's above ground.” She said, “Are you serious? I thought it was going to be underground.” I said, “No, no; they're actually going to have to move all these houses and move all these roads and put in this “Spaghettinet” all over the metropolitan area.” She said, “How are they going to do that?” I said, “Exactly.” So when the opposition starts espousing fully costed, fully funded to the government in this place, I ask that it look at its “Spaghettinet” because it will find that when independent auditors of “Spaghettinet” had a look at it, they found the opposition was very much wanting in the actual financial statements linked to that project—very much wanting!

Several members interjected.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, members, please.

Mrs M.H. Roberts: This from the party that shut the Fremantle line!

Mr S.K. L'ESTRANGE: Member for Midland, when in opposition the Labor Party loves telling stories—in fact, they are almost akin to fairy stories! I think sometimes members opposite think they are superheros! We have the member for Willagee abseiling off the gallery and the member for Bassendean—“Boy Wonder”—eyeing off the member for Rockingham's Batmobile and thinking: When's it going to be my turn to drive the big car? They are sizing up all the different things.

Mrs M.H. Roberts: He's just excited to be called a boy!

Mr S.K. L'ESTRANGE: Does the member for Midland want to expand on that? Anyway, I am not sure exactly where the member for Midland was going with that, but it was great to see a bit of excitement from her.

The member for Armadale—I wish he was in the chamber right now—is undoubtedly one of the strong performers of the Labor backbench. I think he would make an excellent shadow minister, and it is just a shame that the leadership of members opposite leaves him out! He is left right out on the back bench. He has such passion. The member for Fremantle has the “lasso of truth” ready to throw around people; it seems to have got a

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few of them tangled up! But the poor old member for Armadale, who I think has an enormous amount to offer for the opposition, is left out.

Mr A. Krsticevic: He is very talented.

Mr S.K. L'ESTRANGE: He is very talented.

On the whole theme of superheros—some members may have seen this movie—one of my young kids was watching *The Incredibles*. One of the characters in *The Incredibles* is a guy called Syndrome who wants to be a superhero. The member for Armadale is like Syndrome—desperately wanting to be one of the superheros, but none of the superheros wants him on their team! They leave him up there on the back bench and he has so much to offer. I really think the opposition should have a look —

Ms S.F. McGurk: Just concentrate on your own track record.

Mr S.K. L'ESTRANGE: That is interesting, because let us actually have a look at the opposition's track record—I am glad the member for Fremantle brought that to my attention. I draw the opposition's attention to a newspaper article from *The West Australian* of 29 September 2009 titled “Carpenter's achievements clouded by misjudgments”. This was where fantasy had to become reality, so the Labor Party went from being dreamers in opposition when it got into government in 2001, and it stood and said, “Right, we're in power now! What do we do?” They are like —

Point of Order

Mrs M.H. ROBERTS: I draw your attention to the motion, which is that this house condemns the Barnett government for its poor economic management and appalling failures across a multitude of portfolios.

Mr J. Norberger interjected.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Joondalup, a point of order is not a time for you to be vocal. Please hear the point of order in silence.

Mrs M.H. ROBERTS: Although the member may think he is entertaining in talking about the opposition, the motion is actually about the government. He is not speaking to the motion. I would ask you to draw him back to the motion.

Mr T.R. BUSWELL: Further to that point of order, I simply remind the house and the opposition manager of business that the parameters within which the member for Churchlands is addressing the house would, at most, be a subset of the parameters that the member for Collie–Preston, for example —

Mrs M.H. Roberts interjected.

Mr T.R. BUSWELL: Of course, member for Midland. But it would seem that the member for Churchlands' debate is well within the parameters that have been clearly established by members opposite.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The member for Churchlands was responding to an interjection from the member for Fremantle, so if members do not wish to get sidetracked into those areas that are not dealing with the motion, they should limit their interjections.

Debate Resumed

Mr S.K. L'ESTRANGE: I will draw attention to the interjection from the member for Fremantle, because she rightly drew my attention to what the Labor Party was like when it was in government, which is the whole premise of this debate.

Ms S.F. McGurk: No; I said stick to your own economic record.

Mr S.K. L'ESTRANGE: This motion states that the Barnett–Buswell government—the Liberal–National government—is a government that is not doing a good enough job. But the premise of my debate is that when the Labor Party was in power it continued to dream and do very little! I draw members' attention to the article in *The West Australian*, “Carpenter's achievements clouded by misjudgements”.

Mr T.R. Buswell: Who wrote that?

Mr S.K. L'ESTRANGE: It actually does not have his name here, Treasurer. This is interesting, and I will draw attention to what the Labor government was thinking and dreaming of doing.

Several members interjected.

Mr Mark McGowan; Acting Speaker; Dr Tony Buti; Ms Lisa Baker; Mr Mick Murray; Mr Sean L'Estrange; Mrs Michelle Roberts; Deputy Speaker; Mr Troy Buswell; Mr Vincent Catania; Mr Chris Tallentire; Mr Chris Hatton; Mr Dave Kelly

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, members! Treasurer and member for Midland, you are making it very difficult for Hansard, so desist the banter across the house and we will listen to the member for Churchlands. Thank you.

Mr S.K. L'ESTRANGE: The 2009 article that reflects Carpenter's Labor government reads —

There were visionary projects, including bold plans for a \$300 million Perth waterfront project, a \$1.1 billion outdoor stadium at Subiaco and a \$506 million museum in East Perth. But Labor's electoral disaster saw these plans shelved or scrapped and in any case they might have sunk under the weight of the global financial crisis. Fuelled by the boom, his government —

This is Carpenter's government —

kept debt low but was unable to control a blow-out in public service wages.

Ladies and gentlemen, they were dreamers in opposition and dreamers in government and they think they have all the big and good ideas. In fact, at the time of this article when I looked at the newspaper and it had this vision for the waterfront of Perth, it looked like something out of *The Jetsons*. I was looking for the spaceships flying around! "Dubai in the sky"—it was absolutely unbelievable!

Several members interjected.

Mr S.K. L'ESTRANGE: What is interesting is that the Labor Party dreams up these ideas but does absolutely nothing about them, but when we get into government, hello—have a look out the window! What do members see?

Several members interjected.

Mr S.K. L'ESTRANGE: We see the waterfront being redeveloped.

Mr V.A. Catania: Only one member of the opposition, we see!

Mr S.K. L'ESTRANGE: One member of the opposition! It is a sad indictment that on its own debate it is not actually prepared to listen!

Mr V.A. Catania: How irresponsible!

Mrs M.H. Roberts: It says something about the quality of your speech, I think—you have driven them away!

Mr S.K. L'ESTRANGE: Very droll, member for Midland!

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, members.

Mrs M.H. Roberts: Why don't you talk about the Mandurah rail line achievement? How many kilometres of rail line have you built?

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Midland, I have called for order; do not make me call you, please.

Mr S.K. L'ESTRANGE: Member for Midland —

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Just a minute, member for Churchlands. I also warn other members—I am not calling them—but let us just have a debate so that we can hear what the member for Churchlands has to say.

Mr S.K. L'ESTRANGE: I am glad the member for Midland drew my attention to her interesting comment about the Labor Party's railway line, because it made me think: What has the Barnett government done in its very recent history? Let us have a think about that. Perth city infrastructure projects: City Link—a \$755 million project to sink the Wellington Street bus station and rail line. Guess what? It is almost complete.

Mr T.R. Buswell: Ahead of schedule.

Mr S.K. L'ESTRANGE: Ahead of schedule! Let us have a look at the —

Mrs M.H. Roberts: A \$20 billion state debt.

Mr S.K. L'ESTRANGE: There we go!

Ms E. Evangel: With outcomes to show for it!

Mr S.K. L'ESTRANGE: Absolute naysayers on the other side!

There is the \$430 million Elizabeth Quay development on the Swan River foreshore; there it is, being built—actually being done. The opposition loves dreaming and it also loves reflecting on its glorious past of building one railway line! Unbelievable. Then it followed that one railway line up, as I said earlier, with "Spaghetinet", which was not costed, not funded and never going to happen, but it tried to win an election off the back of it. But

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let us ignore that and I will bring myself back to my point, which is that the Perth major stadium and associated transport infrastructure—\$1.3 billion on Burswood peninsula—has actually commenced. Of course, we have got the new Museum, the Northbridge cultural precinct and the \$111 million Riverside project in East Perth.

Mrs M.H. Roberts: Sorry, where's the new Museum? Where is it? I haven't seen it!

Mr T.R. Buswell: You might end up in it!

Mrs M.H. Roberts: Where is it?

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, members!

Mr S.K. L'ESTRANGE: It is on its way, member; it is on its way! The member does not need to worry about that.

Mr N.W. Morton interjected.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Forrestfield!

Mr S.K. L'ESTRANGE: It is going absolutely fine.

Dr M.D. Nahan: What about the Midland hospital?

Mr S.K. L'ESTRANGE: That is a very good point, member.

Mrs M.H. Roberts: Which we were going to complete last year!

Mr S.K. L'ESTRANGE: Does the member know what?

Several members interjected.

Mr S.K. L'ESTRANGE: Let me now bring us back to this motion of members opposite —

Dr M.D. Nahan interjected.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Minister for Energy, will you please desist. It makes it very difficult for Hansard. We need to hear the member on his feet; we need to hear one member at a time.

Mr S.K. L'ESTRANGE: Let us draw our attention back to what this motion is all about: it is having a go at a government that is getting on with the job of governing. This motion has a go at a Treasurer and a Premier who are ensuring that the big projects get off the ground and are being built. The people of Western Australia for the next 50 or 100 years will benefit from the decisions being made by this government. These decisions are being made by a government that is getting things done. These are not dreams and ideas that appear in newspapers from when the opposition was in government when nothing got done. In fact, I draw members' attention to some of the errors of judgement that probably cost Labor the election. I draw members' attention to the column in the *Western Australia Business News* of 18 December 2008 that is headed "Errors of judgement cost Labor".

[Quorum formed.]

Mr S.K. L'ESTRANGE: I love it when the member for Midland decides to give me a breather; it is fantastic. However, I cannot help but think that the only reason she gave me that breather was because she realised just how ridiculous the opposition has been both in government and in opposition. It is astounding! Members opposite are like scared, starry-eyed little geckos clinging to the moist ceiling of the warm Parliament with their big bright eyes looking out and saying, "We're normally the ones with all the big ideas, but we don't know how to do anything. We just cling onto power when we've got it; hold on and hope nobody recognises." Hold on tight, little geckos! Do not let go! For goodness sake —

Several members interjected.

Mr S.K. L'ESTRANGE: Thank goodness for elections! When the Western Australian public wakes up to the scared little geckos clinging onto the ceiling dreaming up all their wonderful ideas but not having a clue —

Mr P.B. Watson: Is this a leadership speech?

Mr S.K. L'ESTRANGE: Member for Albany, they do not have a clue how to actually implement anything; instead, they just ask, "What are we going to do? What are we going to do next?" This government got into power and immediately set about getting things done.

Mr P.B. Watson: What's the AAA rating?

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Mr S.K. L'ESTRANGE: Let us have a look at what members opposite did. I will quote from the column "Errors of judgement cost Labor". Listen to this, member for Albany! The column addresses the whole time Labor was in government from 2001 to 2008, so I will grab a few bits out of it.

Mr P.B. Watson interjected.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Albany!

Mr S.K. L'ESTRANGE: This is what happened when Geoff Gallop got in —

New premier Geoff Gallop had undertaken not to increase taxes, but promptly forgot he'd said that so taxes and charges went up.

Mr P.B. Watson: And he apologised!

Mr S.K. L'ESTRANGE: That was a good idea—he apologised.

Several members interjected.

Mr S.K. L'ESTRANGE: Does the member for Armadale know what? That would have been one of those great little gecko ideas: "I know, when we get in, we'll put up taxes and charges." But they did not tell anybody —

Mr P.B. Watson: Excuse me; I'm the member for Albany.

Mr S.K. L'ESTRANGE: Member for Albany, I do apologise. Anyway, the Labor government did not tell anybody. Do members know what else it went and did? This is apart from trying to put this ridiculous tax, at the time under Gallop, on people who had houses worth over a million dollars or something, which was absolutely outrageous; we were going to have all these poor pensioners out there struggling to find some cash to pay these stupid taxes each year. Thank goodness the Labor Party backtracked on that one; it was probably the cleverest decision it made in government! The Labor government went on to lift the level of stamp duty on everyone buying land or a home. Again, members opposite are advocates of sound fiscal management, such as lowering taxes, lowering interest rates, lowering unemployment, increasing private investment, getting the economy up and running—outstanding! What did they do? They increased taxes, increased charges and then they discouraged any sort of foreign investment. Let us hear what else the column states —

... the two standout items not realised that will remain in mind were: the Carpenter government's Inpex debacle; and why that government, in an era of climate change panic, sought to ban the extraction of a fuel that was emission free.

That is unbelievable!

Mr C.J. Tallentire interjected.

Mr S.K. L'ESTRANGE: Member for Gosnells —

Several members interjected.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, members!

Several members interjected.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Churchlands, when I am standing, will you please resume your seat.

Mr S.K. L'ESTRANGE: I did not see you on your feet, sorry.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you very much.

An opposition member: Call him to order.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I just did, thank you.

Mr S.K. L'ESTRANGE: I did get a little excited when the member for Gosnells came into the chamber because —

Mr C.J. Tallentire: Because you haven't got your facts right!

Mr S.K. L'ESTRANGE: We all know that the member for Gosnells is a watermelon! He is green on the outside and red on the inside. The member for Gosnells is in the wrong party; he should be on the crossbenches being true to himself and standing up for the Greens. He should not be over there.

Mr C.J. Tallentire interjected.

Mr S.K. L'ESTRANGE: Member for Gosnells —

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Several members interjected.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, member for Albany!

Mr S.K. L'ESTRANGE: Let me bring the member for Gosnells back to the point. How did the Labor —

Several members interjected.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, members! Member for Churchlands, if you wish to be heard in silence, you need to stop responding to all the interjections. If you respond to interjections, you deal with the consequences. If you could stick to the motion at hand, please, and we can have some order.

Mr S.K. L'ESTRANGE: Madam Deputy Speaker, I do not seek your protection. I am quite happy to take on interjections from members opposite so that I can demonstrate to everybody in this house just how ridiculous they are.

Mr C.J. Tallentire: Do you want a debate about Inpex, do you?

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, member!

Mr S.K. L'ESTRANGE: Let me just draw the member's attention back to the column, which states —

... how did the Carpenter Labor government fail to ensure that Inpex Browse Ltd —

Several members interjected.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Gosnells, I call you —

Mr S.K. L'ESTRANGE: — would locate the \$24 billion —

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Just a minute, member for Churchlands; I know you are getting very excited with your speech, but when you hear my voice, I would really like you to stop. Member for Gosnells, I call you for the first time; I have asked you many times not to interject.

[Member's time extended.]

Mr P.B. Watson interjected.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Albany, casual criticism of the Chair is not permitted in this house, so I call you for the first time.

Mr S.K. L'ESTRANGE: I draw members' attention back to the column, which states —

... how did the Carpenter Labor government fail to ensure that Inpex Browse Ltd would locate the \$24 billion LNG processing facility in the Kimberley rather than at Middle Arm Peninsular off Darwin?

I will tell members what is in Darwin—those little tropical sucking geckos! They are stuck to the ceilings of the hotels in Darwin. That is what is up there. They are holding onto the moist little ceiling, with their big, gorgeous, googly eyes, and are saying, "I've got an idea. Let's come up with this really good \$24 billion foreign investment project that will be of boom proportions for the Western Australian economy and let's watch it come to Darwin." Brilliant, members opposite! What does this government do? This government gets on with the job of making projects get underway. We know that because a number of expansion projects are going on right now. In fact, there are currently 23 324 tenements in force in WA, which is an historically high level for the state. This is a government that is getting on with the job of governing; this is a government that is getting on with drawing investment to this state and ensuring that the people of Western Australia, and, might I add, the 80 000 east coasters who joined us just this last year, are living off the success.

Mr J.M. Francis: And Darwin.

Mr S.K. L'ESTRANGE: Correct—and Darwin. They joined us to try to live off the success of this state.

Mr M.P. Murray: Why does the member not tell us about the education policy?

Mr S.K. L'ESTRANGE: Member for Collie–Preston, this did not happen in 2001 to 2008.

Mr M.P. Murray: It is an absolute disgrace to any bloody government!

Mr S.K. L'ESTRANGE: I know the member for Collie–Preston is a man who enjoys mining. He comes from a mining town. I know that he is a man who would like the big resource projects, particularly coal, to get off the ground and operate. But I know that the member for Collie–Preston is challenged by the member for Gosnells, who would like us to simply exist on air.

Several members interjected.

Mr Mark McGowan; Acting Speaker; Dr Tony Buti; Ms Lisa Baker; Mr Mick Murray; Mr Sean L'Estrange; Mrs Michelle Roberts; Deputy Speaker; Mr Troy Buswell; Mr Vincent Catania; Mr Chris Tallentire; Mr Chris Hatton; Mr Dave Kelly

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr I.C. Blayney): Thank you, members!

Mr M.P. Murray: That is the good thing about the Labor Party—we all fit in.

Mr S.K. L'ESTRANGE: It is good to know that the member for Collie–Preston is a welcoming man. He is clearly a welcoming man. He enjoys the fact that people can come on board and get jobs and do work. Guess what? This government is about doing exactly that. This government has enabled Western Australia to move from a rapid investment phase to a significant expansion phase in mining output. That is an outstanding achievement. It is doing this off the back of not only all this economic development, but also the big projects in Perth that we have already heard members talk about. This is a government not about dreaming, and not about superheroes throwing lassoes of truth around, dreaming up and concocting ideas; this is a government that has maintained strong economic successes. In fact, I draw members' attention to another document—the economic insights from the Commonwealth Bank's CommSec division titled "State of the States: State & territory economic performance report". It opens with —

How are Australia's states and territories performing?

Mr M.P. Murray: Don't be so vain—buy some glasses.

Mr S.K. L'ESTRANGE: I will get the member to give me a hand in a minute. It states —

Each quarter CommSec attempts to find out by analysing eight key indicators: economic growth; retail spending; equipment investment; unemployment, construction work done; population growth; housing finance and dwelling commencements.

Guess what? This is not a dream; this is a reality. It says that Western Australia remains the top performing economy in the nation with little slippage in the ranking over the past two months. It is the top performing state in the nation.

Ladies and gentlemen, I do not want to go on for too much longer because I know there are many more people in this house who want to speak.

Several members interjected.

Ms E. Evangel: Keep going.

Mr S.K. L'ESTRANGE: Thank you very much, member, I will.

I will allow the member for Collie–Preston to interject, and I ask him for his view on the carbon tax.

Mr M.P. Murray: I have very strong views on the carbon tax and it should remain.

Mr S.K. L'ESTRANGE: It should remain! Okay—fair enough.

Mr M.P. Murray: I have said that more than enough times in this place. I also support the mining tax.

Mr S.K. L'ESTRANGE: All right. The member for Collie–Preston should listen to this because I know he is interested in developments. An article by Mark Pownall from the Thursday, 30 October 2008 edition of *Western Australia Business News* states —

Many in business —

Mr D.J. Kelly interjected.

Mr S.K. L'ESTRANGE: Hang on! My goodness—is that the member for Bassendean? The boy wonder has joined us!

Several members interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Members!

Mr S.K. L'ESTRANGE: The boy wonder is back! I have missed him. I know that he has his eyes on the Batmobile. He is sizing up the caped crusader's kit. That is what he wants. I come back to Pownall's article from 2008 titled "First 100 days critical for new cabinet", which refers to when the Barnett government first got in. Let us look at what it reflected on; it states —

Many in business firmly believe the WA position could have been so much stronger had the previous two Labor governments—those of Geoff Gallop and Alan Carpenter—not fumbled the ball when it came to the approvals process, allowing projects to be delayed, postponed or taken elsewhere.

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The member for Collie–Preston has to accept that allowing projects to go elsewhere is not good for employment prospects in this state. He has to accept that.

Mr M.P. Murray: The member should ask the Premier about that because he has certainly seen them go out the door fairly quickly.

Mr S.K. L'ESTRANGE: It is funny that the member should say that because I disagree. This government has reduced the backlog of pending mineral title applications to fewer than 6 000 from a peak of more than 17 000 when those opposite were in government in 2007. This amazing effort has enabled the private sector to get on with the job of trying to generate wealth and employment opportunities and to grow this state.

Mr M.P. Murray: The member should ask the person in front of him about generation because we know his history on that.

Mr S.K. L'ESTRANGE: I am going to conclude, member for Collie–Preston, with this point.

Mr D.J. Kelly: No, keep going!

Mr S.K. L'ESTRANGE: The member for Bassendean will get his chance.

I take members back to what I said at the start: when those opposite were in government, they dreamed up a whole pile of ideas, but did nothing about them. When those opposite were in government, they enabled taxes and charges to go up and the people of Western Australia had nothing to show for it.

Several members interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Members!

Mr R.H. Cook: What about the tax increases that the government legislated?

Mr S.K. L'ESTRANGE: The member for Kwinana may not have been in the chamber earlier when I drew attention to the fact that those opposite actually enabled taxes to go up when they took power in 2001.

Mr R.H. Cook: The government said it was going to cut taxes and it reneged on that promise—one of the 44 broken promises.

Mr S.K. L'ESTRANGE: It is such a shame that the member for Kwinana was not here when I drew attention to the fact that when members opposite are in opposition, they are very good at dreaming up problems that this government seems to be creating. They are very good at promising things.

Mr R.H. Cook: It is time to stop the Liberal lies that are devastating this state. How many promises has the government broken so far?

Mr S.K. L'ESTRANGE: Member for Kwinana, where was “Spaghettinet” going to end up?

Mr R.H. Cook: Where is your train?

Mr S.K. L'ESTRANGE: The Labor Party promised the Western Australian people —

The ACTING SPEAKER: Members! It is going to be almost impossible for Hansard to keep up with this. I ask you to keep your interjections to a minimum, please.

Mr R.H. Cook: How's your fully funded, fully costed railway line going?

Mr S.K. L'ESTRANGE: How is your fully funded, fully costed “Spaghettinet”? Where was that going to go? It might have been okay for the member down in Kwinana, but I tell him that the people in north metropolitan Perth would have seen their houses sinking. The member had everyone believing that “Spaghettinet” was going to be an underground network of rail. It was unbelievable! Talk about broken promises.

Several members interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Members!

Mr S.K. L'ESTRANGE: The entire election campaign of members opposite was based on a story—a beautiful fairy tale. What was going to fund that beautiful fairy tale? It would probably have been the member for Bassendean's un-enchanted voice. They would have gotten together, held hands, sung *Kumbaya My Lord*, looked for the golden rainbow, and then gone travelling to look for the gold.

Several members interjected.

Mr S.K. L'ESTRANGE: We know about the golden sneakers.

Mr M.P. Murray: This is the third time I have asked about education and you've not responded.

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Mr S.K. L'ESTRANGE: I am not here to talk about education policy, but I am happy to let you know that this government's record on education has been far better than that of members opposite. Let us have a think about it.

Several members interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Members! I will have to start calling people because there has to be only one person talking at a time; otherwise, Hansard literally cannot keep up. From now on, if anyone yells across the chamber at the speaker, I will have to call them. Thank you.

Mr S.K. L'ESTRANGE: The member for Collie–Preston asked about education. This government has had the most successful independent public schools program in the nation, acknowledged by all the other state leaders —

Mr R.H. Cook: You took the money off them that they could spend at their discretion!

Mr S.K. L'ESTRANGE: When the member for Kwinana talks about money —

Mr R.H. Cook: IPS is dead, my friend!

Mr S.K. L'ESTRANGE: Since the time of his government —

Mr R.H. Cook interjected.

Mr S.K. L'ESTRANGE: Another fairytale! There he goes again!

Point of Order

Mr V.A. CATANIA: Mr Acting Speaker, I believe fairytales end in a good way. I think the member for Churchlands is misleading the house in what he is saying.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr I.C. Blayney): There is no point of order.

Debate Resumed

Mr S.K. L'ESTRANGE: Every now and then, there is a wicked witch in a fairytale, and they swing around on their brooms and they pull out their dodgy wands and they do funny things. I draw the member for Kwinana's attention to a statistic. I know that members opposite love statistics.

Mr R.H. Cook: Is this the 30 per cent that you have taken out of SSPRA?

Mr S.K. L'ESTRANGE: No. This is for expenditure on education. Since 2007–08, expenditure on education has increased from \$2.8 billion to an estimated \$4.4 billion in 2013–14. Members opposite can do the maths. This is not dreamland. This is reality. This government is getting on with the job.

I will tell members what else this government is doing. Members opposite have drawn attention to the education reform aspect. The whole point of the reform was to have a student-centred funding model—not a stupid model that just shovelled out money —

Mr M.P. Murray: We have had the stolen generation! Now we have the stolen education generation!

Mr S.K. L'ESTRANGE: I love it when the member for Collie–Preston gets excited! But I want to draw attention to the fact that the member is wrong; plain and simple—wrong. The student-centred funding model is all about putting the right money in the right place for the right time for the right reasons. The member would not want to have money shovelled into a school that did not need it, would he?

Mr M.P. Murray: We know what you are doing with these kids. You are playing with their lives to balance your budget, and that is what is wrong with your government!

Mr S.K. L'ESTRANGE: There is no playing with people's lives. It is about making sure the funding is going to the right place at the right time for the right reasons.

Ladies and gentleman, my time is about to run out. It has been an absolute pleasure to draw attention to the fact that the opposition is a dreamer. This government is a doer. Thank you.

MR C.J. TALLENTIRE (Gosnells) [6.12 pm]: I rise to support the motion put forward by the member for Rockingham. I will begin by talking about the economic mismanagement that has led to some of the problems that I am seeing in my electorate, and also to some of the broken promises that I am seeing in my electorate. Indeed, this morning the Leader of the Opposition and I visited the town centre of Gosnells to examine an area in which the Liberal Party had promised an increase in the number of CCTV cameras. We looked around Gosnells Train Station and saw the CCTV arrangements that are already in place. We had in hand an advertisement that was put in the local papers by the Liberal Party and that said that if people voted for the Liberals, there would be an increase in the number of CCTV cameras. That was guaranteed by the Liberal candidate for Gosnells and the Premier, Colin Barnett. I chased up this 2013 election commitment with the minister responsible for the

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establishment of CCTV, the Minister for Police. I was dismayed when I contacted the Minister for Police and received back from her chief of staff a letter saying that there had never been a promise to increase the amount of CCTV in the area around Gosnells Train Station. In one of my hands I had the Liberal Party election promise that there would be an increase in CCTV, and in the other hand I had the letter from the Minister for Police's chief of staff saying that there was no commitment to increase CCTV. That indicates to me that this government does not get the seriousness of the crime threat around the Gosnells town centre and therefore the need for an increase in CCTV. This is despite the fact that the government did seem sympathetic to the need for more CCTV when it was in election mode in March this year. It indicates also that because of the government's budget mismanagement and its loss of the state's AAA credit rating, it is doing everything it can to avoid expenditure and to save money. That budget mismanagement hurts the people in my area, because it means that we are not getting the things that we need, such as an increase in CCTV.

Another thing that demonstrates this government's mismanagement and lack of aptitude relates to an announcement that was made yesterday by the Minister for Environment—who, as I often comment, is not in the chamber. The minister announced yesterday that changes would be made to the regulations for the protection of native vegetation in this state. We know from the response to my question on notice 1234 that between July 2008 and June 2013, this government has authorised the destruction of some 91 220 hectares of native vegetation. That figure is on the parliamentary record. That is just through the legitimate process of people applying to clear their land.

I put it to members of this place that a serious cost is involved in the destruction of that amount of native vegetation. I base my figures on research done by Alcoa, which, as members will know, does a very detailed and extensive job of revegetating areas that it has used for bauxite mining. Alcoa estimates that it costs around \$20 000 per hectare to re-establish the suite of species that were known to be on land prior to it being cleared for bauxite mining. We can take that cost of \$20 000 per hectare as a benchmark indicator of the cost of re-establishing native vegetation in areas that have been cleared. As I have noted, under this government, over 90 000 hectares of native vegetation have been destroyed. If we use that cost of \$20 000 per hectare, it would cost close to \$2 billion to replace that vegetation. To me, that is a further indication of not only environmental mismanagement, but serious economic mismanagement. That is a dramatic figure. Some would say that the figure of \$20 000 is on the high side. I have spoken to people involved in projects such as Gondwana Link, where they are undertaking massive landscape repair. They estimate that the cost per hectare is in the region of \$4 000 to \$5 000 per hectare. If we use that cost for the 90 000 hectares of land that this government has allowed to be destroyed, we are looking at some \$364 million to repair that area.

However, that figure of 90 000-plus hectares of vegetation destroyed since the Barnett government has come to office is not the whole picture. The whole picture needs to include the exemptions that exist. It is disappointing that the government has not seen fit to find a mechanism for calculating how many hectares of land will be exempt from the need to acquire a formal permit. The government has not bothered to do that. What the government has done—this goes to the minister's announcement yesterday—is broaden the range of exemptions so that a private property owner can clear five hectares of land per year per property without any form of assessment. No-one is saying that people cannot do that level of clearing, because certain circumstances may justify it, but it is necessary to accept that we must have expert advice or some form of control over that activity. Why? There are a number of reasons—one obvious one being the land degradation that could be caused by the destruction of native vegetation. That land degradation could immediately have an impact on a neighbouring property. Five hectares of clearing can lead to serious run-off and gully-type erosion that can see washaways occur on a neighbouring property in, say, only a year. A succession of events could cause massive erosion. Over a number of years the cumulative impact of a series of five-hectare clearings in a catchment could certainly exacerbate the salinity problem. When the Department of Agriculture and Food says that up to 4.6 million hectares are at risk of salinity-type degradation, it is a very serious problem. When Hendy Cowan was in this place 10 years ago, there was a body called the State Salinity Council. That has been moved into the Natural Resource Management Council, but it does not have the same profile it had when Hendy Cowan was, I believe, either the chairman or a significant figure on the council. Is that because the problem of salinity has gone away? No; it is simply because members opposite have lost interest in the issue. People are happy to avoid the issue because we do not want to talk things down; we do not want to talk about the truth. The fact is the Department of Agriculture and Food has it documented in a report released this year that 4.6 million hectares is potentially at risk of salinity.

It is a massive environmental and social problem. If a landholder's property is at risk, he stands to lose a significant portion of his investment. Perhaps the landholder has inherited a farm or taken out extensive loans to buy the farm. They might be facing difficult financial times due to the cost of the loan. Whatever the situation,

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the landholder would not want any percentage of that land lost to salinity. That would be a tragedy. What are we doing? We are making it easier for people to clear land without any form of checking for potential land degradation. That is a great shame. Before this change, the system required people only to make an application, and there may have been cases in which land degradation was not likely to occur, so their application would have been processed and they received a permit. But, no; this government has seen fit to increase the area. If we conservatively estimate the number of farming properties at some 4 600 across the agricultural region of the state, we are looking at an extra 18 000 hectares at least of native vegetation destruction a year. With that figure in mind, there is the potential for significant land degradation damage. I have not gone into detail about the biodiversity loss that can occur when someone clears without any form of control or checking. It is quite possible that the environmental values on the land of a private property owner are just as good as those on a nearby national park. Those values may be quite different, but special in a significant way. The property might contain declared rare fauna. That is why some sort of biological survey should be done. Why not? Why would a property owner want to blindly go ahead and destroy something without knowing that declared rare fauna is there or without understanding its significance? It may contain declared rare fauna or a listed threatened species. Surely people would not want their name attached to destroying such a thing. Surely we cannot accept that ignorance is bliss. Why would anyone want to be in that situation? That is the situation this government is creating, because people will not have to apply to clear land; they will be able to destroy things without knowing what is there. They will not need to be informed or have to inform the broader community; they can go ahead and clear five hectares per year per property. On very conservative estimates, we are talking about an additional 18 000 hectares of clearing a year. That is a tragedy.

The tragedy is not only the floristic implications but also the habitat loss. Many of us here lament the loss of habitat for native species. It is very clear that habitat loss is the major reason for the decline of animals listed on the vulnerable or threatened species list. What are we doing? We are allowing this dramatic increase in the amount of unauthorised clearing through an exemption process. That will be a very significant loss. That habitat will be lost without any real knowledge of what we are losing. We will be back to the very worst of the first Court government—the Sir Charles Court government—days when clearing was done without any good information. In the Richard Court government days, the Minister for Agriculture, Monty House, expressed grave concern about the amount of clearing. He was very much focused on land degradation because of the economic implications. That is why I fully support this motion on the economic mismanagement of this state. Economic and environmental mismanagement are intertwined—the two go together. The figures I mentioned earlier indicate the cost we would need to look at to restore the area destroyed. It would be a very significant figure. I refer also to the blood, sweat and tears some owners have put in on their properties to restore land by revegetating areas through the Landcare movement. The level of investment is billions of dollars as occurred under the Howard government when Telstra donated money to Landcare and the amounts that have been spent through other programs in Western Australia. We are talking about massive amounts of money spent on trying to restore our landscape.

We have only begun the task so why are we then allowing further destruction of native vegetation in this state? It is a retrograde step that shows that this government does not have the expertise. I look to members who represent peri-urban electorates. I am interested to hear what sort of reports they will get in their electorates where there are smaller properties rather than large acreages. Even one of the members here might suddenly find that one of their neighbours has decided to get on his Bobcat or bulldozer and knock over five hectares without knowing the consequences of that, and the member of this place will have no means of reining in that person's activities because that crazy neighbour with a Bobcat or bulldozer will be able to say, "I am allowed to clear five hectares a year on each property." There will be no means of checking that and saying, "Hang on; let's check that what you're doing here is consistent with what we want to achieve in this catchment and what we know could be a problem for an adjoining property." The neighbour will be able to say, "No; we're allowed to do that because we have this five-hectare free-go of environmental destruction." To me that is completely wrong. The Minister for Environment's decision is incredibly disappointing and a real backward step, but it will help the Western Australian community understand the Liberal Party's environmental standards. People will realise that this government cannot get away with green-tinging things or big public relations spin about what it is doing in national parks or the work it is doing in the marine environment. The truth will be out when it comes to the Western Australian community's realisation of the extent of environmental destruction, especially the destruction of our terrestrial habitats. That is when people will realise what this government is really about.

There are many other areas in which this government's economic mismanagement is all too clear. I quickly note the issue of the education cuts in my electorate and how devastating they are for people whose children go to schools that are well-staffed with excellent motivated people. Families who are passionate about the education of their kids suddenly find that the budget for the school has been gutted. That will have all sorts of costs and

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implications on the quality of their child's education. That is another thing that will define this government. It will help people realise that this government does not stand up for people's right to a good quality public education. If the public education system is being smashed in this way, we have to wonder what this government's real agenda is. Is the government really saying that people should just send their kids to private schools? Is that the only option this government really cares about? That is the feeling coming through when I talk to constituents in my electorate. People are particularly concerned about the future of education. They want to see a public education system that is well funded, not one that has been decimated by these kinds of cuts.

MR C.D. HATTON (Balcatta) [6.32 pm]: I am aware that other members want to talk for or against this motion and I hope that I may be able to accommodate that for the member for Fremantle. I am passionate standing here today, just as I am passionate about education. I am passionate about strongly opposing this appalling and ill-informed motion that the Leader of the Opposition has directed to this government today. This motion, and even the notion of poor economic management by this government, is absolutely appalling. It is just as though the Labor Party is living in a fairytale again; the opposition just does not get it, and I have said that before. The Leader of the Opposition and his colleagues have lost their direction. They no longer give relevant debates in this chamber; they are scrambling and digging anywhere for a relevant debate. Yesterday Minister Simpson was digging in the community garden in Balcatta and probably dug up more relevant debate there than the opposition gives in this chamber. Minister Simpson was out in the community doing real and relevant things, and that is what this government does. The Leader of the Opposition is running out of ideas and relevant debate. The opposition has no policies and no substance. It goes round in circles. It is lost, it is negative and it is falling apart. The opposition knows that we live in a great state. That is one of the very few things it agrees on in this chamber. We are in a period, and we have been for some time, of transformation and growth in this state. The opposition does not seem to realise that. It is critical of the good measures that we put in place. We have strong levels of investment. We have created this investment since 2008. We have lower unemployment. We have one of the highest standards of living anywhere in the world. This has not just happened through chance. I am proud to be part of a Liberal Party government. The Liberal Party and the Liberal-led coalition government with the National Party makes decisions. It manages the economy and fosters confidence for business. It attracts investment and in past years it has attracted record investment. What does this government do? It creates jobs, access to better health and state-of-the-art public hospitals. It is revitalising the city centre, which is something the opposition only dreamt about. It is building a world-class sports stadium. The groundwork has been done for the sports stadium that is being built. We have great schools. We are building primary schools and maintaining them. We have introduced a new system, the independent public school system, which has been talked about a lot. We also have outstanding national parks with easier access for all. We have outstanding land and marine national parks, and we are still creating more parks.

Very proudly, apart from the macroeconomics of developing a good state with good investment and business potential, we are looking after and supporting families. We can look at the innovative child and parent centres in local schools and at the increasing community sport and recreation facilities. We can look at the KidSport program, which is a revolution in getting kids out and about and getting them fit and healthy. That program contributes up to \$200 per child per family for sporting equipment, uniforms and fees. I have seen it in action in my electorate when I have been out with the Minister for Sport and Recreation and the Premier. I have given recognition to teachers taking up the KidSport program in schools. It is working and is producing dividends for the young children of today and the future. We are providing more community health initiatives and there are new child health centres based in schools. The opening of the new school nurse health system was conducted in my electorate at Balcatta Primary School some weeks ago and I was there with Minister Hames. What a wonderful day that was.

Let me talk not so much about education, but health. Let us compare our health infrastructure and building program, particularly for hospitals, with Labor's poor, appalling health policies in the past. We can look at the \$7 billion program in hospital and health infrastructure and at Fiona Stanley Hospital in the Perth metropolitan area, with 793 beds to be completed in 2014. There is Perth Children's Hospital; Midland public hospital; Joondalup Health Campus; the new PathWest centre; the new cancer centre; and the new central plant at Queen Elizabeth II Medical Centre and the facilities around that hospital, including the massive state-of-the-art car park at QEII, which I have been into several times recently. In the future, and probably the-not-too-distant future, there will be a major upgrade of Royal Perth Hospital. After Fiona Stanley Hospital is completed, we will push along and keep developing this very important infrastructure. In the regions there is the new Albany Health Campus, the new Busselton Health Campus, the Kalgoorlie Regional Resource Centre and the Southern Inland Health Initiative, and in the future there will be the Karratha health campus. What did we see under the Gallop-Carpenter government? We saw the delay of Fiona Stanley Hospital. It was announced in 2005 with an opening date of 2010, but that did not happen. There was the delay also in the construction of Albany Health Campus. Let

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us have a look at Albany. It is a pity the member for Albany is not here. I have an article about Mr Ripper from back in 2007. It has the headline “We forgot hospital—Ripper confesses”, and states —

A “STUNNED” former local government official has revealed the State Government —
The Labor government —

“forgot” its 2005 election promise of a \$26 million fast-tracked upgrade of Albany Hospital.

The article continues —

“We asked about the hospital and we were informed ... had only just been received by the Government, 2½ half years after the money was granted,” ...

“Obviously it had fallen off the radar ...

Maybe the member for Albany fell off the radar. Mr Wellington, the mayor, said —

... Mr Ripper was “very annoyed” the plan had only just been received.

It fell off the radar. We can look at the previous health minister, Mr McGinty. Members of the opposition should pay attention to this because this is how they get their policies—from news articles. That is all they ever bring to the chamber. It is absolutely appalling.

Mr D.J. Kelly: What are you reading from?

Mr C.D. HATTON: This is a collage; this is not a running article. I am sure that the Acting Speaker realises that it was a reading at the time.

Point of Order

Mr T.R. BUSWELL: I am very interested in the well-researched points that the member for Balcatta is making, but I cannot hear him over the squawking from the member for Bassendean, which is clearly interrupting the business of the chamber. There is a standing order that insists that members be heard in this place.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr I.C. Blayney): Member for Bassendean, I ask you to stop interjecting, please.

Debate Resumed

Mr C.D. HATTON: Mr Acting Speaker, I will read a few more headings, if that is all right: “Medics asleep at wheel” and “Plea for action on hospital overcrowding”. In another heading, patients were urged to think. Patients were urged to think—when they were sick? Another heading was about the dying risk. Other headings state “Hospitals top-heavy” and “Senior doctor shortage ‘a risk’”. And they go on and on. It is unbelievable. Look at the infrastructure in our hospitals. There is no comparison.

I will move on from hospitals. We can look at small business growth. This government is protecting the rights of small business and is creating opportunities with flexibility to develop business strategies. It has tried to give small businesses fair and supportive environments. I know that from the small business association in my electorate of Balcatta. I hear a lot of good stories about business development. If things are not going right, I listen.

In law and order, we are delivering more front-line police and auxiliary officers, we have introduced strong sentencing laws, we are making a real difference on the street, and we are protecting police officers. We are tackling out-of-control parties and high-speed chases. Look at the new Perth police complex. Nearly \$100 million was spent on this state-of-the-art police complex, which I attended at midnight on a Saturday night to look at the action. The police and auxiliary officers do a wonderful job.

What a wonderful experience it is to deliver, with the National Party, such richness to the outlying areas outside urban Perth through royalties for regions. Much improved facilities and services have now been gained in regional and rural areas. Just last week the Premier and the member for Pilbara opened the Pilbara Cities Sharpe Avenue complex. There is investment in medical facilities and general practitioner services. We can look at the great southern, the midwest, the goldfields, the south west and the wheatbelt.

I am going to give other members an opportunity to speak in a moment.

Mr T.R. Buswell: There’s no hurry!

Mr C.D. HATTON: I must stress again that the opposition is quite appalling. It needs to do better. The Liberal-National team is doing what Labor has never done well. Western Australians would not like to go back

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to those dark, shameful years of the Burke-Dowding era or to the more recently woeful years of the Gallop-Carpenter era. This government is proudly delivering real outcomes to the people of Western Australia. The people of Western Australia are benefiting from planned and directed investment in health, education and policing. The present opposition struggles with the positive decisions and directions that this government is delivering. It is fairly obvious that it struggles. It is scrambling. It is digging for ideas. The massive infrastructure that the Liberal–National government is investing in for the needs of this growing state continues. Western Australians expect that sort of investment. We are continuing to deliver new hospitals, new schools, transport networks and massive road infrastructure. I think the people of Perth fully understand this investment in road infrastructure. When I travel along the freeway at 60 kilometres an hour, I do not see people trying to bust that speed limit while roadworks are in progress. People are respectful of the amount of investment in this infrastructure and what it will do to make the roads less congested. I am sure that if people were frustrated, they would speed along the freeway and put workers' lives at risk. It just does not happen; I do not see it.

We are a government that makes decisions and gets things done. We would not want to go back to the dark days of the Labor government. Western Australians voted for what they believed in at the March election. It was a landslide victory; we should not forget that. It was the worst result for the opposition in 90 years. This government will continue to deliver for Western Australians. I am proud for my family, my children and my friends that this government is delivering and will continue to deliver. The people voted for a government that will continue to deliver. They will not vote for governments that do not deliver.

MR D.J. KELLY (Bassendean) [6.46 pm]: I am pleased to have a few minutes to talk in this debate. It is always nice to pick up from where the last speaker left off. The last speaker referred to the government that people voted for. The government that people voted for said in its campaign that it had a plan that was fully funded and fully costed. That was all over the election material of the Liberal Party. Unfortunately, the government that people voted for is not the government that they got. No sooner had the government come into this place than it clearly indicated that its plan was not fully costed and it certainly was not fully funded. It was probably one of the biggest election lies that we have seen in this state—the fully costed, fully funded campaign by the Liberal Party. When I came to this place, I felt a little sorry for some of the new members on the other side who were very happy to be the newly elected members of this government. But they rode in with a party that ran an election campaign that was ostensibly a lie. I felt a little sorry that their big opportunity to be in state Parliament —

Several members interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Members!

Mr D.J. KELLY: Having heard some of them speak, I no longer feel sorry for them. One after another, they have got up and basically forgotten about everything that was promised by the Liberal Party at the election and cheerfully defended what this government has done since the Barnett government was re-elected. One after another, they have got up and basically said what an outstanding job the government has done since the last election. Those new government members have forgotten promises such as the one made to keep electricity prices at or about the rate of inflation. They came into this place and in their first budget increased electricity prices by four per cent. Everyone knows that the rate of inflation in this state is less than three per cent, but they said, "Let's just raise electricity prices by another four per cent." People in Western Australia in the electorates of Wanneroo, Joondalup, Balcatta and Forrestfield have been really hurt by the rise in electricity prices from this government, but those members elected to those seats just came into this place as though they were in a conga line, fell in behind the Premier and the Treasurer and spoke as though those increases in electricity prices and the broken promises were something to be proud of.

Ms E. Evangel: A broken record!

Mr D.J. KELLY: I am sorry, member for Perth, I missed that. Even in the electorate of Perth, there are people suffering from the increase to electricity prices. It would be good if the member for Perth got up and spoke about the pain that some of those people in that electorate are feeling. I hear none of that from the member for Perth—absolutely none of it. Having claimed to have a —

Ms E. Evangel: Perth is the fastest growing city in the nation. We are driving the increase in housing prices. Come with us and we'll give you a tour and you can see for yourself all the wonderful things that are happening.

Mr D.J. KELLY: Does the member for Perth think I have never been to Perth?

Ms E. Evangel: It sounds like you haven't because you're criticising the best city in the state—in the country.

Mr D.J. KELLY: I cannot wait to see where the government puts the light rail.

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The price hikes for electricity and water that people in Western Australia have experienced have all been put in place by this government because it does not know how to manage the state's finances. It was prepared to promise everything in order to get elected, and now we have a state budget that is in disarray. We have lost the AAA credit rating, yet we have had extraordinary contributions from members opposite about that issue. The member for Alfred Cove, who speaks highly of his experience in the private sector as a senior executive in a bank, got up and tried to explain away the loss of the AAA credit rating as though it did not really matter. He said that it was just going to add an extra \$21 million to the bottom line of the budget. He said that it does not matter because the exchange rate for the Australian dollar has gone lower and the income we get from royalties will be better. The iron ore price was the other thing he mentioned. He said that the iron price has gone up and that will push into the budget. The last time I looked, exchange rates and iron ore prices were not within the control of the government to set. The fact that the budget bottom line may be improved by the changes in iron ore prices or fluctuations in the Australian dollar does not excuse the fact that the government has lost the AAA credit rating and that will put extra money on the bottom line of this government's budget.

The government lost the AAA credit rating, which is an indication that it has lost control of state debt. The government inherited one of the best positions in state debt of any state government in WA's history, yet it has blown state debt out to \$20 billion and rising. I cannot believe that people such as the member for Churchlands can get up and speak glowingly about the state government's performance and just gloss over the fact that the government has maxed out the credit card. I simply cannot believe it. I thought that the Liberal Party believed in keeping state debt low, yet it has won the Olympic Games in the speed at which it has maxed out its credit card. The government loses the AAA credit rating, it puts up fees and charges enormously and it blows out state debt, yet we hear a chorus of praise for the government from new members today. I think they want to call themselves the class of 2013. Maybe they had better go back to primary school and learn some basic maths.

Mr T.K. Waldron: You're one of them in 2013.

Mr D.J. KELLY: Yes, but I am not championing the performance of the state government, because I can see what has happened.

One of the good things about public life is when people can see the good things they do and also see the bad things they do. If they go through life trying to say that everything they do is perfect or everything they do is good and ignore the fact —

Ms E. Evangel: Is that why you're so doomy and gloomy? You're spending all your time looking at all things doomy and gloomy 24/7. We're living in the worst place in the world according to you.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Member!

Mr D.J. KELLY: The member for Perth is like a dull ringing in the ears. There are serious issues to debate here, member for Perth.

Ms E. Evangel: That's why we're the fastest growing state in the nation. That's why everyone wants to be here.

Mr D.J. KELLY: That is absolutely fantastic!

Ms E. Evangel: If we're so doomy and gloomy, why are they all coming here in droves?

Mr D.J. KELLY: It glosses over the fact that the government cannot pay for its election promises.

Ms E. Evangel: Because we're delivering outcomes for this state—something you didn't do!

Mr D.J. KELLY: Yes—like the Ellenbrook rail line and the MAX light rail! I think it was the Treasurer who held up a photo —

Ms E. Evangel interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Member for Perth, I will have to call you if you keep interjecting; thank you.

Mr D.J. KELLY: The Treasurer held up a computer-generated image of King Plaza, I think it is called, on the City Link project. The light rail, as I understand it, is supposed to go straight through that plaza. It is not on the computer-generated image that the Treasurer held up.

Ms E. Evangel: Are you about to criticise the Perth City Link now?

Mr D.J. KELLY: Here we go again!

Ms E. Evangel: It is one of the best things that has ever happened to this city.

Extract from Hansard

[ASSEMBLY — Wednesday, 4 December 2013]

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Mr Mark McGowan; Acting Speaker; Dr Tony Buti; Ms Lisa Baker; Mr Mick Murray; Mr Sean L'Estrange; Mrs Michelle Roberts; Deputy Speaker; Mr Troy Buswell; Mr Vincent Catania; Mr Chris Tallentire; Mr Chris Hatton; Mr Dave Kelly

Mr D.J. KELLY: It just shows the blinkers that some new members of this chamber have to the quite serious issues that have been raised on this side of the house about their government's management of the state budget.

I will mention a couple of other issues. One is the fiasco at Fiona Stanley Hospital. The member for Balcatta had a dig at the former Minister for Health, Jim McGinty, over that issue. Fiona Stanley Hospital was planned by Labor. In a quite unprecedented fashion, Labor put aside \$1 billion in a special-purpose account—\$1 billion—to pay for that hospital. That is almost unprecedented. We paid in advance for Fiona Stanley Hospital. We paid for the Mandurah rail as soon as it was completed. Compare that with the rail plans of those on the other side. It just staggers me that government members would champion their performance on Fiona Stanley Hospital to boost their credibility. We planned it, we paid for it and it is now built, but the government cannot put any patients in Fiona Stanley Hospital because it mismanaged the information technology services and the introduction of the Serco contract. The government has now admitted to not knowing how much compensation it will have to pay to Serco for that contract because of the delay to the opening of that hospital. Sure, we will eventually get a very good Fiona Stanley Hospital to add to the public hospital fleet in Western Australia, but it was planned by Labor and paid for by Labor. The only thing new that the government has added to that project is the Serco contract. Who on earth thought that was a good idea? When we ask members of the public in Western Australia whether they think it is a good idea that Serco has that contract, people say no—they cannot understand why the government did it.

One of the practical implications to patient care to be provided at Fiona Stanley Hospital will be affected by what will happen to the rehabilitation hospital. The rehab hospital service currently at Shenton Park will move to Fiona Stanley Hospital. The people at that hospital—doctors, nurses and support staff—work as a team. Because of what the government has done at Fiona Stanley Hospital, the doctors and the nursing staff will move over, but many of the support staff will not, because under the government's model they will have to quit their jobs with the Department of Health and apply for jobs at Fiona Stanley Hospital with Serco, and they just will not do that. We have a patient-centred team model at the Shenton Park rehab service; when that moves to Fiona Stanley Hospital, those teams will be cut in half, and we will lose people who have spent five, 10, 15 or even 20 years in those clinical teams doing the work that they love so much. They will have to give up that work and the patients they care for will also have to be given up because of the Serco contract.

Debate adjourned, pursuant to standing orders.

House adjourned at 7.00 pm
