

Hon Sue Ellery; Hon Ken Travers; Hon Peter Collier; Hon Col Holt; Hon Robin Chapple; Hon Kate Doust; Hon Robyn McSweeney; Hon Darren West; Hon Rick Mazza; Hon Dr Sally Talbot; Hon Liz Behjat; Hon Lynn MacLaren; Hon Alanna Clohesy; President; Hon Ljiljanna Ravlich; Hon Adele Farina

HON LJILJANNA RAVLICH

Retirement — Tribute — Motion

HON SUE ELLERY (South Metropolitan — Leader of the Opposition) [3.20 pm] — by leave: I move without notice —

That this house expresses its appreciation to the retiring Hon Ljiljanna Ravlich for her significant contribution to the Legislative Council and the state of Western Australia over the last 18 years as a member for the East Metropolitan Region and as a current member for the North Metropolitan Region.

On behalf of WA Labor I place on the record our appreciation for the work Hon Ljiljanna Ravlich has done on behalf of her constituents and on behalf of the Labor Party. We all recently celebrated Chinese New Year. In the Chinese zodiac, Ljil is a rooster. The characteristics of a rooster are that they are confident, courageous, frank and honest. Hon Ljiljanna Ravlich is all of those and more, and we will miss her in our parliamentary group. This chamber will be duller for her leaving.

It takes courage and confidence to arrive in a foreign country, not speaking the language, and rise to be a community leader and a minister. Every party needs a mix of skill sets in its parliamentary team. Members will forgive me if I refer to her every now and then as Ljil, but that is what is in my notes. Ljil can take the fight up to anyone. She has held conservative governments to account with her dogged determination. She is not precious. Ljil can and does—she did today—take the proverbial out of herself as much as she takes it off her opposition. She is absolutely fearless. When she is pursuing an issue, nothing will put her off. She has taken on many fights, but the one that is most recent in my mind, and the one that tells us the most about her, is what she did as shadow Minister for Mental Health. Ljil was approached by families of people with mental illness, some of whom had family members who had taken their own lives. Their concerns were about the discharge practices that saw their family member sent home from acute-care facilities. Ljil was particularly concerned about what was going on at the Alma Street facility in Fremantle. She raised question after question in this place. Night after night she made members' statements, expressing concern and giving voice to the families who felt abandoned. She demanded that the government take action to address their concerns. Mr President, like me, will recall that she was fearless because what she got in return was accusations that she was wrong, that she was exploiting grieving families, that she was silly and ridiculous, and that she did not understand the system. She was told off, she was told to sit down and she was told she did not know what she was talking about.

Between May 2011 and November 2011 Ljil asked 90-odd questions on those issues. The response she received from government was that there were no problems; that she was wrong and misguided. As a direct consequence of the families campaigning with other advocates and with Hon Ljiljanna Ravlich, in November 2011 the government commissioned three reviews about the suicides of people who had been discharged from mental health services in WA. Two of those reviews were to be done by the Chief Psychiatrist into four deaths after presentations at Fremantle Hospital, and the clinical decisions made at Fremantle Hospital over the previous 12 months, and the third was the Stokes review entitled "Review of the admission or referral to and the discharge and transfer practices of public mental health facilities/services in Western Australia". Despite daily abuse from the government telling her she was wrong, Ljil doggedly pursued the issues and she was right. The Stokes report validated her concerns and her campaigning.

In this job it is easy to be one-dimensional and to be completely obsessed with the daily ups and downs and tribal activities of our parties. But that is not Ljiljanna Ravlich. She is a talented artist, and we can see the evidence of that next to Mr President. I saw her Jackson Pollock-inspired exhibition at the Beaufort Street Festival a few years ago. I have one of her paintings in my electorate office and she has kindly donated paintings to many a Labor Party fundraiser. She is a fabulous cook and a fabulous entertainer. She is a loving and generous partner. She is a sister and aunt, a godmother and cousin, and a dearly loved friend to many.

The test of a real campaigner is the oldest test in local politics: if you do not make it your business to doorknock as a politician, no matter how high up the hierarchy you get, you are missing out on the most valuable political research—direct contact with voters. I have spent many a hot summer campaign doorknocking with Ljil. She is energetic and engaged; a great motivator to the odd candidate who has to be dragged kicking and screaming to doorknock!

Ljiljanna Ravlich has served her state, her two electorates and her constituents well. Parliament will lose colour and movement today when she leaves. The future is bright for Ljil. When we spoke in our caucus meeting this morning, Ljil reminded us that she is not dying, she is just going to Cottesloe! I am sure she will continue to work successfully and she will continue to make great art. We thank Ljil for her service and we wish her well.

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HON KEN TRAVERS (North Metropolitan) [3.26 pm]: I join with Hon Sue Ellery in speaking to the motion she moved this afternoon. I came into this place at the same time as Hon Ljiljanna Ravlich. It has taken me 18 years to see it on paper but I can see in front of me the words “the retiring Ljiljanna Ravlich”. I thought I would never hear that from the day I arrived because I do not think anyone would ever have described Ljiljanna Ravlich’s contribution to this house as retiring! Ljiljanna has always been on the front foot. She has always been out there working for what she believed in. As I say, we arrived in this place together. It was just after a highly contentious period in the history of the Legislative Council. The house had been brought back to sit just before the change of new members coming in, after which the then government would lose control. We were brought back to put through what was the third wave of industrial relations laws. Ljiljanna and I really did not know each other very well before we were elected to this place. We had campaigned against the fact that the government of the day was not allowing us our right to decide the laws despite an election having been held. On arrival to Parliament, we shared an office for the first couple of years. We came from different factions. We did not know each other well, but I think it was the start of what turned out to be a great relationship, which I have certainly very much enjoyed. I am not sure what this place will be like without Hon Ljiljanna Ravlich being a part of it.

Hon Ljiljanna Ravlich arrived here when there was, dare I say it—we loved them dearly—a group of crusty old men on the government benches. Ljiljanna and I sat where Ljiljanna sits today; I was just behind her. I really do not think that members like Norman Moore, Max Evans and Peter Foss knew what had hit them when Hon Ljiljanna Ravlich arrived. We got a taste of her capacity today in her mixture of forensic detail and hard-hitting passion, but also her great sense of humour in the way that she delivered it. Ljiljanna has an ability to get back up. As Hon Sue Ellery said, if Ljil is knocked down, that never puts her off—she just gets back up.

There was also the personal side of it. Neither Ljiljanna nor I had children but we both shared a tremendous love for our nieces and nephews and would often discuss their successes. I think Hon Ljiljanna Ravlich again reinforced her great love of her nieces and nephews today, and that always came out to me.

There are many things I could say today. Hon Ljiljanna Ravlich talked about some of her highlights as a minister. Hon Sue Ellery talked about her more recent times. One thing that will always be in my memory is the forensic way that Hon Ljiljanna Ravlich, as the shadow minister for government accountability, went about exposing what was a great scandal—the Matrix contract. It was a contract that I think was probably too difficult for even most of the ministers who had signed off on it to understand. It exposed the state government to serious financial cost. It was Hon Ljiljanna Ravlich who, through her forensic detail, her questioning in Parliament and the freedom of information requests that she talked about, pulled that contract apart. She not only pulled it apart, she also explained it in a way that journalists could understand and tell the tale of it. There might have been something before that, but that in my mind stands out as the event that made it clear to people in the early years that Hon Ljiljanna Ravlich would be a force to be reckoned with while she remained a member of this place.

I went on to share times. There was a period when I used to sit next door to Ljiljanna in Parliament, on a parliamentary committee and in cabinet. It seemed as though I spent more time in close proximity to Hon Ljiljanna Ravlich than I did to my own partner, and I speak for Hon Ljiljanna Ravlich when I say that she spent more time close to me than she did with Eric—I am sure she would have preferred the alternative!

We had great times and I will very much miss Hon Ljiljanna Ravlich. I will miss the way in which she has conducted herself in this place. She mentioned that she has always pushed the Chair. Some of us on this side do that from time to time. Hon Ljiljanna Ravlich always knew how to pull it back, until one day when she was in full flight, the President was about to name her and I was quickly trying to quieten her down. I said, “Sit down, Ljil; you will be named”, but she was in full flight. Presidents have always allowed that flexibility for Hon Ljiljanna Ravlich because it has never been done with malice; it has always been done with passion. That is what has always stood out in my mind. Although from time to time attacks on government can be seen to be about personalities, in my view, Hon Ljiljanna Ravlich’s motivation has been driven by only one thing, and that is her commitment to making Western Australia a better place.

I refer to the prolific nature of her work and the capacity of Hon Ljiljanna Ravlich. She served on the estimates committee and I used to turn up just to watch Hon Ljiljanna Ravlich on occasions because Hon Ljiljanna Ravlich in full flight questioning both ministers and bureaucracy is a sight to behold. As I said, she had a tremendous capacity. I looked at *Hansard* and went back through it. A function on the Parliament website tells us how many speeches a member has given, including questions and the like. Sadly, it goes back to only 2000 and not to 1997 when Hon Simon O’Brien and I arrived in this house. I did a search going back to 2007, and it showed me that Hon Simon O’Brien had 3 862 mentions. I clearly need to work harder because I had only 3 815. However, Hon Ljiljanna Ravlich had 6 405. That is a tremendous effort that puts us all to shame. They were not questions

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and speeches for the sake of it. Every one of those had a purpose. The questions were brought into this place and used. Again, when we first arrived in this place, there were probably not as many opportunities for opposition members to prosecute their arguments as there are today. Hon Ljiljanna Ravlich would regularly stand at the end of each day to use one of the few opportunities, which was then called the adjournment debate rather than members' statements. If we could conduct a search that went back to 1997, that 6 405 would probably reach more than 10 000.

I, too, have a Hon Ljiljanna Ravlich original, which Ljiljanna gave to me and my partner when we visited one of her early exhibitions in Mosman Park. It hangs in my house and it will continue to hang as a reminder of the great time I have had serving with Hon Ljiljanna Ravlich in Parliament.

Hon Ljiljanna Ravlich: It will be valuable one day, Ken.

Hon KEN TRAVERS: It is already priceless to me!

The contribution that Hon Ljiljanna Ravlich has made to the Australian Labor Party, the people of the East Metropolitan Region and more recently the North Metropolitan Region—she finally saw the light!—has been tremendous to the state of Western Australia. Both as a member of Parliament and a minister of the Crown she has made a fantastic contribution and I am sure her parents, whom she spoke of today, would be immensely proud of that contribution if they were here today. Ljiljanna, I will miss you dearly in this place. It will not be the same without you, but I wish you all the best for the future and congratulations on a fantastic career.

HON PETER COLLIER (North Metropolitan — Leader of the House) [3.35 pm]: I stand to support the motion. I say at the outset that only 24 hours ago when Hon Sue Ellery spoke to me about this issue behind the Chair and said that Ljil was stepping down, I said that I think probably everyone reaches a point in their lives when they know that they want to move on to something else. As compelling as this institution is, there is a point when we know in our heart of hearts that it is time to move on. Ljil has always had such a passion for Parliament and her responsibilities in government that she would not have made that decision unless she felt she wanted to move on to something else. Hearing today, yet again, the variety of other strengths that Ljil has, such as her art—I also went to the art exhibition in Beaufort Street—it does not surprise me that she feels it is time to move on from Parliament in a representative capacity. Through her art and her strong relationship with Eric—it is good to see him here today—Ljil has things outside this chamber that she will excel in, and I think that needs to be identified.

As I said, this is certainly not the end for Ljil. She has a lot more that she can achieve in many other areas. Hon Sue Ellery and Hon Ken Travers mentioned some adjectives and commentary on her character that I was going to use. They used words such as “colourful”, “varied”, “forensic nature” and “dogged”—all of the above—to identify the passion that she has for this chamber. In particular, Hon Sue Ellery mentioned Ljiljanna's dogged determination in mental health. I know Hon Helen Morton would be very conscious of that. Having said that, I think I win! Hon Ljiljanna Ravlich's dogged determination in some of my areas has certainly been extremely forensic.

Hon Ljiljanna Ravlich: You are safe now.

Hon PETER COLLIER: I love Hon Ljiljanna Ravlich's interjections. What was it?

Hon Ljiljanna Ravlich: I said you are safe now.

Hon PETER COLLIER: Cheers, mate. We have locked horns on a number of occasions and, as Hon Ljiljanna Ravlich said, that is the nature of this institution. We have come to have a begrudging respect for each other, which is very healthy in any relationship.

I would like to comment very briefly on education because Ljil and I are both educators at heart. We both came through the public education system. I was in the private education system for a significant proportion of my teaching time, but we were both pretty much products of the public education system. I acknowledge the issues that Hon Ljiljanna Ravlich endured with the outcomes-based education policy, and I did not help in that area.

Hon Ljiljanna Ravlich: Did you say you didn't help?

Hon PETER COLLIER: I did not help in the difficulties that Hon Ljiljanna Ravlich had.

Hon Ljiljanna Ravlich: That is all right. I have forgiven you.

Hon PETER COLLIER: That goes back to the nature of the beast of Parliament.

Hon Ljiljanna Ravlich: But I have forgiven you, Peter!

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Hon PETER COLLIER: Thank you! This is all warm and fuzzy today and we have to feel that way. With outcomes-based education I think we are at one on that; the notion that we move away from a norm-referenced approach and allow students to think for themselves individually in a much more expansive fashion is imminently sensible.

Having said all that, we have come out the other end. Even though we have locked horns in education in a number of areas, we have come out the other side. I genuinely feel that both of us—when I also finish in this place—will always have a personal regard for education and the best educational outcomes for our state. That is the important thing. We might have different ways to get there, but that is basically what this place is about. It is a collection of ideas, energy and expertise. That is what we bring to this institution and Ljil is a perfect example of that.

On behalf of the Western Australian government, I thank Hon Ljiljanna Ravlich for the contribution she has made to not only this chamber but also the state in the various roles she has played. I wish her every success for the future.

HON COL HOLT (South West — Minister for Housing) [3.40 pm]: I would like to make a contribution on behalf of myself and my National Party colleagues in recognition of the contribution that Hon Ljiljanna Ravlich has made to this Parliament. We being National Party members, people would probably think there are many differences between Hon Ljiljanna Ravlich's views of life and ours, and they would probably be very right. There are many differences, but I dare say there is much common ground as well. That is one of the exciting things about coming into this place. One of the intriguing things about this place is the exploration of these differences and the common ground that we share. That is what makes every day in this place interesting. We just never know where it might land.

What a great nation and what a great state we are where anybody from any background and any language can aspire to be a member of this place. Hon Ljiljanna Ravlich is a living, breathing, talking example of just how people can aspire to be here. Congratulations, Hon Ljiljanna Ravlich, on your contribution to the Labor Party. Congratulations on your contribution to this Parliament and on the contribution you have made to the state of Western Australia. On behalf of my colleagues I say thank you for all those contributions. You should be very proud of yourself and your family and friends should be very proud of your contributions. I would like to wish you good luck in the future. My boys, who are both aspiring artists, and I came to have a look at your exhibition in Mt Lawley. I was thinking of maybe sending one of my boys, who wants to become a professional artist, to come and see you to see how to be a successful commercial artist, but it seems that you give all your paintings away!

Hon Ljiljanna Ravlich: That is a problem. I haven't made any money; it's cost me money!

Hon COL HOLT: I think when my boys saw that exhibition that day it gave them some inspiration to say, "We can do this", because they could see it happening before their eyes. Thank you for that day. Thank you on behalf of the Nationals and we wish you all the best and good luck in the future.

HON ROBIN CHAPPLE (Mining and Pastoral) [3.42 pm]: I have sat behind Ljil on many occasions and I have had a wry smile as she has gone into full flight across this chamber. She is dogged and she is feisty; these are words that have been used. I try to think of a word I can use for Ljil and I think of a terrier, because terriers snap at one's heels until they bring their prey down, and that is what Ljil has done on so many occasions. Ljil, thank you for your time on the Joint Standing Committee on Delegated Legislation. I have served with you a number of times there and witnessed your forensic investigation on that committee, and I think the minister would have experienced that again yesterday! My colleague and I, Hon Lynn MacLaren, wish you all the very best and I think this place will be the sadder for your passing, because you have brought to it that terrier —

Several members interjected.

Hon Ljiljanna Ravlich: Am I going to die or something?

Hon ROBIN CHAPPLE: No, no.

Hon Ljiljanna Ravlich: You mean my passing on.

Hon ROBIN CHAPPLE: You have brought a great degree of humour to this place and I remember a debate we had a while ago about the area a person is allowed to have in a dance hall. Do you remember when you introduced that? You explained the area by determining how many people you can get into a square metre. You described your dancing activities and how if the area was too small, there were too many people around and you did not know who was touching you. That was one of your contributions that brought this place to its knees. It was marvellous. I thank you for your humour and we will sorely miss you. Thank you so much.

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HON KATE DOUST (South Metropolitan — Deputy Leader of the Opposition) [3.44 pm]: I also want to add my words to the comments already made about Hon Ljiljanna Ravlich and I want to thank Ljil for her support and her friendship. She is a great mate to all of us. We both stood for preselection at the same time and I recall us both waiting outside the Trades Hall that night. Numbers were running to see how things would go and there was another person running as well. I remember Ljil saying to me, “How old are you tonight, Kate?” I told her and she said, “You’re young enough to wait another couple of years!” And she was actually right, so I was very pleased. That was my first lot of campaigning with Ljil out on the ground and we worked very hard. The year 1996 was not a good one for us, but we certainly worked very hard. Having come into this place with every new group of members who have come in, Ljil has always stood out as being the person who has gone out of her way to provide them with support, advice and counsel, and help them work their way through the maze that is Parliament and explain how things are done. She has never hesitated to provide that assistance. She has always been very generous—generous in time, generous to her party and generous to her community.

People have talked about her art. I am the beneficiary of a significant number of pieces of art going way back to the 1990s, so I have a number of different types and styles. I am very grateful for those pieces. I hang them very proudly in my house and always explain who painted them. I think, Ljil, it is fantastic that you now have that opportunity to spend more time painting, because I know you are extremely talented. I have always been in awe of how you can disappear into your studio and bang out half a dozen pieces of glorious colourful art in one sitting.

Hon Ljiljanna Ravlich: Kate, you’re not supposed to say that. You’ll devalue them!

Hon KATE DOUST: It is always great, Ljil!

Whenever Ljil got to her feet in this chamber, we always knew we were in for a good time—a good time packed with loads of stats and reality, but we also knew she would always liven this place up. We will miss that and her successor has huge shoes to fill in that capacity. Staff who manage questions on notice will find they have a lot more free time, given the volume of work that has been provided to them, so they will probably not miss her as much, but we certainly will! Within our party forums she has never had any concerns about fear of favour. She has always stood her ground, has always spoken her mind and has always demonstrated a clear integrity about what she was doing. That is something I have always admired about her and the way she has gone about her business in the party. I am very pleased that over the last few years we have perhaps become closer in terms of how we work together in the party.

I have always thought if she had not been in Parliament, she would have had a significant career in the commercial world. She demonstrated that capacity before she came into Parliament and there are probably lots of different and interesting opportunities waiting for her now. I hope that, particularly in the art field, she goes on to paint a lot more and improve. We only have to look at this beautiful piece of art that is resting next to the President to know that staff will certainly enjoy that every day when they go into their lunchroom. I look forward to the value of your art increasing over time, Ljil! In your new life there will be new opportunities for you and Eric. There will be ample time to enjoy that private life you both look forward to with travel and other opportunities. The offer is still open to Eric. When he is ready I am still happy to taking him shopping to that favourite jewellery shop I keep talking about, and I look forward to that. I want to say it has been an absolute joy to work with you. You are indeed a great Labor woman. You have made a significant difference in this place to our party and our community and I look forward to our continuing relationship outside this place.

HON ROBYN McSWEENEY (South West) [3.49 pm]: I rise to wish Hon Ljiljanna Ravlich all the very best in her retirement from this place, and I really do mean that. I have been in Parliament for 14 years and Hon Ljiljanna Ravlich for 18 years. During those years I would like to think that even though we have been on different sides of the house we are friends. There has been many a time I have had a coffee with Ljil and we have had many debates about unions and the Labor Party, which I certainly do not agree with on this side of the house, but through all that we have been friends. I think younger members coming to Parliament could probably learn a good lesson from the both of us that you can actually be a friend with somebody on the other side. We respect them for what they do and they respect us for what we do. Eighteen years is a huge commitment to public service, and Ljil’s family sitting here must be absolutely and extremely proud of you. You led the way and you are a woman leader in your community. Ljil is at the moment the mother of the house. Once she leaves, that will be shared by three Labor women on the other side—Hon Sue Ellery, Hon Kate Doust, and Hon Adele Farina—and me. Of course, Hon Barry House is the father of the house, which is very apt.

Hon Ljiljanna Ravlich: Three of them! You’ve got to control three!

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Hon ROBYN McSWEENEY: Yes, four women. How terrible for Hon Barry House! On a more serious note, I thank Ljil for what Hon Norman Moore used to call her moaning. I am sure he meant it in a very respectful way.

Hon Ljiljanna Ravlich: He called me “Moaner”!

Hon ROBYN McSWEENEY: I know he called her “Moaner”. Another thing Norman used to say, which involves Eric who is sitting in the gallery, was, “Ljil will never marry Eric because she just doesn’t want to be known as that “Little Ripper.” I do not know whether Eric can entice her to the altar, but she will be forever known as the “Little Ripper” if he does! Her speeches were entertaining at times and very serious issues were tackled at other times. Like me, she has had the privilege of being a minister. I say to the people in this place who have never been a minister that they do not know they are alive until they are a minister. It is four o’clock in the morning; it is 20 hours a day if they do it properly; and then there is the media. The media can be appalling at times and they can be very good at other times, depending on which newspaper it is. But I will not go into that because I am still standing here and Ljil is leaving. I might need the media one day. But I say well done to her and happy painting. She has a wonderful talent. I note that she has not given me a painting yet; she said she would. I just put that on the record.

Hon Ljiljanna Ravlich: I’ll write it down, Robyn.

Hon ROBYN McSWEENEY: And for goodness sake, Eric, buy a horse! She is still complaining about it 20 years later. She actually does need to come visiting here on a horse one day—and a carriage perhaps. In all seriousness, I thank Ljil for her friendship. She has given great service to her community. She has given great service to her Labor Party. Although, as I said, I have not necessarily agreed with anything she said, she has actually said it and done it.

Several members interjected.

Hon ROBYN McSWEENEY: I will rephrase that. In this chamber we have opposing views, but as a person and as a human being Ljil is a delightful woman and I thank her for her friendship. I will miss her.

HON DARREN WEST (Agricultural) [3.52 pm]: I too would like to make a contribution to support this motion and give my perspective on the time I have spent with Hon Ljiljanna Ravlich. I do not know whether Ljil remembers but I can remember very clearly the day I met her at a state executive meeting. I found her, as an up-and-coming person who was moving through the ranks of the party, through policy committees, starting branches and beginning to forge a career as a politician, to be someone who was always most helpful and who always returned my calls. I will always remember her for that. Whenever I rang, she would return my calls and give me some sage advice. She has seen my movements through the party up until now and it has been fantastic to have spent some time with her in Parliament. It has been a real pleasure for me and it has been great to have been part of the team with her.

I have to say that I am inspired by her oratory skills and her flashing wit. Something I hope to have after 18 years as a member of Parliament is the ability to mix it with the government, as she has done. Some of the instant, witty comments she makes I find most amusing that add a lot of life to the debate. I will always remember the day she called the Leader of the House “Sunshine” across the chamber. I might go out on a bit of a limb here. I do not know that the Leader of the House would be called Sunshine very often, but I do remember that clearly and it was said at a time that certainly aroused the house. We will all miss that acerbic wit and the way she is able to deliver a very funny line across the house and lighten up the debate from time to time. I do wish her and Eric all the best in future years, and I look forward to continuing my friendship with them both. One of the highlights of being involved in political life is forging friendships and working with people such as them.

I know that Ljil’s parents would be very, very proud of her, because we are all very, very proud of her too. Her time in Parliament is a great achievement and it has been an absolute honour to know her. I guess it is goodbye for now and thanks very much. It has been a great contribution.

HON RICK MAZZA (Agricultural) [3.55 pm]: I rise today to support the motion. It is my extreme misfortune not to have been able to get to know Hon Ljiljanna Ravlich very well over the past 18 months. However, I think I learnt more about Hon Ljiljanna Ravlich today, from her valedictory comments and comments made by her colleagues and other members of this place who have history with her, than I learnt in the entire 18 months or so that I have been a member. Hon Ljiljanna Ravlich has been described as dogged and even as a terrier, but I think the way that I will remember her is as the most cheeky member of this place who was always prepared to push the boundaries. There is a lot for Hon Ljiljanna Ravlich to be proud of. Many comments in her valedictory speech struck a chord with me, including her migration from Croatia and the hardships she went through to get to where she is today. I wish her and Eric all the best for the future in their endeavours.

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HON SALLY TALBOT (South West) [3.56 pm]: I want to add a couple of comments to the very eloquent acknowledgements that have been made of the contribution that Ljil has made to this place. I have been on the Labor team in this place for only 10 years, but in every moment of those 10 years it has been a great honour and privilege to serve with Ljil. She will indeed be sorely missed. What *Hansard* will not show and what honourable members sitting more than a couple of feet away from Ljil right at this moment will not know is that she is trying to encourage everybody to shut up so that she can get out of this place once and for all, as I was in the members' bar earlier today and saw her putting on ice every single bottle of Moët that this place possesses. So, guys, bear with me for just a few minutes and then you can get down to the Moët!

Ljil is a consummate parliamentary performer. We have all learnt from her, and we will all continue to remember the example she has set us long after she has departed this place. Unlike a couple of very famous members of this place, when Ljil was asked at the last moment to get on her feet and speak, sometimes indefinitely, she did not just make the same speech over and over again. Some members on the other side will know exactly about whom I am talking. One Liberal member of this place was famous for always giving an identical speech. Whether it was on the onion bill or an appropriation bill, he always gave the same speech. But Ljil had the incredible knack of being able to pull together at the last minute the main points of a bill and stand and talk in this place until she got a note saying, "That's enough; you can sit down now." I will never forget the time when I saw her do this. She was in full flight and had been going for about 35 minutes. She had just finished a rhetorical flourish—we all know how good she is at that—with the comment, "That is why this is such an appalling bill and Labor is opposing every clause of this bill", whereupon a note was passed along the row and I put in front of her that said, "Ljil, we're actually supporting the bill"! Ljil did not drop a stitch! She did not bat an eyelid! She just said, "We would of course be opposing this bill if"—and she then went on for another 35 minutes. My goodness me! It was one of the most compelling performances I have ever seen. I am sure Hon Ljiljanna Ravlich remembers it as well.

Ljil has already referred to the story about the beginning of her relationship with Eric. I want to add a few other little dimensions to that story by telling her where I first heard it. I was not a member of Parliament. I was the assistant state secretary of the Western Australian branch of the Australian Labor Party. Wearing that hat, I was also, of course, the assistant campaign director. We were in the final few days of the 2005 campaign. Members all know a lot about campaigning and what it is like at that stage of the campaign. As a member of the strategy group and as the assistant state campaign director, I was part of that team that was working very closely together to very carefully manage the media in the final few days of the campaign. We were pretty good at that. We rushed out to get *The Sunday Times* at about eight o'clock on Saturday night. When we got back to the office we opened the paper and there was Eric and Ljil all over the paper—on the front page, the trailer, the page 3 article and then, of course, the article inside the paper. Eric and Ljil had done an interview for the series *Two of us* about famous people and their relationships. Our very, very carefully choreographed media strategy was totally derailed by this brilliant story told in the most comical terms by these two people. I have to say I think that was probably the reason we won, Ljil, because your media strategy was far superior to anything that the state strategy committee was able to come up with. It was the most heartwarming story that many of us had seen for a long time; it brought a tear and a smile to everybody's face.

Hon Ljiljanna Ravlich: Be careful; things might have changed since then!

Hon SALLY TALBOT: I was reminded about that today, not because Ljil referred to some of the stories, but because part of the warmth of this series is the way that people tell the story about each other. I want to share with the house what Eric, who I know will be just itching to have contributed to this debate today, said about Ljil at the time. I will just share those words. He said —

Ljiljanna has a great gift for making friends. She's a very social person. I think I'd been going out with her for more than a year and I was still meeting people who were old friends of hers. She's a very hospitable person. She's a very well organised, competent and energetic person.

She's great at shopping. She loves shopping for all sorts of things: —

At this point I have to tell members that Eric loathes shopping. Eric's idea of a fun week is to go and stay in a tent in the Stirling Ranges in the great southern; Ljil's is to spend the whole week shopping. It is a wonder and a marvel that these two people get on as well as they do. Eric continues —

she's got a terrific eye for quality and a terrific eye for a bargain and she usually manages to pull both of those things off in one.

Her Croatian heritage is very important to her. What she's done really is amazing. To have come here not speaking English at the age of five, from a small Croatian village, to have completed a university

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education and now be a minister in a state government is a remarkable achievement and I really admire her.

Family is very important to Ljiljanna and I've attended a lot of functions with her family and a lot of Croatian community dances. My dancing, I believe—although you might want to check this with Ljiljanna—has improved.

Now, the one thing that Ljil is not—she is all the things that we have heard about today; she is resilient, she is resourceful, she is enormously talented—is romantic. Members who recognise that already will not be surprised that in her comments Ljil actually says —

There is a problem with the dancing. Bit by bit he's getting a bit better but he's got a long way to go.

I am not sure how much Eric has improved in the last 10 years.

That is a lovely tribute to you, Ljil, and one with which we would all agree wholeheartedly. There is one very small detail that Ljil omitted from her account of how Eric arrived at her door. She told members about seeing him at the bottom of her coffee cup. In the article she says —

... on Valentine's Day 1995 I got a knock at my front door. I looked down the passage and I thought: "What's Eric Ripper doing there with a box of chocolates and a bunch of flowers?"—I couldn't believe it.

I went to the front door and said: "Hi, what are you doing here?" He didn't even say "Will you go out with me". He said: "Will you be my girlfriend?" Just like that, out of the blue. I said: "Well, nothing else has happened in eight years! —

I think that shows the depth of love between these two people, because next she said —

But we'd better have a bit of an interview."

I can assure members that she meant that. Congratulations, Eric, on having passed the interview.

Ljil, to say that you are a talented artist is actually, I think, quite patronising; you are an artist of real stature. We all hope—we all know—that your art will improve in value. We all have a significant investment in that, because the art that you have given us over the years is the only way that most of us will make any real money. Ljil, you have conclusively demonstrated to me that the old adage that there are no friends in politics is definitely not true. I count you as a friend, and I count your partner, Eric, as a friend. Jon and I are thoroughly looking forward to many more long Sundays at the Blue Duck.

HON LIZ BEHJAT (North Metropolitan) [4.05 pm]: Please do not let it ever be said that I got between Hon Ljiljanna Ravlich and a glass of champagne, so I will keep my comments brief. I rise to support the motion this afternoon and to raise an issue that has not been canvassed in the things that have been said on both sides of the house today, and that is the important work we do together as members of Parliament on committees. When I first came into this house, I was very fortunate to be appointed to the Standing Committee on Estimates and Financial Operations by Hon Norman Moore. I thought he was seriously having a go at me and I said to him, "I cannot balance a chequebook. Why would you ever put me on that sort of committee?" He said, "It is because you have some political nous about you, and as a government member on a committee like that, you are going to need it." He said, "Given the opposition members on that committee, you will be tested." Certainly that was the case. With Hon Giz Watson as the chair of that committee and opposition members Hon Ljiljanna Ravlich and Hon Ken Travers, it was sometimes a testing time. Our colleague, Hon Philip Gardiner, who is no longer in the chamber, also made it a testing time on that committee for other reasons, as members might appreciate.

Ljil, I just want to say that you were nothing but generous with me on that committee. Without divulging too much that went on, there were certainly times when the debate was heated in the room, but we always walked out of there as good friends. Certainly to you and Eric also: we have attended a lot of multicultural functions together and I want to thank you because when I have taken my husband along, you and Eric have been nothing but charming to him and it has been very sociable to be with you both.

I found out today that Hon Ljiljanna Ravlich arrived in Australia on the *Galileo Galilei*. I came to Australia on the *Castel Felice*, which was the last ship to come through the Suez Canal. Our passage through the Suez Canal was delayed because the *Galileo Galilei* had had an accident; it had gone sideways into the canal and was creating a roadblock. It is quite interesting that that was the ship that Hon Ljiljanna Ravlich should come on, because it has sometimes been said that perhaps she might have acted as a roadblock to a few of the things that we have tried to achieve on this side of the house!

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With those few words, it has been great fun having you as a colleague for six years. I know that you would have loved to have continued in north metro—the region that rocks—but things will be different for you. I wish you all the best for your future.

HON LYNN MacLAREN (South Metropolitan) [4.08 pm]: I rise to give 100 per cent of the Greens support for this motion. My colleague Hon Robin Chapple has already made a couple of comments, but I want to briefly say something, and because I know how chilled Moët needs to be, it does need just another couple of minutes chilling.

Hon Ljiljanna Ravlich: It is only one bottle.

Hon LYNN MacLAREN: I will get you another one.

I first came to this place in 2005 and Ljiljanna made a very strong impression on me at that time. Hon Peter Foss was on the other side of the chamber and they used to have quite a good scrap together. Then again in 2009, when I was watching the banter between Hon Peter Collier and Hon Ljiljanna Ravlich, it impressed me no end because I saw before me a strong woman, an articulate woman and a courageous woman. And, as we heard today, she is a self-made woman from a migrant family. From a distance, it has been impressive to see her relationship as quite an independent woman. I think that is a great role model for all Western Australians. I am going to miss her. I wish you and Eric well. It is also admirable to see a woman leave with grace at a time of her own choosing.

HON ALANNA CLOHESY (East Metropolitan) [4.10 pm]: I also rise in support of this motion. As a relatively new member of this place, I want to place on record my thanks to Hon Ljiljanna Ravlich for her support and friendship. Coming into this place is a very steep learning curve and I have always appreciated Ljiljanna's advice on practically everything that goes on inside and outside this place, but her most precious piece of advice was, "Give 'em heaps, Lanny!"

I also want to say that Hon Ljiljanna Ravlich has been an inspiration to me. Young women, particularly women from non-English speaking backgrounds, hold her in great esteem, and it is no wonder, of course; she is very inspirational. But she is also very supportive of a range of individual women and women's organisations, and I think that needed to be placed on the record.

This is the quietest I have seen Hon Ljiljanna Ravlich since I came into this place, and in honour of that I will take my seat! Thank you, Ljiljanna.

THE PRESIDENT (Hon Barry House): As the father of the house, I am also delighted to add a few comments to the motion acknowledging the extremely extraordinary service of the mother of the house over 18 years. It has been my pleasure and privilege to be in this chamber for the 18 years that Hon Ljiljanna Ravlich has been a member. I make these few comments not just as a fellow member, colleague and friend, but also as the President representing the institution of the Legislative Council.

A couple of weeks ago Hon Ljiljanna Ravlich contacted me confidentially to indicate that she was considering retirement and to seek a bit of advice about the process and how these things happen. I know that a letter has been prepared making it official and formal that her resignation will take effect from 10 March. I am very pleased that you did it that way, Hon Ljiljanna Ravlich, because it gave you the opportunity to make a valedictory speech and it gave the rest of us, as a chamber, the opportunity to express our gratitude and observations on your contribution to this chamber. Some members resign and just disappear, and I think that is a great shame because the history of this state is bound up in the recollections of people who have served in public life.

Can I just generally congratulate and thank you, Hon Ljiljanna Ravlich, for your service to the Legislative Council, and wish you well. As I said, you have served for 18 years with energy, flamboyance and distinction. You certainly have not been one of those members of the Legislative Council who do not get noticed during their period of service! As many members have said, you have found various ways of making an enormous impact, whether personally, through policy, with your party or with government and the community.

You have always been active, colourful, entertaining, combative and passionate. One vivid example I recall was when I was the opposition education spokesman asking you a question during question time. Hon Ljiljanna Ravlich took me to task for having misspelt her name a couple of times in media releases, and rightfully so; it was careless, and I made sure I never repeated that mistake! But it was also an extraordinarily clever way of avoiding answering the question!

You have certainly served your party, your family, the community and this institution well and with distinction, and that is illustrated by your parting gesture, as has been referred to: this magnificent painting that you have

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asked to be presented to the parliamentary staff and hung in the parliamentary canteen. I will make sure that happens. I am sure that you have a career, if you want it, in art; you certainly have a passion for art and a record of extremely talented work already hanging in many houses around the state.

On my personal behalf, thank you; and on behalf of the institution of the Legislative Council, thank you for your friendship, your contribution and your amazing service to the state of Western Australia through the Legislative Council.

HON LJILJANNA RAVLICH (North Metropolitan) [4.15 pm]: Thank you, Mr President. I will not take up much more of the house's time; I know that we have been discussing me for the last near-on two hours, and discussing me can get a bit much even for me after a while! That is pretty hard for me to say, but I have to be honest!

Mr President, can I first of all thank you for those very kind words. I also thank members of this chamber who have spoken for their very kind words. I am amazed at the esteem in which I am held. I never thought I would be a success in politics, to be honest, and to be leaving now after 18 years with a good career under my belt and having such high regard from members such as you is really a great honour for me, and I cannot stress that enough. I thank each and every one of you for being not only colleagues, but also friends, comrades and just the decent people that you are.

Mr President, drinks will be served in the courtyard. Can I just say to members: please join me, Eric and members of my family for a drink as soon as proceedings come to a close. Thank you very much. I am absolutely honoured by the effort you have gone to today to make sure that I leave! Thank you very much.

Question put and passed.

The PRESIDENT: Can I get an indication from members who wish to make a statement?

HON ADELE FARINA (South West) [4.18 pm]: I just indicate that I had intended continuing my remarks from last night, but I do not want to keep Hon Ljiljanna Ravlich from her celebrations, so I will defer and continue them when we next sit.

House adjourned at 4.18 pm
