

WESTERN ROCK LOBSTER FISHERY

Motion

HON JIM CHOWN (Agricultural) [1.07 pm]: I move —

That this house expresses its concern at the Labor government's mismanagement of recent policy concerning the western rock lobster fishery and, in the interests of preserving the peace of mind of fishing families and restoring stability and confidence in the industry, calls upon the government to undertake that it will not pursue such a policy in future.

The western rock lobster industry has historically been based on confidence—confidence in security, confidence in resource rights and confidence that it was a limited-entry industry. The McGowan government has destroyed that confidence overnight. There will be long-lasting ramifications for the many people within the western rock lobster industry and those who support it. The government has demonstrated that in theory, without industry consultation, and using overhand tactics, it can simply gift itself a stake in the well-established commercially viable industry for no other reason than to endeavour to make it a cash cow for the government.

On that matter, it is interesting to note that after Parliament rose at the end of 2017, the government also tried to curtail funding to regional Western Australian education, and in the 2018–19 Christmas break the government then went into this policy of trying to grab 17 per cent of a very viable fishery without any planning, without any announcement and without any real consultation with industry on what it was trying to achieve. I suggest that in the next Christmas break government members should get out their Santa suits, go up and down the streets and the malls of the city and the country, and try to bring some good cheer to people from this Parliament.

The western rock lobster industry has worked hard to be a responsible and environmentally sustainable industry, building confidence for those who work within and finance the industry. That confidence has been shaken by Hon Dave Kelly's policy and has been replaced with unpredictability, scepticism, distrust and anxiety. That issue is ongoing in this industry. I am very well informed about the lack of confidence from financiers of the industry. Operators in the industry are being asked questions by their banks due to the uncertainty about whether the government may try a further attempt to socialise or nationalise part of the fishery. That guarantee has not been given by the McGowan government and the industry is finding it hard to finance its future endeavours. In fact, the asset base that the industry relies on, including pot values, has decreased by about 20 per cent. That is not only for industry operators; pot values are used as a form of investment by private and public superannuation funds. The rock lobster industry generates around \$505 million per annum and it supports about 2 400 direct and indirect jobs. It is a substantial industry and it is very important to regional Western Australia. There are 650 licence holders and it was the first fishery in the world to be certified as being ecologically sustainable by the international Marine Stewardship Council. This sustainability was threatened by the Minister for Fisheries' endeavours when he attempted to take 17 per cent of the industry for government usage.

The process that the minister undertook is interesting. For example, on 24 October, Minister Kelly put out a press release stating that the popular local lobster program was going to be extended for four months. This program put 25 000 extra lobsters into the local market. It allowed licensed commercial fishers to each tag up to 100 extra lobsters for sale either directly to the public or to local restaurants and fish retailers. I quote the minister, according to the press release —

“The Local Lobster Program ensures plentiful supplies of fresh WA lobster is available during the festive time of year when we celebrate with friends and family for Christmas, New Year, Australia Day or Easter.

On 24 October, the Minister for Fisheries seemed to be very happy about extending this local lobster program for four months to allow more lobsters onto the local market. On 27 October, the Western Rock Lobster Council emailed Mr Michael McMullan in the Department of the Premier and Cabinet. It states that the Western Rock Lobster Council has —

... been waiting months to add WRL content to the report ...

A report was due but the pivotal consultative industry body had not been asked by the government to make any submission to the program. However, some 16 months beforehand, it had made a submission to the minister on how it intended, under the local lobster program, to extend by fourfold the number of lobsters that would be available to the local market. The minister ignored this submission. The council received nothing back on its submission to make more crayfish available for local consumption.

I will now go into the disastrous policy that the industry rallied against and fought in a highly professional manner. It concerned not only the western rock lobster fishery, but also fisheries all around Australia that a Labor government intended to socialise part of a very highly regarded fishery without any planning or consultation. The government adopted standover tactics with the pivotal body—the Western Rock Lobster Council. It came down

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to a consultation period in which the Western Rock Lobster Council had to sign a confidentiality document with the minister's department on so-called negotiations on this matter. On 7 December, the peak body wrote to the minister about its concerns and dissatisfaction. I will read the letter —

A draft Terms Sheet was achieved between both parties however it was only made available to the WRL Board with three hours' notice —

The minister gave the Western Rock Lobster Council three hours' notice of his intentions. He then went along and had a board meeting with the council. It continues —

to its Board meeting today during which Government required a decision on signing.

On this very important matter, about which it had three hours' notice, the council had to sign a confidentiality document, and it was then expected to make a decision on the proposal. The letter goes on —

After extensive discussion the Board resolved to sign the Term Sheet on the understanding that the Board unanimously and fundamentally opposes the Government having ownership of units in the fishery, which it believes will cause a detrimental effect on the industry.

The document the council signed was non-binding. I have seen the document and it categorically states that it is a non-binding document. It was not even an agreement. However, the next day, the minister put out his own press release. It states —

Fisheries Minister Dave Kelly today announced the Government and the industry's peak body, Western Rock Lobster (Council), have agreed on an innovative industry development package that will substantially grow the industry to provide more benefits to the Western Australian community.

It states they "have agreed", but there was no agreement because the day before the minister got the letter saying that the peak body did not agree with his intentions and that it was upset it was given three hours' notice to force them to sign a non-binding document. The council hoped there would be further discussions and there was none because the minister went out and made statements such as this about creating new fishing units and creating 500 Western Australian jobs. This was without any backup or business plan and the minister undermined all aspects of the confidence in the industry. For example, I think some members may have had a notification about boatbuilders in Geraldton who lost contracts and had to put off staff. Some correspondence stated that boatbuilders had been struggling after the global financial crisis and the downturn in the lobster catch in 2008–09, and they had only just started to get back on their feet. This minister cut out the confidence in the industry to the point at which nobody was prepared to invest, let alone get substantial finance to build new boats. The same thing happened to another support industry—the anode industry—which puts blocks of metal on vessels. A business had two apprentices but the owner had to put them off because there were no more orders. That has been replicated in businesses right down the west coast. It is very concerning that any minister of any government would try to nationalise something that is as important and sustainable as the western rock lobster industry.

This industry had built up a fantastic rapport between its department—the Department of Fisheries—and the people who participate in the industry by catching lobsters. It is of great concern that this relationship broke down. The trust that has been built over the years has broken down. I have had emails on this matter from fishers who had such a rapport with the department that they could email or ring people in the department to speak to them and ask questions about where the industry was going and what the puerulus count was likely to be. Other innovative subjects were also under discussion. They are very innovative people. One of them sent me an email. I will not mention their name, but it is from a department member. It says that they can no longer talk to me because the minister has told them that they are not allowed to unless he gives us permission. Trust broke down from that point alone. I have no doubt that the department is very concerned about where this minister took this industry—and so it should be.

We have found out in this house that the minister did not even take this matter to cabinet for discussion. The minister has responded to two questions to say it was cabinet-in-confidence. All the opposition was asking for was a date. It was not asking for more information or the conversation that took place in cabinet. To me, that says that the minister went rogue. He went rogue at a time when the Premier —

Hon Sue Ellery interjected.

Hon JIM CHOWN: Leader of the House, are you saying that it went to cabinet?

Hon Sue Ellery: You know that I am not going to answer that question —

The PRESIDENT: Order!

Hon JIM CHOWN: Fine; it obviously did not go to cabinet. The minister went rogue at a time when the Premier went on holiday. Shortly after this announcement, when the industry was in turmoil, the Minister for Fisheries went on holiday. His chief of staff went on holiday. The head of the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development went on holiday. Until later in January, there was nobody from whom the industry could seek

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relevant information. There was no information at all, other than this dark cloud hanging over them that the minister intended to take, by hook or by crook, 17 per cent of the industry for purposes unknown. The depreciated cost of the units that he intended to take out of the fishery would have had a value of around \$800 000. We do not know—it has never been stated by the Premier or by the minister—who was going to buy these pots if this happened or how they would have been sold on the open market. We do not know how, as purported, the minister intended to increase the domestic supply of rock lobster. We know the industry had a plan and it told the minister 18 months earlier, but he totally ignored it. This is incompetence at a level never seen before in a western government. We know that socialism of industries cripples them. It did not work in the old Union of Soviet Socialist Republics iron bloc, it did not work in China and it still does not work in North Korea, so why would a minister of this government, initially supported by Premier McGowan, make such a decision under the pretence that it would increase the state's ability to attract tourists? We know where tourism is going; it is going down. If people think that an international rock lobster festival will lift the tourism rate by 10 per cent overnight, they really are living at the bottom of the garden with the fairies.

This decision should never be repeated by any government with any primary industry in Western Australia. If it had not been for the very professional campaign launched against this government by this particular fishery, if the fishers had not come together as a group to fight this decision, and if opposition members, including the Greens, had not stood against it, this government would have taken 17 per cent of the most viable and most respected fishery in the world.

In light of the debacle that the Minister for Fisheries instigated, which undermined confidence in the western rock lobster industry, the very least the Premier could do to restore confidence in this mature and responsible fishery is to make a public statement that his government has no future intention of entertaining the idea of socialising any part of the rock lobster industry or Western Australian fisheries. The Premier also has a duty to state that his government will work towards giving the rock lobster industry security of tenure in the fishery. This industry has been asking for that for years. It is my understanding that a Minister for Fisheries in a previous government, Hon Norman Moore, was working towards this outcome. The fisheries department would have all that information. I suggest that the Premier tap his rogue minister on the shoulder and say, "Listen here, Dave; either get on with this or I'm going to give you the flick." But we know that will not happen.

Such a statement would restore confidence in the industry and would restore the excellent relationship the industry had with the fisheries department and it would allow business as usual for this iconic and highly respected industry. Confidence is what needs to be restored. We all know that if government gets its hand around the neck of private enterprise, as this government intended to do, restoring the confidence of financiers takes a long time; it does not happen overnight. A statement from a Premier of this state such as I have outlined would certainly accelerate this industry getting back on its feet. That is the sort of leadership people expect when a government makes massive mistakes in policy and implementation, as this government made on this particular matter. I look forward to the Premier of Western Australia making a statement along the lines that I have advocated today.

The damage that this government has done in regional Western Australia is beyond belief, but I doubt whether the 5 500 employees in this fishery, their families or their friends would ever entertain voting for a Labor government at any time in the future. Governments cannot threaten responsible, viable commercial industries and get away with it. We have long memories. Unless the Premier has the intestinal fortitude to make a statement, we will not forget and neither will they, and nor should they.

I would like to congratulate the fishing industry for its professionalism in fighting this campaign. A number of fishers have said to me that this is the first time they have ever come together, such was their concern about the matter and such was their incredibility that a government, let alone a Labor government, would do as it intended to do. They banded together, with the help of this side of the house, in a professional campaign that finally made this government backflip. They need to be congratulated. Quite frankly, this government needs to start listening to the people, not to its left-wing advisers or its rogue ministers who disappear on holiday after making irresponsible statements with irresponsible intentions before coming back with their spin doctors. I think we have all read Paul Murray's article that was the last say on this matter. It encapsulated everything that was wrong with Minister Kelly's policy for the crayfish industry in this state. I certainly hope the minister sits down and engages in serious, mature, responsible negotiations about the future of this industry.

Hon Samantha Rowe: Sit down!

Hon Darren West: You've run out of things to say.

Hon JIM CHOWN: I have 23 seconds, so I will use those 23 seconds.

I look forward to a response to my motion in this house today. Even though the government has done a massive backflip on this decision, it is important that we stand up against future intentions by a government to nationalise or socialise primary industries.

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HON SUE ELLERY (South Metropolitan — Leader of the House) [1.27 pm]: Some people say that politics moves really fast. Those people have not met Hon Jim Chown. Two weeks ago, after listening to the concerns raised by the fishing community, the Premier and the minister announced that they would not proceed with the original proposal to increase the catch and allocate some of that catch to government and that they would convene an independently chaired industry and government group to examine together ways to grow the industry. Under the agreement, the total commercial catch of the western rock lobster will increase by 315 tonnes, with all or a significant majority of it to be sold in Western Australia. The details of how that will be delivered will be finalised very soon.

Currently, 95 per cent of WA lobster is exported, with most of this going to China, meaning that little is left for the enjoyment of Western Australians. This is predominantly due to a lack of supply and the high retail price of WA lobster. The agreement that has been reached between the government and the Western Rock Lobster Council will see up to triple the amount of lobster kept for the enjoyment and benefit of Western Australians.

The western rock lobster industry is Australia's largest single-species fishery. Over the past few years, the industry has grown from strength to strength on the back of strong demand from China. In 2017, the Western Rock Lobster Council released a report that identified opportunities for significant growth in the industry. That report outlined a pathway to grow the gross value of production to more than \$1 billion and to increase the total commercial catch to over 8 000 tonnes per annum. Many small coastal towns between Perth and Geraldton have been impacted by the changes that have occurred in the industry over time.

The way that the system works is that fishers with a quota pay an access fee to government for the right to fish the resource. This is calculated on a percentage of the gross value of production for the fishery. Once the fisheries department's costs for managing that fishery are taken into account with the access fee that the fishers pay to government, it raises a little over \$10 million per annum. The industry had record prices for lobster and the gross value of production for the fishery was just under \$400 million in 2016–17, so there was the potential to grow that gross value of production to \$1 billion a year over the coming years.

With nearly all the lobster being exported overseas, there were limited opportunities for Western Australians to enjoy it. The number of boats being put out was declining, as was the number of jobs. The government was not reducing the quota that was available to existing fishers; in fact, the original plan would have delivered an increase in the quota to existing fishers. The government was not planning to fish the resource or launch boats. The additional quota was to be released to the market to be fished by fishers. It is clear that the industry raised concerns. Although there was support for some elements of the original proposal, clearly, there was no support for the amount of increase and the allocation to government. That was clear, so we listened, and on 8 February—two weeks ago—with industry representatives standing beside them, the Premier and the Minister for Fisheries announced a new plan, which was received well by all.

The industry has claimed publicly that its profitability has decreased, a point made by Hon Jim Chown, as a result of the government's plan.

Point of Order

Hon JIM CHOWN: The Leader of the House appears to be reading verbatim from a prepared speech.

The PRESIDENT: The minister is using notes. The member would appreciate that the minister is talking in a representative capacity. Obviously, these notes would have been provided to her to assist with this debate. In those circumstances, it is an accepted practice for ministers in a representative capacity to be able to do that. I know that the minister will not deliver her whole speech in that way. That is not how she does things. I note what the member has raised, but there no point of order.

Debate Resumed

Hon SUE ELLERY: I will be looking at the notes provided to me for this debate.

In early February this year, beach prices for lobster were higher than they were at the same time last year. The beach prices for lobster were also higher in early February than they were before the original plan was announced on 8 December. On 5 February this year, fishers were paid between \$61 and \$83 a kilo. In February last year, fishers were paid between \$52 and \$61 a kilo. On 5 December, just before the original proposal was announced, fishers were paid between \$52 and \$78 a kilo. There is no evidence to support the claim that the value of pots significantly declined following the announcement. There is no evidence to support the claim of a drop in prices.

Hon Jim Chown interjected.

The PRESIDENT: Order! Member, you have had your opportunity. I am trying to hear what the minister has to say.

Hon SUE ELLERY: Clearly, the fishing community had concerns about the original proposal. The government listened, and two weeks ago it announced that the original plan as proposed was not proceeding. The Premier and

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the minister made the announcement about the new proposal with industry representatives standing beside them in agreement.

HON RICK MAZZA (Agricultural) [1.33 pm]: I would like to thank Hon Jim Chown for bringing this very important matter to the house. I would like to outline a little background behind this industry because it has not always experienced rivers of gold. About a decade ago, the fishery was under a lot of pressure. Before 2009, the industry system in place had seasonal closures and a restriction on the number of pots, but there was no quota. Consequently, during the fishing season, commercial fishers would make every effort to catch as many crayfish as they possibly could. The consequence of that was twofold. Firstly, the fishery was under a lot of pressure because 14 000 tonnes per annum of crayfish were caught. Secondly, the price of crayfish came down because the market was flooded during the crayfishing season. The fishery was on the verge of collapse. Puerulus counts were down and there were a lot of worried commercial cray fishermen.

Around 2009, the then Minister for Fisheries, Norman Moore, investigated a quota system, which was implemented. By all accounts, at the time that that quota system was put in place, it got quite ugly. Many people were very fearful for their livelihood. I think that the Western Australian Fishing Industry Council received many threatening phone calls and the ministry itself was under some pressure. However, the result was that a quota system was developed whereby a person could fish all year round. However, the quota was reduced to 5 500 tonnes—less than half; a significant decrease—in order for this industry to recover. During those years, many people put in a lot of work, invested a lot of time and took a lot of risks to develop their crayfishing business. About the time that the quota system was put in place, pot prices were about \$8 000. They were very low and of course there was a lot of struggle. A lot of people put a lot of time and effort into this industry and took a lot of risks to develop it to where it is today. My understanding is that today's pot prices are over \$80 000 each—a significant increase. A lot of care and thought has gone into the lifting of that quota. That quota is about 6 300 tonnes. It has increased by only 800 tonnes since the quota system was put in place.

Now, in agreement with the government, a very sensible increase of 315 tonnes has been put in place. However, the proposal put forward by this fisheries minister for the government to own an additional 1 385 tonnes would have lifted that quota to 8 000 tonnes a year, which would put significant pressure on the fishery. We do not know what effect that might have. Some people are telling me that puerulus counts are down by about 40 per cent at the moment. The environment is a very fluid thing. We are not quite sure where that might take us. A lot of science goes into trying to work out how sustainable this fishery will be. People have put a lot of work into this area. To have a grab at having a state-owned quota from this industry under the guise of providing a cheaper product for Western Australians is deplorable. The fact of the matter is that in a free enterprise system, the value of something is the value of something. We would all like to drive a Mercedes-Benz or a BMW, but of course not everybody can afford to do that. Those vehicles have a value in the marketplace and that is their value. We are in a global market and the beach price for crayfish has been quoted at \$58 a kilo; \$78 a kilo was one of the highest prices that I have seen. Many people rely on this industry. It is worth more than \$400 million a year in cash flow and many industries support the crayfishing industry; it is not just about the fisherman and his boat. Many of the support industries that look after the maintenance of boats and crayspots and the production system to process crayfish, all rely on this industry.

There was some commentary that this is a community-owned resource and therefore the community of Western Australia needs to benefit—I hear that a lot in the mining and the fishing industries—but someone has to have the expertise and put in place the capital to extract the value of that community-owned resource. If it sits in the ground or in the water, it is of no value to the community. In the crayfishing industry, many people have put a lot of effort and substantial investment and expertise into maintaining this community resource.

One of the other things that has worried me substantially is the idea of nationalising this fishery in order to provide a cheap product for the community. We believe that when bread is priced too highly, the government then invests in wheat farms and produces wheat or some other primary product. It all sounds very North Korean to me. Australian commercial practice is not conducive to that ideology; it is quite Communist. A lot of the worry has been around what “Kim Jong” Kelly might do next as far as nationalising —

Withdrawal of Remark

The PRESIDENT: Member, I might just remind you to refer to members by their appropriate title.

Hon RICK MAZZA: My apologies, Madam President. I withdraw that comment.

Debate Resumed

Hon RICK MAZZA: I wonder what the Minister for Fisheries, Hon Dave Kelly, might do next when it comes to nationalising primary production.

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Why are we interfering with a world-class fishery that has come a long way in the last decade? Some 55 000 recreational crayfish licences are issued each year. That is up about 50 per cent on the last four or five years. It is very hard to measure but it is estimated that about 450 000 tonnes of crayfish are caught by recreational fishermen. The recreational fishermen I talk to are very happy with the current arrangement. If we go back six or seven years—I must admit that I was dropping a couple of pots about that time—it was very difficult to catch a feed of crayfish. These days, quite seasonally—usually around December—people can go out quite close to shore with a couple of pots and catch themselves their bag limit most times, to the point that the government has been very generous and increased that bag limit from 16 to 24. The recreational sector has benefited from that. The worry that it has expressed to me is that if we increase the total allowable commercial catch for commercial fishers, they will have to put in more effort to try to get their share of that quota, which might bring them inshore again and therefore reduce the number of crayfish that are available for the rec sector. It is very important to be mindful of the fact that this fishery is world class. This industry was the first in the world—I think it occurred back in 2000—to be certified as a well-managed and sustainable fishery by the Marine Stewardship Council. That is quite an achievement for that fishery considering that it came from being on the brink of collapse to becoming a world-class fishery. I think it needs to be congratulated for that.

Hon Simon O'Brien: Hon Norman Moore was the one who led that.

Hon RICK MAZZA: I think I mentioned him earlier, member.

Further to that, in 2012, it was the first fishery in the world to be certified as sustainable for the third time, which is no mean feat considering everything that has taken place over the years. I do not know why we would want to interfere with this fishery. I think it is a very reckless thing to do. I had a number of calls before Christmas. As Hon Jim Chown pointed out, these things seem to come up around Christmas, whether it be cutting education funding in the country or crayfish. People were very anxious and worried about their industry. I had a phone call from one member of the public who had committed to buy pots and was very worried about whether his investment would collapse and whether he should proceed with the sale. I received a lot of feedback from people that banks were ringing fishermen and saying, “We’re not sure whether we want to continue to fund you on this basis. Maybe we need to revalue your assets.” The whole industry was undermined.

Hon Jim Chown: That was because if this take had happened, there is nothing to stop the government from doing it again.

Hon RICK MAZZA: Yes.

The ABC conducted an interview with Jake Suckling, which I will read out for members. I have the transcript of that interview. On 8 January this year, there was an ABC news story about Geraldton fisherman Jake Suckling, who recently purchased 25 A-zone pots. In summary, he claimed that he stood to lose \$1 million overnight if the proposal was implemented due to a possible glut that would damage the value of not only the pots, but also the catch. He also expressed concern for the job security of his two employees. The same story quoted Geraldton boatbuilder Peter Ellis from Xtreme Marine who said that the government’s decision cost him a contract worth \$3 million. That is the level of fear that was put out there. He was reported as having said —

“It was a 10-month job, which would have engaged over 30 contractors and local people around town, and a lot of suppliers local and state.

“We had 2019 already planned out and now we’ve got nothing after March.”

A more cautious approach should be taken in the future to ensure sustainability. There was a lot of disruption to this industry. I am sure that other members were contacted by processing groups in Geraldton, fishermen, industry representatives et cetera with their great concerns.

I support this motion. I would like to think that this government would not attempt a nationalisation policy like this again. The fact that this fishery was able to come back from the brink in the way it did, take the pain and put in the investment, expertise and effort to get to where it is now should not be punished by the government having a grab for more quota out of this industry. If anything, it should be congratulated for a job well done.

HON COLIN de GRUSSA (Agricultural) [1.45 pm]: I, too, rise to indicate the support of the Nationals WA for this fantastic motion moved by Hon Jim Chown. Like others on this side of the house, we are certainly astounded by the arrogance, ignorance and disregard for the industry displayed by those opposite and, as we heard earlier, the continual rewriting of history. There is the notion that somehow this government listened and learned. Holding a gun to someone’s head while they take their car keys does not constitute an agreement to hire that car. There was no negotiation or listening. It was just another poorly thought out policy from this government that it clearly hoped would be swept up in the hustle and bustle of the Christmas period. Regional Western Australia has proven yet again that it will not be taken for fools and it will not let these things happen.

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On 5 January, Paul Murray called this lobster grab “crazy ideology”. Indeed, he writes —

But the minutes show that the McGowan Government’s plan to take a share of the catch of WA lobster fishermen by regulation and ministerial decree was non-negotiable from the outset.

There was no negotiation. There was no agreement. There was reckless disregard for an industry that has done so well over the years through many changes, as outlined by speakers before me. Today, federal Labor again announced an interventionist policy, this time for the dairy industry. The wannabe Prime Minister now seeks to intervene and set a floor price for milk. Do they not learn? Intervening in an industry is not the solution. The problem with the dairy industry is not about setting a floor price; it is largely about the power of supermarkets. Floor prices do not work. Government intervention will not work. The lobster industry has just told this government loud and clear that those interventions will not work.

Once again, as I said before, this government underestimated the people of regional Western Australia. There was no better example of that than in Geraldton on the morning of 7 December last year. We are all busy at that time of year at various school awards. I happened to be at the Mount Tarcoola Primary School awards. I am sure that Hon Darren West will remember it well. I sat down, awaiting the assembly, and there was a flurry of activity because the seat next to me with Hon Darren West’s name tag on it was empty. It was empty for quite a period after the awards had started. He slithered in later, sat down next to me and whispered in my ear, “I’m a bit late. Fantastic announcement for the fishing industry. Wonderful news. This is the best thing ever for the crayfish industry.” I thought to myself, “Hello, someone’s found the keys to the Kool-Aid cabinet again and obviously drunk the Kool-Aid.” Again, the announcement was made and the rest is history with the industry’s reaction to that. I want to put on the record absolutely clearly that the industry, families, mums and dads and hard-working Western Australians stood up for their industry in the face of this attack.

I want to record my thanks and gratitude to all those people who wrote to me and to other opposition members and government members, who attended meetings, who wrote to newspapers and spoke to journalists, and who met with us on this issue, and who did not let it go. The passion and fight the industry itself showed in this matter is a shining example of what can be achieved when an industry and ordinary folk unite for a very worthy cause. I certainly encourage those in the agricultural industry to learn a little from their brothers and sisters in the fishing industry.

I want to talk about the history of the rock lobster fishing industry, just as others have done to some extent today. It is a very important industry for Western Australia. It is an industry that generations of hardworking Western Australian families have worked hard to build for more than 60 years. It employs thousands of people right across the state. Many small towns on the midwest coast between Perth and Geraldton are underpinned by the fishing industry, and the western rock lobster industry in particular—local boatbuilders, service industries and other ancillary industries depend on the fishing industry for their livelihoods. The industry pumps around half a billion dollars into the state’s economy and directly generates around \$282 million in the supply chain and a further \$222 million in indirect economic value. In fact, it is comparable with other WA primary industries, such as wool, sheep, wheat and milk, so it is a very important industry in WA and should not be interfered with. The direct economic contribution of the fishing industry to the WA economy is greater than that of the beer manufacturing industry and greater than that of the dairy and coalmining industries.

As Hon Rick Mazza said, the rock lobster industry was the first fishing industry to be certified as ecologically sustainable by the Marine Stewardship Council. What does that mean? Marine Stewardship Council certification is a label applied to wild fish or seafood from fisheries certified to the MSC fisheries standard, a science-based set of requirements for sustainable fishing. The fisheries that are certified as MSC fisheries are managed in best practice. There is no better example around the world than the WA rock lobster industry in the way that the fishery is managed, the way it is fished for sustainability and the way the whole industry works to ensure that the lobster industry will remain viable for many, many years to come. MSC certification is certainly important and is something that should not be taken lightly. Indeed, it is a credit to the industry that it has been able to maintain that certification over the years, even through the trials and tribulations of change that it has had. This industry was the first in the world to achieve that certification, as I said. If it is left alone, the industry will continue to flourish.

The government’s proposal was a failure to recognise just how well run this industry is. It was a failure to recognise the hard work that those men and women have gone through to build this industry and it was a failure to recognise that the good times are not always there and will not always be there. As with any primary or food production industry, people do not know what is around the corner in terms of seasonal conditions and conditions for spawning et cetera, so they do not know how successful the industry will be every year. Given the reforms it has been through, there is nothing wrong with a bit of success. It is a good thing. We should indeed be encouraging industries to flourish in this state and not penalise them for that success.

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It was obvious that this intervention would have a number of destabilising effects on the industry. I gave the example of the banks. I spoke to a number of bank representatives and they were very nervous about the position of some of their clients and the security of some of those businesses due to the uncertainty created by this crazy cash grab. That is all it was about. It was never about making cheap lobster available to the masses; it was just about extracting a dollar to put in the government's coffers for refurbishing the Premier's office and other things.

The government crowed about how it had consulted widely. This has been another great example of how the government tells us it has consulted widely, then there is a backlash, an inevitable backflip and the policy is changed and it says, "We listened." Perhaps if it had consulted at the start, a good outcome may have been achieved without putting hardworking and decent West Aussies through uncertainty and the destabilising effects that these crazy ideas have had on them.

The industry growth plan to create Western Australian jobs failed to provide any detail on the proposed potential benefits for this fishery and the WA community. There was no modelling. I cannot find any modelling. I have asked for some of that modelling. We will see what turns up, but to my best knowledge and certainly after consultation with the industry, the industry could not find any examples of modelling that showed how this proposal would work or why it was necessary. Why did the government expect the industry to accept this proposal when there was no detail behind it? There was no rigour behind the idea; it just seemed to be one man's agenda. This government has a great history of creating jobs in regional WA! I give the example of Carnegie in Albany, which created 16 jobs, 15 of which are in Perth and one overseas. That was very good news for Albany!

Stakeholders were seriously concerned about the potential move to the 8 000 tonnes per year total allowable catch. From consultations and the meetings that I attended with the industry, there was no guarantee that the total allowable catch was ever going to get to 8 000 tonnes. It was a maximum. Indeed, if it did not get to that and the government still had its take, fishers would have been out of pocket, effectively losing some of their quota. That is where the trickery is in this policy. Again, the industry is to be commended for working so hard to understand exactly what was going on.

This issue sent shock waves right across Australia, through all fishing industries. Indeed, Seafood Industry Australia held a meeting in Fremantle. CEO Joan Lovell in a media release put out by Seafood Industry Australia said —

"What we have seen happen in Western Australia with regard to Western Rock Lobster and the McGowan Government's move to issue licenses to itself, is unprecedented, we believe illegal and condemned by representatives at today's meeting. This action dramatically devalues the local industry and has national consequences on property rights, not just within the seafood industry," ...

The other message that came through loud and clear after consulting with not just Seafood Industry Australia but also other industries is that they were worried. Abalone industry representatives came to me and were in a state of panic. People in many other industries were very worried about their future as well. They were all united in the cause to defeat this crazy policy. Again, as Hon Rick Mazza said, recreational fishers were united in their opposition to the proposal because it would have had a dramatic effect on them too, potentially. Again, where was the consultation? Surely, it was the Minister for Fisheries' job to find out what the industry thought and what other solutions there were. Instead of doing that, he made a unilateral decision that was overturned at the last minute.

Again, there seems to have been no appreciation of the effect this policy would have had on the communities represented by the government. I quote an email I received from a fisher, who wrote to the minister —

Our lobster boat is 22 years old and with my son as skipper I have gone through the process and plan to build a new boat. We have discussed with our accountants, bank, boat builder and had our existing boat valued. I can see what your plan is going to do to our markets and sustainability, so building a new boat is all over. Finished. What you are proposing will be a wrecking ball to an iconic industry in Western Australia and further you are the person ,against overwhelming advice will be held responsible for such an outrageous plan, should it ever proceed.

It was not just fishers who were thrown into uncertainty; as others have said, boatbuilders were as well. Some fantastic successful regional businesses that we must support were thrown into turmoil. Staff were nervous, with some losing jobs. It was madness that this was allowed to happen. Regarding banks, I quote from *The Weekend West* of Saturday, 12 January —

Dutch banking giant Rabobank yesterday said moves by the State to quarantine 17 per cent of WA's lucrative rock lobster fishery had cast significant uncertainty over the \$500 million industry and were a new "dynamic" for banks to consider.

Extract from Hansard

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I spoke to the state manager of Rabobank about this issue and he, too, was concerned about the unprecedented intervention. It was a new threat to the industry that bankers had not seen or expected and they were unsure how to deal with it. As has happened in many cases before with this government, there was a backflip. Not long before that, on 22 January, Gary Adshead wrote in *The West Australian* —

Enterprising fishers, wholesalers and marketing people behind this multimillion-dollar industry should be left to their own devices under sustainable quotas formulated by government using scientific expertise.

I could not agree more. He got it right 100 per cent when he said that. In the other place, on 14 February, only last week, my colleague the member for Moore said also on this topic —

We know the government has backflipped on that decision, but only after it has caused an enormous amount of damage to the confidence of the industry—not just the rock lobster industry, but the fishing industry right around Australia. Questions are being asked by fishers right around this nation about the value of the entitlements they have to carry out the work in the industry that they are involved in. It is not just about crayfish anymore; this is a wider problem.

Indeed it is; it is a problem that opened up so many other concerns for industry that a state of panic ensued and a very big campaign was undertaken to defeat this ill thought out plan. Just after the announcement on 13 February, Paul Murray said in *The West Australian* —

And Labor's clear intention to take a stake in the industry sent alarm bells ringing throughout the business community in WA and nationally. The precedent was chilling.

He goes on. I talked a bit about rewriting history. He commented on that, which I wholeheartedly agree with. I quote —

Both McGowan and Kelly tried to paint the picture on Friday that their key objective had been to increase the supply of affordable crayfish to the local market.

Minutes of the negotiations at the first meeting on November 22 show that to be untrue.

The government's first priority was higher financial returns to the WA government from the lobster fishery. It was a cash grab by this government. It was not about making cheap lobster available to anyone. It was a cash grab, about putting money into the coffers and not about feeding the hungry at all.

This government has a history of backflips. There have been backflips on the fishing industry, backflips on funding for community resource centres, backflips on the Schools of the Air and backflips on Perth Modern School. The proposed closure of Moora Residential College was another fight and there was the agricultural education farms provision trust and the camp schools. All these things are happening in regional WA that the community is up in arms about and continues to fight against every time they happen. We can add to that some dodgy planning decisions in Mt Helena that will potentially put lives at risk; mates' deals for the wave farm in Albany and a litany of other backflips and poor decisions. When will the Premier, who ultimately is the leader, rein in these out-of-control ministers? Does he have the authority to rein in his out-of-control ministers?

Hon Sue Ellery: Are you reading your speech?

Hon COLIN de GRUSSA: Notes? I am certainly not reading, Leader of the House; I am reading notes just as she was.

I reiterate the Nationals' support for this very good motion. I congratulate the industry for stopping this Bolshevik minister in his tracks and may the western rock lobster industry enjoy a successful future thanks to the fight of its people.

HON ROBIN SCOTT (Mining and Pastoral) [2.04 pm]: I rise on behalf of Pauline Hanson's One Nation to support the motion put by Hon Jim Chown. I had the pleasure of visiting the crayfish export factory in Welshpool built at a cost of \$22 million. It was built and paid for by the fishing industry. It is a state-of-the-art live crayfish storing and packing facility capable of handling 80 tonnes of live crayfish. According to the staff, no-one from the government has visited this facility since the day it opened on 13 June 2017. It is unbelievable that the Labor government would jeopardise this thriving industry in an attempt to bolster government revenue. Make no mistake, as another member just stated, it is a cash grab—nothing more, nothing less.

I have received many emails from crayfishing operators concerned about their future. I have also received emails from the industries that rely on the crayfishing industry for their livelihood, such as the mechanics who maintain the engines and the boats, and the refrigeration and electrical companies, which maintain the electrics and the cooling systems to allow this industry to operate. I even heard from a boatbuilder who was concerned that he would lose orders for new boats. I have a suggestion for parliamentarians, particularly in the other place, who have never run a business and, obviously, have no idea how to run a business. Instead of trying to impede enterprise and penalise hardworking people, they should show respect and admiration for Western Australians whether they

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are in the fishing industry, the mining industry, the pastoral industry or the taxi industry or even running the corner store. I am standing in this chamber because I want more jobs for Western Australia. What I would really like to know from the government is: what is its next bad idea?

HON DIANE EVERS (South West) [2.06 pm]: When I first heard about this policy, I was a bit surprised. It seemed too good to be true—everything would be good, we would have more tourists, more lobster on the table, more boats out on the water, more people working and more money. It would be a good deal for Aboriginal people and for tourism. What could go wrong? Within a few minutes of looking into it, I wondered: what is the government trying to do here? It was seeking an extra quota that it was going to do something with at the time. There was no detail about what would happen with it. It was just going to increase the quota and do more. It promised everything, but the detail was completely lacking. When we looked into it from a Greens' perspective, we had to ask: Why lift the quota from 6 300 tonnes in one year to 8 000 tonnes the next, and where is the information to back that up? What would happen if we did that? To suggest the quota could be 8 000 tonnes in five years still would not work because it is based on the egg production and puerulus settlement. That is only four years in advance. We cannot predict even five years out what can happen. Many other issues come with that, so we have to ask: what is happening here? Then we looked at the consultation process—or lack of consultation—and there seemed to be no rhyme or reason for how this proposal came up. It seemed like one of those Christmas surprises.

I met with fisheries because I wanted to find out as much information as I could. There was still very little detail on how the extra quota would go into the local market and very little detail on the Aboriginal component. Even when we looked at the charts and graphs of the fishery, we could see that the industry has picked up from the terrible time of 14 000 tonnes being taken, but we are only picking up to a new average. This average is still considerably below where it was, say, 20 years ago and we have to ask why. What has changed? One event was the heat event that affected the lobster industry in 2011. Some of the seagrass beds affected at that time have still not recovered. Why are we saying it will be fine when we see that climate change impacts can affect it very quickly and very harshly? It was completely unexpected.

When I saw those graphs and heard the government say that it had worked out that the maximum sustainable yield was 10 000 tonnes and the maximum economic yield was 8 000 tonnes, and that everything would be fine so we should just go ahead with that, it made me ask the question: what happens if we get up to 8 000 tonnes but we see that it is having an impact on the industry, so we start to reduce it? If we start to reduce it, that will have an impact. The government had worked out that if it sold the extra quota, it would reap a substantial benefit for the state for a number of different areas, but if it went down, investors would lose some of the value of their investment. For example, if somebody had recently bought a couple of units and taken out a loan to do that, they would still get the same quota up until the 8 000 tonnes, but if that yield dropped back, their quota would start to reduce, and through no fault of their own. That has to be addressed in some way.

I also wanted to talk about the impact of climate change. It is not just happening here—it is a worldwide phenomenon—so maybe we should do something about it. In the meantime, we should find out what impacts climate change will have on us and what we can do about it. In 2016–17, the Senate's Environment and Communications References Committee inquired into the consequences of climate change for fisheries and biodiversity. This followed a heatwave in Tasmania in 2015–16 that devastated its fisheries. The conclusion to the committee's report states —

During this inquiry, compelling expert evidence was presented to the committee about the current and projected impacts of climate change on the marine environment. Rising ocean temperatures, changes to ocean currents, increasing sea levels and acidification of the surface ocean (from rising carbon dioxide levels in the atmosphere) have been observed or are projected.

7.3 The implications for Australia will be significant.

The report went on to say —

7.5 There is also concerning evidence of disease outbreaks and biosecurity risks linked to climate change. These events are already costing industry lost production and revenue and may ultimately threaten businesses, investment and employment. Governments will likely incur direct costs in response to outbreaks of marine pests and diseases.

7.6 Effective adaptation to the effects of climate change on the marine environment requires action by governments, industry and the community at large.

The committee very clearly outlined that climate change is happening. We do not know exactly how, when or where, but climate change will have a multitude of severe impacts on our fisheries. Therefore, we need to be much

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more careful about maximum economic yields or maximum sustainable yields, because we are still using old information to predict what might happen in the future, and the future is more uncertain than that. Recommendation 10 of the committee report was that —

... the Australian, state and territory governments review all environmental and resource management legislation to ensure that adequate consideration of the effects of climate change is expressly required as part of assessment and decision-making processes.

Going back to the western rock lobster issue, the size of the quota now and in the future needs to take into account climate change impacts on the ocean. How will lobster be affected? We cannot really tell. We know the things that have happened in the past, but the impacts could be worse than that; in fact, they are likely to get worse. The habitat and food source of lobster could be affected. We know that there was a marine heatwave in 2011 and that we still have seabeds that have not recovered. It also affected our kelp beds, abalone, scallops and microfauna—the list goes on.

The most important part of this is that we want the fishery to remain sustainable. The reason it is sustainable now is that significant changes were made to the model. Even though we did get Marine Stewardship Council certification following the heatwave and the overfishing, when 14 000 tonnes of crayfish were taken out, there is no guarantee that we will keep it. It is very important that we do. It is also important that we apply that to our other fisheries. From what I understand, our fisheries are declining all along our coast—there are already fewer fish than there were in the past. We have this great certification for lobster. What about the rest of the fisheries? Why are we not managing those fisheries when we know that climate change is coming? A lot of change has to happen. Maybe the raising of this issue has been at least a starting point.

As we have said, this did seem like a cash grab—a revenue-raising exercise. All of us want to do a lot of things in the state. This proposal was promoted by saying that something would be given to the Aboriginal community—that somehow they would get something out of this—tourism would get something out of this, there would be lower priced lobster for individuals, there would be more lobster on the market, and more money would be put into research. There was something else, too. All of these things do not add up to the possible billion-dollar value of that new quota. In fact, it was a very small portion of it.

These difficulties can be seen in other areas, too. I have mentioned our timber industry before. The government not only manages that resource, but also exploits it. That leads to difficulties and conflicts. There is an inherent tension between government responsibilities when it is exploiting and conserving a resource. The same problem will arise in the marine area. In fact, this is particularly so under this proposal. The minister responsible for commercialisation was to be the Minister for State Development, Jobs and Trade, yet the Minister for Fisheries would set the quota. What sort of pressures would be involved? I cast no aspersions on the Premier, but it would surely not augur well for the sustainability of the fishery if the most senior of the two ministers involved is the one who is responsible for its exploitation and not its conservation.

Where do I see this going? We were not persuaded that the jump in quota was necessary to meet our domestic or tourism markets. Things had already been put in place to allow for the local purchase of these lobsters. I acknowledge that it has not been working since it was introduced two or three years ago, but maybe that can be met without embarking on the proposed change. This industry is a resource of the state, like mining and other resources. It is owned by the state and there for all of us. Yes, the government does get five per cent from the take, but it was trying to get more. We recognise that the industry is strong; it may even be growing. We may be managing it so well that it does one day go back to pre-2000 levels. I like the idea that recreational fishers are having an easier time and are able to get some lobster, because that is a nice way of sharing the wealth around the state. Even then, we are talking about a lot of lobster, and it is more than the state could eat on its own—we would have to have it every night of the week, and that is just not going to happen. Maybe there is another way or some other road to take. The idea of having something available for the settlement agreements with our Indigenous population could be a possibility. Maybe there could be some sort of way of dealing with that excess quota from one year to the next, but the industry would need to be involved.

I can support the first part of the motion, as the plan was lacking in justification and detail—it was lacking in many ways—and would very likely damage the resource. It could also cause financial hardship to current licensees if the quota was subsequently dropped. Even though a harvest of 8 000 tonnes rather than 6 000 tonnes would create more jobs and more boats, that is no reason or justification to exploit the resource. I would also like to talk about the lack of consultation. This is something I am very strong about. I really think we need to look back at how we consult in almost every case. The government has to get more than just the industry involved—it has to consult people who represent Western Australians. We think that is what we are here to do, but it does not seem to work that way. We need consultation to include a deliberative process so that we can bring into the room people who can make those decisions, because we have a lot of preconceptions or misconceptions, possibly, about the lobster industry. On the one hand, operators do not make any money. On the other hand, they are all really rich. I heard

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many stories through the consultation process—which I undertook to try to learn more about it—that completely opposed each other. I am not here to be judge and jury. That is why we need a deliberative process when we look at issues such as this. Bring people into the room, put the science in front of them and make some decisions.

As I was saying, the resource is too valuable to exploit unnecessarily. We want to keep it ongoing indefinitely so that we always have it there and we can rely on it and use it. The second part of this motion reads —

... calls upon the government to undertake that it will not pursue such a policy in future.

I have limited support for that because “never say never”. There could be a way that we could manage this resource better and I would not want to give up on the opportunity to do that.

Amendment to Motion

Hon DIANE EVERS: I move —

To insert after “future” —

unless it consults in good faith with all stakeholders with the objective of achieving —

- (a) a sustainable fishery and marine environment; and
- (b) an outcome acceptable, so far as is reasonably practical, to all stakeholders

HON JIM CHOWN (Agricultural) [2.21 pm]: We are happy to accept that amendment.

Amendment put and passed.

Motion, as Amended

HON PETER COLLIER (North Metropolitan — Leader of the Opposition) [2.21 pm]: I stand to support the motion in its amended form. I think it still retains the integrity of the original motion, but at the same time ensures that consultation takes place. Here we go again with an issue that the government has, basically, failed at in its policy direction. The way this policy has been formulated has been absolutely appalling. Let us make no bones about this; this was all about making money. There was nothing about increasing the threshold level to 8 000 tonnes of crayfish. It is a fiscal decision and not a practical decision. It comes from the mob opposite who for the last two years has been absolutely obsessed with us, as I keep saying. Every time they have opened their mouths and tried to govern, they have got it wrong. The government has had to backflip. I was staggered by the comments of the Leader of the House today. She almost tried to reverse the reversal. It was like a double backflip. It made Nadia Comăneci look like rank amateur.

Hon Simon O’Brien: With a full pike.

Hon PETER COLLIER: Absolutely. It was extraordinary. I could not work out what was going on. This government did a backflip. Whether or not members like it, this government backflipped on this issue. If it was such good policy, why is Labor still trying to defend it? Essentially, it increased the lobster threshold to 8 000 tonnes, as I said, up from around 6 300. It was a 1 700 tonne increase. Of those, 315 tonnes would go to existing fishers, but, significantly, almost 1 400 would go to the state government and straight into the coffers of the Treasurer. That is what it was all about. The government says to forget about the sector. All roads lead to the government because this is the way it governs. Do not take my word for it. I thought that the ABC did one of the most precise journalistic appraisals of recent times immediately after the backdown on 9 February when it stated —

The decision to ditch an overhaul of WA’s lobster industry the Government spent two months defending adds to a pattern of policy reversals that is proving increasingly hard to ignore.

The pattern goes something like this:

- **Stage 1:** A policy is established, with the Government strongly confident any wave of discontent can easily be seen off.
- **Stage 2:** Controversy and public backlash grow, as the Government vehemently defends its plans against mounting criticism and campaigns led by prominent West Australians.
- **Stage 3:** The issue continues to drag on, to the point where frustration grows about it sucking oxygen away from the Government’s other activities.
- **Stage 4:** Finally, a line is drawn and the policy is consigned to the dustbin of history.

Those words are written with the scrapping of the Government’s proposed nationalisation of 17 per cent of WA’s lobster industry fresh in mind, but there are plenty of other backdowns which fit that pattern almost perfectly.

He goes through them all. We are seeing a common denominator here. The government makes these decisions just before Christmas. When everyone is getting ready for their Christmas cheer, the mob opposite decides it will

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alienate yet another group in the community. I will not use the vernacular, but when we start to peeve off the people in the community is when we start to see the decline of a government. As I have said, the destruction of a government commences in Parliament. When the government takes this place for granted, it is gone. Members can see that now with the decisions that have been made away from the scrutiny of Parliament. When we are on our holidays and the public is purportedly having its siesta over Christmas, that is when the government makes the decisions. It also made decisions before the election, as it did with Perth Modern School. That was the most idiotic decision ever made. There was no consultation whatsoever. The government had to backflip on it.

What did the government do with the Schools of the Air? It made the decision just before Christmas and had to backflip on it. It had to backflip on Moora Residential College. You name it, the government had to backflip on it. Why do these guys not start to govern? Why can they not go out there? What is alien? What is in the DNA of the Labor Party that tells it not to consult? What is it with these guys, particularly the left wing, United Voice? They think they are going to bulldoze their way through like they do in the union movement. It does not work that way in the community. Labor is in a unique position. It is in government, for goodness sake, and it is wasting an opportunity. It does not bother us. We are glad. We get inundated with support. I should not be giving the government this advice. It should not really need it. I am speaking with complete accuracy. Every time these guys try to govern, they mess it up. The government has to start consulting. Cracks are emerging everywhere.

These guys should get a PhD in how not to make a decision. I will quickly go through the media releases on this lobster decision. The first one was on 10 November 2018. It states —

Fisheries Minister Dave Kelly has today revealed plans to grow the Western Australian lobster industry while returning more benefits to the WA community.

...

The State Government has now begun consulting with the peak industry body, Western Rock Lobster, and other stakeholders to explore options to grow the fishery, including increasing the supply of lobsters for Western Australian families and tourists.

They are weasel words. The government said that it would start consulting. A month later, we have a decision on this industry. On 8 December 2018, another media release from the minister states —

The McGowan Government plans to double the value of Western Australia's acclaimed western rock lobster industry and create up to 500 WA jobs.

We have a nice graphic there, which would have cost a pile of money. It has all these great reasons that we should have this wonderful new nationalised lobster industry to fill the coffers. It is not about the rock lobster industry, I can tell members now. It goes through weasel words about why we need it. It is not about that. If it had been about that, why is the rock lobster industry so adamantly opposed to it? All the government needed to do was look at the ACIL Allen Consulting report from 12 months earlier to see what a magnificent and sustainable industry it is. The government gave a single-finger salute to the industry and the report, which said it was going along very nicely and did not need any help from these guys. They should not go and put their hand over the industry and try to nationalise it. Look at that report. It is compelling evidence to show that the industry is very successful and sustainable. Not on your life! Not with the left wing of the Labor Party; it knows what is best for industry and the industry will get it whether it likes it or not.

Let me have a look at how the rock lobster industry responded to this, because, apparently, it liked it! That is not according to the chairman of the Western Rock Lobster Council. In a letter to Minister Kelly—I will not read the whole lot—he states in part —

After extensive discussion the Board resolved to sign the Term Sheet on the understanding that the Board unanimously and fundamentally opposes the Government having ownership of units in the fishery, which it believes will cause a detrimental effect on the industry.

I cannot believe that was written on the same day that the minister was high-fiving with the Premier, saying how wonderful it was that the Bolsheviks had control of the lobster industry. A press release is titled "Boost for WA jobs and local lobster supply from WA's most iconic fishery" but the lobster industry disagrees. Who is right? We do not know. The rumblings have started, but now Christmas is coming so all the fisheries start to worry about it. The minister put out another release. He is good at this. It reads —

The Minister has ... reassured WA's Fishing Industry Council that this is not a broader strategy to be applied to other State fisheries; it is about a new and unique opportunity for the rock lobster fishery.

We can see some smoke on the horizon, but there is even more animosity from all the fishers. The minister and the government can put their heads in the sand and say just before Christmas that it is a great idea, but the industry disagreed with them. Why does the minister have to placate the other fishers if he is so confident of his decision?

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There was not only that, but also, by 16 January, all hell had broken loose. By then, the rock lobster industry was in revolt. Get the barricades up around Dumas House, because they have had it! They are really peeved with you guys; you have lost them completely. The minister then decided to extend the consultation. Should he not have done the consultation before he made the announcement? Is that the bleeding obvious—not to do the consultation after the announcement? The minister extended the consultation on 16 January. But then what happened? The writing was on the wall. The minister had a finger in the wind and said, “Parliament’s coming back—a bit of scrutiny. We can’t have that.” Do members remember this government’s new level of transparency that I talked about last Thursday? Tell them nothing! Government members knew what was coming. They knew that when Parliament came back, they faced the possibility of suffering a humiliating defeat in this place and further scrutiny in the other place. So, on 8 February, the government came out with a decision to do a backflip. After all this consultation and being told for six weeks it was a wonderful decision—the government was told yet again today it was a great decision—it did a backflip. On 8 February, the media release came out. It states —

The State Government and the western rock lobster industry have today agreed on a plan to significantly increase local lobster supplies.

The government tried to put a spin on it, but it is basically a backflip. It continues —

At the meeting it was agreed —

That is, a meeting between the Premier, the minister and the industry —

that the annual catch would be increased by 315 tonnes, with all or a significant majority to be sold within Western Australia. The details of how this will be delivered will be finalised by the end of March.

Was it not meant to be 1 700 tonnes? The government told us we were going to have 1 700 tonnes. Everyone, wherever they live in the state, was going to have a crayfish for Christmas. That is how the government tried to portray it. It said that the crays would not just be for those in the western suburbs; everyone in Western Australia was going to have crayfish and the Labor Party was going to provide them. It was absolutely nothing to do with that. It was all about revenue raising and, in order to do so, the government tried to nationalise one of the most pivotal industries in this state. By all accounts, the ACIL Allen report said that the industry was handling itself very nicely and it did not need you guys to come along and tell it how to run its industry. The government agreed with it because it backtracked. By then, the media and the community were on to it. Gary Adshead wrote on 9 February in *The West Australian* —

Hooray for the cray backdown

A fumbled attempt to seize a 17 per cent stake in the lucrative rock lobster industry was yesterday abandoned in the McGowan Government’s latest humiliating backdown.

After announcing in December that the State would take more than 1300 tonnes from an increase in catch quotas, Premier Mark McGowan was forced to accept a deal for just 315 tonnes after a sustained industry campaign against the changes.

It goes on and on. In addition, an editorial in *The West Australian* on the same day is titled “The common theme to many of McGowan’s policy mistakes.” It reads —

Leaders must have the ability to realise when they have got something wrong and change course. And so to some degree the pragmatism of Premier Mark McGowan of finally changing his tune yesterday after the fallout over his ill-advised nationalisation of a big part of the crayfish industry could be commended.

But, it also must be said that he’s making a habit of backing down.

The crayfish U-turn comes after similar reversals on a pledge to relocate Perth Modern School into a city high-rise, the WA Schools of the Air debacle, plans to cut funding to Community Resource Centres and the shark drum lines.

There’s a pattern to all four. Every one of those decisions and the crayfish issue were being led by two union-backed frontbenchers—either Education Minister Sue Ellery or Fisheries Minister Dave Kelly.

That is too true. You guys have to understand that if you are going to make policy throughout the community, you have to consult; you cannot just crash through. The government did back down, but goodness gracious guys, what have you got a handle on in government over the last two years other than just smashing us? Communicate and consult with the community, for goodness sake! How are we going to find out who is responsible for this? Was it a cabinet decision or was it the Minister for Fisheries’ decision? We do not know. Yet again, here is the new level of transparency we were promised before the election. Remember what Mr McGowan said before the election? I have said this so many times. On 18 June 2016, he said —

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“The public interest must come first, transparency must come first, openness must come first.

I nearly choked on my Sultana Bran this morning when I got up and saw something about 150 000 new jobs.

Hon Sue Ellery: That’s my line and you know it!

Hon PETER COLLIER: It sounds better when it comes from me!

It is titled “WA’s working class Premier”, which I have to say is a ridiculous announcement. It states —

“Reporting on performance will be transparent and accessible to ensure we are accountable for our progress, and cannot hide beneath rhetoric,” he will say.

I nearly threw up. You have to be joking! Day in and day out, we get the hand all the time on questions to you guys and this is no different. I asked a very pertinent question on this issue to find out whether the decision went to cabinet. I asked this of the Minister for Fisheries and do members know what his response was? I asked him —

(1) Did the minister take the package to cabinet; and, if yes, on what date; and, if not, why not?

The answer was —

(1) Cabinet discussions are confidential.

Hon Jim Chown asked exactly the same question and got the same answer. I did not ask about the discussions; I asked whether it went to cabinet. The minister can say whether it went to cabinet. If he cannot say that, Hon Roger Cook needs to be sacked regarding Huawei. An article reads —

“In relation to the Huawei/UGL partnership bid, that has not come before cabinet, it has not come before any of the ministers of the government,” Mr Cook said on Wednesday.

Well, well, well; it is good for some ministers but not for others. Hon Roger Cook can talk about whether the Huawei matter went to cabinet, but what about the crayfish industry? I do not care about the deliberations. I am not asking about the discussion. It is a simple question and I can give members a litany of examples in which ministers and Premiers have said whether something did or did not go to cabinet. This is a bit sensitive; it might get the minister into a bit of trouble, so fend him off. What is the default position? To the apparatchiks in Dumas House: “What is our default position?” “Tell them nothing!” That is what the government has done. I could not believe that.

Last year, when I was doing some work on Carnegie, I asked the Premier —

(1) Has any minister declared a conflict of interest or a perceived conflict of interest in Carnegie Clean Energy Limited?

Did the Premier say that cabinet deliberations are discussed in confidence? No, he answered the question. He said no. Why is it okay for the Premier and the Deputy Premier to give me an answer but it is not okay for the Minister for Fisheries to give me an answer? I wonder whether Hon Darren West can respond to that. Tell me: does the fisheries minister have seniority over the Premier and the Deputy Premier? If he does, we want to hear about it. It just gets worse. Members have to hear the pièce de résistance. Yesterday, I made a mistake in my question to the Premier. I wanted to find out whether there was a conflict of interest. The Premier had said that he would give me an answer on Carnegie, so I thought: let me see whether he will give me an answer on the fisheries decision. I asked —

Has any minister declared a conflict of interest or a perceived conflict of industry in the western rock lobster industry?

It should have been “interest” but I put “industry”. Anyone could see that it was a mistake and they could give my office a call, which they do regularly, as did we when in government. There was a mistake with a question yesterday and the Leader of the House corrected the question and said to the honourable member that she assumed they meant to include the extra three words. This is not uncommon. All I am saying is that one does not need a PhD to work out that I meant, “Has the minister declared a conflict of interest or a perceived conflict of interest?” The government should have just got on the phone and asked me—but no. What is its default position? It is to “tell them nothing”. The response I received from the Premier of the state was —

It is unclear as to what the member means by a “perceived conflict of industry”.

How juvenile! Those juvenile apparatchiks in Dumas House—for goodness sake, they have got to be joking! The Leader of the House is better than this. If she read that, why did she not send it back to the Premier’s office? Why did she not send it back and say that it was unacceptable? That is unbecoming, not just of the government. Do members know who signed this letter? It was the Premier of Western Australia. He has got down into the gutter with those juvenile apparatchiks in Dumas House. If they are watching, I have two words for them: grow up. They

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are working for the Premier of Western Australia, and they actually sent that response back. Government members wonder why we put forward ad infinitum motions on transparency. It is because we get this rubbish. The fact that Hon Mark McGowan, the Premier of Western Australia, would sign off on that response is absolutely disgraceful. It is beneath contempt and it is certainly beneath this Parliament. There is one thing I hold dear in my role as the Leader of the Opposition in this house, and that is that the role of the Parliament is paramount. Government members take this place to a new low every single day.

This motion is a very reasonable motion. The opposition has not come in here and condemned the government; we have identified something that is real. Yet again members opposite have gone out into the community with a decision and implanted a decision that they thought was best for a particular group. They have been found wanting. They have been humiliated and they have had to back down, all because they think that they are above the Parliament. If the government wants to govern beyond one term, it must show some respect for the Parliament.

HON DARREN WEST (Agricultural — Parliamentary Secretary) [2.42 pm]: I will return the discussion to the motion moved by Hon Jim Chown, and I put on record the government's opposition to the motion. I always appreciate advice from a former Barnett minister. It is always useful advice. I write it down and do exactly the opposite of what the former Barnett cabinet member said because that was the most deplorable government in Western Australian history—forty thousand million dollars down the gurgler as a consequence of eight years of ineptitude. I have some advice for the opposition: keep doing exactly what it is doing. Members opposite are doing a fantastic job over there, opposing everything the government does. They do not know why they oppose things—they just oppose everything the government does. They have no clue what they are opposing or why.

It is a great initiative to try to reform the western rock lobster industry after nine years of rebuilding. It is time for a reform of that industry. Let us remember why we had to have this rebuilding phase. The western rock lobster industry was catching around 14 000 tonnes of rock lobster every year, which was more than the industry could sustain. In 2008, the puerulus traps revealed zero puerulus in the traps. The industry was on a course to extinction of that species through overfishing. That is where it was going. Hon Norman Moore, to his credit and against much angst and opposition from industry, introduced the quota system for the western rock lobster industry and reduced catches to a maximum of 5 500 tonnes per annum. Many people exited the industry because it went from 14 000 tonnes per annum to 5 500 tonnes. It was not what cray fishermen wanted. It was not what investors wanted. I think it is important that we distinguish those two groups, the investors and the fishermen themselves. It was not what they wanted, and craypots tumbled to a value of around \$8 000. Those who bought pots have done particularly well out of the reforms of Hon Norman Moore.

Over the past eight or nine years that catch has steadily increased to 6 300 tonnes per annum. The industry itself said in 2017, after eight years of rebuilding, that it could raise that catch to around 8 800 tonnes. That will give about 500 new jobs to the industry and increase its value to \$1 billion. As the government, of course we were happy at that prospect. We sat down and worked out the best way for the Western Australian people. When the opposition says that this is a cash grab, it should remember who we represent. We represent the people of Western Australia who voted us in here. It is not the Premier, the minister or anybody else who is grabbing that cash; it is the Western Australian people who will benefit from that increased revenue from this resource.

The poor old Libs are opposing everything, and because they do, the Nationals do as well. Hon Rick Mazza does as well, and not to be outdone, Pauline Hanson's One Nation hops on board also. It results in the situation that when we try to reform an industry, try to get a better revenue stream for government, try to act in the best interests of Western Australia, and try to get revenue for an ailing economy that the opposition trashed, members opposite just oppose.

Several members interjected.

The ACTING PRESIDENT (Hon Matthew Swinbourn): Order! Members, the member on his feet is not taking interjections. Other members were entitled to speak without interruption. Please keep the disquiet down and let the member resume his response in silence, thank you.

Hon DARREN WEST: Here we have opposition for opposition's sake. In over an hour of debate not once have I heard one idea about how we can better reform this industry. It is time for reform, after many years of rebuilding. Anyone who looks at the photos posted by recreational fishers on the Crayfishing WA Facebook page to show the size of the crayfish they are catching would realise that we have now rebuilt that industry. Crays that are 2.5 kilograms to three kilograms are regularly being caught. Those crayfish must be six to 10 years old. That tells us that there is a rebuilding of the stock and an increase in the material.

The government had an objective: to increase return to the taxpayers from around \$10 million out of a \$400 million to \$500 million turnover industry. That is not a big return. It is a lower return than we get from the iron ore industry or the liquefied petroleum gas industry. We thought that there was an opportunity to increase the return so that we

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could build schools, hospitals and roads and all the things that we are constantly asked to build. We thought there was a good opportunity to get more small boats back into regional communities. Every community up and down the coast laments that there were once 600 boats and now there are only 200 boats. That is fewer deckies, fewer marine services and less boatbuilding. Some have even said that boatbuilding has decreased because of the government's proposed plan. It has been going down for years, since the number of boats on the water decreased from 600 to 200. There is a loss of jobs in those communities.

People cannot buy a western rock lobster at Morley Galleria or the Midland Gate Shopping Centre. One will not find a western rock lobster on the menu in 75 per cent of our restaurants. There is a problem here. There is a beautiful irony that Hon Jim Chown has brought this on when 95 to 98 per cent of our western rock lobster, owned by the people of Western Australia, is exported to China. I am sure that I am not the only one who has picked up on that.

The government put forward a proposition to industry over a five-week consultation period and, ultimately, although the industry had some reservations about parts of that, and it made that clear through those negotiations, the overall plan was accepted and agreed. On 7 December, the government was of the view that we had a deal with industry. We went to Christmas without a word being said. Nobody raised an objection, all the way to Christmas. We went to holiday and then the fear campaign began, driven in the main by investors and pot owners rather than fishermen themselves. We became aware that these changes were not going to get support in the upper house. That should not have been totally unexpected because that is what the opposition does.

Members, I do know a bit about this industry. I grew up in Geraldton and my office is there. I can tell members that the catch from a craypot licence today is worth around \$6 000 to \$6 300. The right to catch is worth about \$100 000 each. An investor came into my office and said that he had 150 pots and that the government had just wiped out the value of his pots. I put it to that investor that I would take them off his hands for about \$10 000 a pot. He did not want to do that. By the time we got to the end of the conversation, his licences were worth about \$80 000 to \$100 000. He leases those licences for \$4 500 a pot. I know that members on the other side are not very good with money—we all know that—but can they see that if the total craypot catch is worth \$6 300 and a fisherman pays \$4 500 for the right to lease that pot, that leaves him with about \$1 500 to \$1 800, and then there are other costs that also have to be paid? The fishermen who actually go out and get wet are getting done over by these arrangements. For every four crays that are pulled out of those pots, the investor who does not go fishing gets three of them, and the poor old fisherman is left with one cray and all the bills and all the risks. That is an unfair system. That is not something that would stack up in the agricultural sector. I do not know why it stacks up in the fishing sector, but that is where we are at. This industry clearly needs reform. We cannot get local crayfish in our shopping centres. It is very difficult to find on our menus. In Northbridge, if a person wants to eat a live lobster, I have seen them selling for \$180 a kilogram. That is beyond the reach of the common person. We need to reform this industry. We have lost all our boats up and down the coast. This was an opportunity to bring back some of those small boats by allocating a small number of licences to small boats.

As equally significant was the opportunity for Aboriginal economic development. I know of one Aboriginal person who catches crayfish—I would encourage anyone to name another. That was a great opportunity, but because of the opposition, all these options have now gone back to the drawing board. We need to revisit them and we will do that. The industry and its investors got really uptight about the state owning some of that right to catch. I know that members are not good with money, but that right to catch, or the 1 385 tonnes that was being talked about, is equivalent to a bit over 15 000 pot licences or about \$1.5 billion. A lot of this campaign was about who gets that \$1.5 billion. Naturally, the investors want that for nothing, but I do not think a government that is responsible with economic management would do that. If opposition members were in government, I think they would do that, but we should not. We should be investigating ways in which we can get a return on a \$1.5 billion asset that is owned by the people of Western Australia. If we had leased those pots to the people who go out and get wet, and perhaps put a bit of downward pressure on the price that fishermen are paying to lease their pots, we could have returned about \$60 million a year to taxpayers. Geraldton Health Campus is going through a significant upgrade worth \$70 million—a massive upgrade to that facility. Had we proceeded with that plan and received that increase in revenue for the people of Western Australia, we could have paid for almost one of those upgrades every year. Clearly, we had a well-funded campaign that was funded by investors—I just make that point—that also brought in the fishermen. I went to the Geraldton Fishermen's Co-operative meeting. Hon Colin de Grussa was there and I looked him in the eye and said, "No-one is trying to run you out of business. We are trying to reform the industry." People were saying, "My son might want to go crayfishing." My response to that was, "Get your other kid involved as well because we are going to double the size of the industry and we are going to provide better opportunities for fishers and locals and for Aboriginal economic development, as well as give a reasonable return from a \$5 billion industry back to the people of Western Australia who actually own those crayfish."

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This opposition was against a very reasonable increase in the gold royalty. Its members also trashed our finances to the tune of \$40 billion. They now stand against us at every turn as we try to get a better deal for the people of Western Australia. Every time we try to get a better deal, they stand against us. I have realised that the last thing opposition members want us to do is repair the state's finances and get people back to work. That is the last thing they want us to do because it makes them look even worse. We are going to return a budget surplus in the next year or two. That is something that was unheard and unthought of a couple of years ago when we came to government. The last thing opposition members want is for us to do what we said we would do—repair the state's finances and get people back to work.

Hon Jim Chown: You haven't done it yet.

Hon DARREN WEST: We are well on the way, Hon Jim Chown. The more opposition members get out of our way and let us go about our job of governing the state of Western Australia, the better it will be for everybody. As I said before, they should just keep doing what they are doing. Everybody who votes can see exactly what opposition members are doing and they can see exactly how poor they are in opposition, because they do not even think about things like this. Opposition members have given us no tangible ideas that we can take to the task force.

Several members interjected.

The ACTING PRESIDENT (Hon Matthew Swinbourn): Order, members! The members on my left are taking great liberty with their interjections. Please listen to Hon Darren West in silence.

Hon DARREN WEST: As I said, the last thing opposition members want us to do is repair the state's finances and get people back to work, because the more we do that, the worse they look.

We have taken the 1 385 tonnes off the table and once again the actual fishermen, the people who get wet every day and catch the crayfish, have lost out because we were going to give the first increase in catch—the 315 tonnes—to existing licence holders and fishers. That is worth about \$22 million a year. It has now been put back into the local catch. It is not available as an export opportunity, a sales opportunity or a revenue opportunity for the people who actually fish.

Hon Jim Chown interjected.

The ACTING PRESIDENT: Order, Hon Jim Chown!

Hon DARREN WEST: The first deal that was signed was a better deal for fishers. This current arrangement is a better deal for investors. I think that people can work out what is going on. People with lots of money have run a well-founded and very effective campaign and they had spooked the opposition into supporting them. But the people of Western Australia do not see it as fair that 98 per cent of our crayfish go to China, that they cannot buy one in Morley Galleria Shopping Centre or Midland Gate shopping centre, and that they cannot get them at Christmas, even though they are owned by us. Instead of traditionally eating a ham or a turkey on Christmas Day, I would love it if we all ate crayfish in Western Australia—that would be great; an iconic product that we all produce. People talk about how they want a steak as well and a BMW and an Audi—it is ridiculous! There is nothing wrong with the notion that the people who own the western rock lobster crayfish should get a chance to eat one. There is nothing at all wrong with that. The opposition's arguments are really quite feeble, quite expected and quite ridiculous. There have been no positive outcomes from this debate other than the opposition just having a whack at the government—that is fine; that is its job. I guess there is not much else to do over there, but when we were in opposition, we wanted to come up with some new ideas and to set new policies.

Several members interjected.

The ACTING PRESIDENT: Order, members!

Hon DARREN WEST: We then took them to the election. For instance, we took plans for Geraldton and for all over regional WA to the election and, as a consequence, we had the largest win in Western Australian history.

Several members interjected.

The ACTING PRESIDENT: Order! I cannot hear Hon Darren West's contribution over the interjections. I think this is now the fourth time I have asked for order. You may not like what he says, but you will respect the Chair. Please maintain order.

Hon DARREN WEST: We took those policies to the election and the Western Australian people delivered us the biggest margin ever in an election. They delivered WA Labor more regional members of Parliament than any other political party—13 regional Labor MPs, nine National members, seven Liberals and five of the rest. The people voted on our positive ideas and our fresh approach. Now we have a sad, tired, dispirited and miserable opposition that really has no ideas of its own. The best its members can do when they try to investigate the government is to

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find out that the Premier went to Sydney—that is the best they can do. They have no ideas going forward for reform of the western rock lobster industry. I think deep down they know that it needs reform, because after 10 years of lower catch, perhaps it is time that we doubled the value of the industry. I say to all those fishing families that no-one is trying to run them out of business. We want to double the value of their industry and reap the opportunities that that will provide. To those fishermen who are worried about the future for their kids, I say to them, as I said earlier, that they should get their kids involved because if we double the size of the industry, we double the opportunities for the next generation.

The other initiatives, such as the spiny lobster research institute, will pay off in spades. Also, the western rock lobster festival, which will move from Perth all the way up to Geraldton over a week, will be an outstanding initiative and shine the spotlight on our iconic seafood product. It will help us get even better, more diverse markets that we can operate in. We currently sell all our lobsters to pretty much one market. I know that those opposite are not very good at economics and running business, but I think they can see the risk in that, especially given the way many members opposite talk about our largest trading partner.

We need to step back and be a little sensible about this issue. There has not been a lot of sensibility in this debate since Christmas. We accept that the industry had a problem with the state owning a share of the catch. It does not have a problem with the state owning the pastoral leases. I note that Rabobank still finances pastoralists, even though the state and the people own that land and lease it to the pastoralists. We just voted for the people to own all the taxi plates. No-one has a big problem with that but when it comes to western rock lobster, people lose their tiny minds. I do not understand the difference.

Several members interjected.

The ACTING PRESIDENT: Order!

Hon DARREN WEST: The resource that is owned by the people should provide more benefit to the people. Whether that means being able to buy lobsters locally, better opportunities for Aboriginal economic development, more boats up and down the coast or more jobs or a better return for the taxpayer to provide the infrastructure and services that the people need, they are worthy outcomes. We saw this fear campaign about nationalising the industry. I am not sure how a state government nationalises a resource that is owned by the people. No-one ever explained that to me. I am sure that someone will at some point. I never understood how a state government can nationalise a resource that is owned by the people. All the fish, crayfish and abalone in the ocean are owned by the people of Western Australia. That is where members opposite are wrong. The fish are not owned by those who hold pot licences. People who hold a licence have a right to catch 90 kilograms.

The ACTING PRESIDENT: Pursuant to temporary order 6 that applies to motions on notice, the mover now has a right of reply for the next five minutes. Member, do you wish to exercise that right?

HON JIM CHOWN (Agricultural) [3.02 pm] — in reply: Thank you, Mr Acting President. I would like to say a few brief words on this matter. I thank all the members on this side of the house who supported the intent of the motion. I note in the response from the Leader of the House on this matter, when she read out her notes, which obviously came from Minister Kelly's office, that not once did she make a statement on future endeavours by this government to socialise or nationalise part of the fishery of Western Australia. That was the intent of the motion.

Hon Sue Ellery: You know it's been amended and you agreed to the amendment.

Hon JIM CHOWN: Excuse me!

Hon Sue Ellery: Why? You interrupted throughout.

The ACTING PRESIDENT: Order, members! Hon Jim Chown has the call.

Hon JIM CHOWN: Not once did the member representing the minister make that statement. I noted her interjection. The amendment to the motion was made after she gave a response. Also, the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Regional Development did not address the amendment in that regard. Not once has the government addressed this motion —

Hon Sue Ellery: Goose.

Hon JIM CHOWN: I beg your pardon. What did you say?

Hon Sue Ellery: Goose.

Withdrawal of Remark

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Hon DONNA FARAGHER: I appreciate that we are in the heat of debate but referring to a member as a goose is not appropriate and I ask that it be withdrawn.

Hon SUE ELLERY: I withdraw.

Debate Resumed

Hon JIM CHOWN: I once remember being personally attacked in this house by Hon Ken Travers. We know when we are winning an argument because our opposition starts to get personal, because that is all the government has got. Quite frankly, at this stage the government is in absolute disarray on this very important motion.

Several members interjected.

The ACTING PRESIDENT: Order! My goodness, everyone did not have their Wheaties this morning. Hon Jim Chown has the call. He has three minutes remaining in his reply.

Hon JIM CHOWN: As we heard from Hon Darren West, this was all about money. As he admitted—it is in *Hansard*—Hon Darren West once again let it slip that this was a money grab by the government.

Several members interjected.

The ACTING PRESIDENT: Order! Are we going to get through this? Hon Jim Chown has the call. All remaining members in the house, please reserve your comments. If you wish to express yourself, you are always welcome to take it outside the chamber.

Hon JIM CHOWN: I thank Hon Darren West for that admission as a frontbencher representing the McGowan government. The industry will love the comment. As I said previously, regardless of Hon Darren West's speech about consultation and the future reform of the industry, the industry will never listen to this government again because it has no trust or respect for it. That applies to the tens of thousands of households in my electorate and in regional Western Australia with regard to education and CRCs. The list goes on forever. I have no idea how this government can continue to be so arrogant in how it goes about its business from a policy perspective in regional Western Australia. Members should not start me on the Premier's latest edict to create 150 000 jobs.

Hon Darren West: It doesn't include yours.

Hon JIM CHOWN: Of course it does not but it may include Hon Darren West's job, as my electors keep telling me. Once again, thank you so much for the support. I struggle to call this government a government with a capital "G".

Division

Question put and a division taken, the Acting President (Hon Matthew Swinbourn) casting his vote with the noes, with the following result —

Ayes (18)

Hon Martin Aldridge	Hon Colin de Grussa	Hon Rick Mazza	Hon Dr Steve Thomas
Hon Robin Chapple	Hon Diane Evers	Hon Simon O'Brien	Hon Alison Xamon
Hon Jim Chown	Hon Donna Faragher	Hon Robin Scott	Hon Ken Baston (<i>Teller</i>)
Hon Tim Clifford	Hon Nick Goiran	Hon Tjorn Sibma	
Hon Peter Collier	Hon Colin Holt	Hon Charles Smith	

Noes (10)

Hon Alanna Clohesy	Hon Laurie Graham	Hon Matthew Swinbourn	Hon Pierre Yang (<i>Teller</i>)
Hon Stephen Dawson	Hon Martin Pritchard	Hon Dr Sally Talbot	
Hon Sue Ellery	Hon Samantha Rowe	Hon Darren West	

Pairs

Hon Colin Tincknell	Hon Alannah MacTiernan
Hon Jacqui Boydell	Hon Adele Farina
Hon Michael Mischin	Hon Kyle McGinn

Question thus passed.