

**PREMIER'S STATEMENT**

*Consideration*

Resumed from an earlier stage of the sitting.

**MR P. PAPALIA (Warnbro)** [2.59 pm]: I am very pleased to see the Premier and the Minister for Police in the chamber, because this is a relevant subject that they may have some interest in, particularly in light of the recent provision of information from the Minister for Police.

During my reply I have been focusing on the nature of the debate about corrective services in the last 17 or 18 months. I will finish what I was saying before lunch about my disappointment with the Attorney General and Minister for Corrective Services' response to the Murdoch University report on sexual assault in the prison system. He dismissed it in a fairly negative fashion by saying that it seemed to him to be of very limited usefulness in that it was co-authored by an ex-prisoner who based his findings on totally unverifiable claims made in interviews with a number of unknown but handpicked ex-prisoners. As I said, the ethics committee at Murdoch University endorsed the report. The co-author, Dot Goulding, endorsed the report. A committee from the Lotterywest social research technical panel, comprising academics from all the universities, and also representatives from the Australian Bureau of Statistics and the Department of the Premier and Cabinet endorsed the report by Dr Brian Steels. I feel that the minister's denigration of his professional standing was incredibly spiteful, unnecessary and unprofessional of the senior law officer of Western Australia.

I will move on. I am very aware that the Whip wants me to move things along, so I will try to keep going. I have said that it is disappointing that for 12 months the minister continued to deny the impact that he and his government were having on overcrowding within the prison system.

**Mr R.F. Johnson:** You did not build one extra prison cell in seven and a half years.

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** That is what the minister said. That was the argument for 12 months, but it has now changed. Finally, the Minister for Corrective Services has taken responsibility for overcrowding in the prison system in Western Australia. He has very clearly done that by recognising that he can no longer sustain the suggestion that somehow it was Labor's fault, because it has been 18 months since he came to government and the massive increase in the prison population has occurred since he took office. Everyone in Western Australia, the press gallery, the prison service and the Department of Corrective Services knows that throughout the Labor period in office, the prison muster fluctuated, but, generally, it grew by 750 over those seven and a half years. However, the prison muster has grown by an extraordinarily massive 944-plus in such a short time—in the past 17 months, and predominantly in the past 12 months—that I do not think that that figure has been matched in the entire history of Western Australia, possibly with the exclusion of the arrival of several ships from England in the early days when we took up the offer to take convicts. Other than that, I am absolutely certain that this number would be a record. It is beyond doubt that in the past 12 months, there has been the highest growth rate in the prison muster in the history of the state. Why is that unsustainable?

**The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr P.B. Watson):** If members want to have a meeting or a chat, they can go outside. I want to hear what the member has to say.

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** Why did the minister abandon his attempt to blame Labor? He did so because he recognised that at the current rate of growth—this is the conservative rate of growth, not the rate of 1 200 a year that the Inspector of Custodial Services says; I say it is 55 per month—the muster will be 7 694 by the time of the next election. That means that there are associated costs. There are varying responses to this. The department's view, as given to an upper house committee not that long ago, is that the cost of the growth in the past 12 months or so is around \$41 million. That is incredible. I do not know how the department arrived at that figure; it is lower than any other figure I have managed to find and lower than any evidence given by the minister. According to the figures given by the minister, in the past 12 months the recurrent growth in expenditure has been \$62 million. This amount does not include capital expenditure; it is just to feed and clothe extra people and to pay for prison officers. But the figure used by the Inspector of Custodial Services, which is widely accepted as being accurate, of \$100 000 per prisoner per annum indicates that the cost of the prison system has risen by \$94 million in the past 12 months as a result of this government.

**Mr R.F. Johnson:** We're putting the crooks away—something that you didn't manage to do.

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** I will take that interjection from the Minister for Police and address it, because he is maintaining this spurious claim that somehow this is having a positive impact on crime in Western Australia. The question is: is what is going on effective? We know that it is not sustainable. Recurrent growth of \$94 million every year cannot be sustained, can it, member for Riverton? That is not possible; we know that. We

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cannot do that. Well, we can if we sacrifice hospitals, schools, police and all those sorts of things. But we do not want to do that.

So I will move on and ask: is it effective? Last week, the minister claimed that it was effective. The minister repeated that claim in Parliament on Tuesday. The Premier, in his Premier's Statement, demonstrated incredible hubris when he claimed that after only 17 months, the growth in the prison muster under this government has resulted in the complete decimation of crime in Western Australia. The Premier said that the government has imprisoned all these terrible, dangerous people, and that is what has caused the decline in the reported crime statistics. The fact is that that decline has been going on for 10 years. However, putting that aside, the truth is that the people of Western Australia do not feel any safer. That is one measure. That is a subjective measure. There is another very real measure beyond that. That is the recidivism rate. It is not possible to know that rate after only 12 months. However, the rate of recidivism belies any suggestion that incarceration alone is a positive way of preventing people from reoffending. If that were the case, we would not have a growing prison population; we would have a diminishing one.

I am not the only one who believes this. The Chief Justice of Western Australia said in a speech to the Australian and New Zealand Society of Criminology Conference on 23 November last year that recidivism rates disprove the claim that incarceration works to stop crime. He said that in Western Australia, 40 per cent of non-Aboriginal prisoners and just under 70 per cent of Aboriginal prisoners succumb to recidivism. These are old figures. People know them. We know that incarceration costs \$100 000 per offender per year. The Chief Justice compared that with the results of the Drug Court. The recidivism rate for offenders who have gone through the Drug Court is one-third lower than for offenders who have been incarcerated, and the cost is only \$16 000 per offender per year. We therefore need to ask ourselves: is incarceration effective and sustainable?

I turn now to some other comments that were made by the Chief Justice at that conference. This is not what I am saying; this is what the Chief Justice had said. He said —

Such research as there is tends to suggest that the longer the term of imprisonment imposed upon an offender, the more likely that offender is to reoffend. So, while there are many good reasons to send people to prison, it would be contrary to the evidence to place too much weight upon the prospect of imprisonment discouraging reoffending.

Well, surprise, surprise!

**Mr R.F. Johnson** interjected.

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** The Minister for Police should not be too dismissive, because there are other people, as I think the minister might appreciate, who also agree with those comments by the Chief Justice. A report from the United Kingdom House of Commons' Justice Committee of 14 January this year—this is a very recent report, and I commend it to everyone in this house—said —

Our evidence suggests that prison is a relatively ineffective way of reducing crime for other than serious offenders who need to be physically contained for the protection of the public.

Of course everyone agrees with that. Labor agrees with that. That is not an incredibly astounding conclusion. But it is beyond the comprehension of the Minister for Police. He cannot see that we should not be locking people up—other than the really dangerous people in our community—at such a huge cost.

[Member's time expired.]

**MR M.P. MURRAY (Collie-Preston)** [3.08 pm]: I want to begin my response to the Premier's Statement by talking about Redress WA. I have been inspired to hear members in this place speak on this issue and give some personal stories.

**The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr P.B. Watson):** Order, members!

**Mr M.P. MURRAY:** I have an adopted sister. She was buoyed by the news that someone was willing to take the blame for what had happened to her. We used to have children stay at our house every Christmas and school holidays just to give them a break away from their homes. However, she stayed on. She never went away. When she was aged 16, she asked my family to adopt her. We were very proud of that. The trauma that she had gone through in her previous life was quite unbeknown to us. We found out about this only recently, after her many suicide attempts. When the Redress WA announcement was made, she went for counselling and this has helped her, although she is not over her problems. I am sure she will not be too pleased when I explain that I had to say this, not only for her but also for others—someone has taken the blame. She said straight out to me that it was not about the money, but by changing the amount, the government has devalued the impact of redress. I have heard people in this place say how close they have been to this issue, but I can tell members that they have not

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been as close to it as I have been—in my house. They cannot know what I felt when at eight years of age my sister asked me, “Can I call you brother?” I have been, and will continue to be her brother. It disappoints me to see how these changes have disappointed her. She feels that she had been devalued. While there was a dollar value involved, she feels that redress no longer matters as it has become a budget issue. I will not go into details of the many things she has told me—I could not do that; this is hard enough—but I can say that the government of the day has caused a setback on her long road to recovery; a road that has already been tough. It is my duty to speak today, not because I like to bring family issues into this place or because I want to be one better than anyone else, but because after yesterday’s speech by the member for Mandurah and seeing the lady sitting in the Speaker’s gallery having the guts to be here, I thought it would be wrong to stay silent. I plead again with the Premier not to decide this on a dollar basis, but to think of it in personal terms—as though it were in his house—and how that apology has been devalued because of a dollar. My sister will never be short of a dollar in a sense—she is short of a dollar, as she lives in a two-bedroom state house and drives a 1990 Hyundai, which breaks down every second week—because she will be looked after by my sister and me. I have seen her heartbreak over this decision. I will move on.

We had been buoyed by what had happened in Collie previously, and then we had Griffin Coal Company collapse. I thank the Premier for coming down, although briefly—one coffee and he was gone.

**Mr C.J. Barnett:** That is untrue. I had three meetings at Collie.

**Mr M.P. MURRAY:** Just hang on a minute! I was just going to thank the Premier for again making himself available at short notice. I took Gary Wood from the Construction, Forestry, Mining and Energy Union, who was representing the workers, to see the Premier, and I thank the Premier for that meeting. The Premier was not in town for a very long time. Although his visit was appreciated, I think he could have done a bit more, like talking to the full council and others about the issues, which would have given him a higher profile within the town.

As things moved on, the government’s purchase of \$4 million worth of coal was certainly appreciated. However, it was disappointing to see the receivers give that discount to Verve Energy. That was taking advantage of people who have made bad business decisions over time. We only have to go back just a short while to realise how things change very quickly. A short while ago, Ric Stowe, whom I met, was buoyed about how things were going, and then there was the global financial crash and also some bad decisions that reflected on his business acumen, and Griffin Coal was in a lot of bother. There are between 400 and 500 direct jobs off the back of Griffin Coal, so that is a major concern within our town. Natural attrition has been happening, so many of the contract workers have now gone. Production has gone through the roof because sometimes people need a shake-up to say, “Get on with the job and move on.” That is an issue that is a major concern in Collie at the moment.

Another disappointment, but in a different way, came from the Premier. When it was announced that the entitlements for the workers were going to be guaranteed, within two hours the Premier had walked in, overridden his minister and said that that was not the case. That certainly had a devastating effect on people who said, “Oh, I might retire because I have three months’ holiday pay and three months’ long service leave, so I’ll be able to retire and let someone else keep their job”, especially workers who were in the 60 to 65 years age group. When the Premier changed his mind and overruled his minister, it cast a gloomy shadow over the town because —

**Mr C.J. Barnett:** Sorry; I did not change my mind. When you came to see me with Gary Wood, both of you conceded you knew that wasn’t what was happening—both of you, so be honest.

**Mr M.P. MURRAY:** I did not say a word about it. The Premier spoke to Gary Wood about that; I did not speak to him about that at all, if the Premier remembers rightly. However, as I said, I do thank the Premier for making himself available.

Certainly, it was on the front page of the local newspapers and *The West Australian*. One realises how much it impacts on a community when it involves about \$54 million of entitlements. However, making promises on the run was really more the issue, and then the Premier happened to come and override his minister. That has been a major problem and we are working through that. Recently, there was a report-back meeting to the workforce and the person concerned, Mr McMaster, said that there are plenty of people lined up to buy part or all—we hope all—of it and work through into the future.

While the Premier is in the chamber—he has been a bit touchy—again, that regurgitated speech that he made the other day was the same as we heard last year with just a few words changed around and never mentioned the South West. There was not one mention of the most vibrant part of this state at the moment. We heard about Broome, Karratha, Kununurra, Ord River and all those areas up north, but, again, the South West missed out. It was the same as last year’s speech. It disappoints me that I have to again remind the Premier that the South West plays a major part in this state but he forgot it. It is the same as how the Premier has forgotten the promise of

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\$20 million for the Coalfields highway, and the same as I now believe \$20 million for the Greenbushes–Bunbury rail line will be withdrawn and which will be taken and used in the Wheatbelt. That is \$40 million worth of promises that people voted on and, gee, will the government be reminded of that! That was \$40 million for two parts of my electorate. One is a dangerous highway; the other is also a dangerous highway because of the number of trucks on it, which people were hoping would diminish with the opening of the rail line and therefore free up the highway. How disappointed those people will be! It has been done sneakily: a press release has not come out to say that for the good of the state the government will do this or anything like that; it has been snuck through and then leaked out. What sort of government do we have? One that is open and honest? Believe me, it is not that kind at all; it is one that is very, very sneaky.

I will move on to Lake Kepwari. Here we are nearly two years in, with \$3 million promised, and the work at Lake Kepwari is still not done. Why is it not done? Because it is another broken promise, albeit a cheaper one of the government's promises. About \$3 million was promised for Lake Kepwari but what happens in the summertime when the work should be done? We are told, "We haven't got an officer to do that; he's on fire duties." For four months the government stopped work on this much-needed project in the South West where waterskiing is at a premium now with some areas being closed, including an area in Bunbury. We have 500 acres of water to ski on and we cannot get the project started. Even though the money has been identified, it may have been stolen and shifted somewhere else. The money has been previously identified in the budget. Now here we are, without anything happening, four months on. Is it not any wonder that Labor can hold its ground against the odds in the South West? Not once has the Premier honoured his promises. He makes a lot of promises. He gets his photo in the paper, leaves again and then, a few months later, says, "I didn't mean that; what I meant was — ." A huge problem in the Liberal Party's back room would be how it will get down there and make some ground when it keeps renegeing on promises that amount to many, many millions of dollars, and many jobs.

I will move on to jobs at the Forest Products Commission. The Forest Products Commission is now half privatised. That will put huge stress on native forests. I believe there has been a briefing in the Liberal Party room about the Forest Products Commission. For it to survive it means the timber cut in our native forests has to go up by 20 per cent. That is absolutely unsustainable. Again, that is against the will of the people. It does not matter where one goes to cut down a tree or to log an area, we get protests; yet we have an industry that we need to look after at the same time. To ramp that industry up—because dollars are tight—is not the way to go. The green groups will come out a lot stronger in and around Perth because a lot of the northern forest is being logged at the moment. They have moved away from plantation income and chipping income. Along with that, one of the best things about the Forest Products Commission—although I do not agree with a lot of what has been done in the native timber industry—is that it was planting many, many trees in areas that were much needed, including the gullies and the dryland salt areas, but certainly it was not going out and buying farms, like the early times, and completely ruining the farms. With the Forest Products Commission and its previous government-backed guarantee, people were willing to take the risk, thinking their incomes were quite safe. That is not the case anymore. They have been sold down the drain. By gee, there are some angry farmers out there because they do not know where their income is. How profitable will it be in the future? One major company has gone broke in the plantation timber industry. No buyers have come forward to buy that side of the Forest Products Commission. I estimate the industry has lost about 200 jobs in the South West—that is, direct and indirect jobs—and includes sprayers and firebreak attendants. All those sorts of people will be out of a job because there is no-one coming on and no further plantings. It is all because of a small glitch in the system; that is, they have to wait six or eight months for federal government funding.

In saying that, the Minister for Regional Development has a slush fund, which was previously unallocated, of \$230 million. That has now gone up to \$330 million of allocated funds. He could not find \$7 million on a loan basis for six months to save 200 jobs. That will impact on the South West and it will impact on his electorate. By gee, do not worry about that; we will look very hard at where the preferences go next time in his electorate. It is quite obvious that he does not want to support the people in his own electorate. I will not even get on to genetically modified crops today!

Moving on, Perdaman Industries has been working away very, very solidly. It is moving things forward under difficult circumstances and picking up some of the bills that it should not have to. I ask the Premier to assist this company. I believe it is a way that we can move away from coal to steam and those sorts of problems. We can use the gas from the process that makes urea and fertiliser for Western Australian and Indian farmers and get a win-win situation out of that. Not only that, we need it in Collie for jobs. In the future there will be between 150 and 200 permanent jobs when the factory is located east of Collie. Collie has moved a long way, but we need that small help from the government to keep the momentum moving forward. I am asking the Premier to assist in that area—although he seems to have a bit of a cranky on today. But tomorrow is another day in politics and I just hope that the Premier will be able to assist us to get that project in my electorate up and running.

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[Member's time extended.]

**Mr M.P. MURRAY:** There are plenty of other issues and I will try to get through them a bit more quickly. Some issues might be regarded as trivial. However, complaints come into my office on a regular basis about the speed limit on Forrest Highway. It is called "Colin's curse". At about 63 kilometres from Perth the speed limit changes from 110 to 100 kilometres an hour.

**Mr R.H. Cook:** It's called road safety!

**Mr M.P. MURRAY:** I have been getting a number of complaints about it and I have been asked on many occasions to bring them up in Parliament. I am doing that. It is not a safety issue because nothing changes. If that part of the highway was 20 kilometres from Perth, I could understand it. There is no identification along there of the change other than a big sign that says "Speed limit changes". There is no infrastructure in that area and there is no town. I am therefore asking the Premier to take that complaint on board. It spoils the trip both into and out of Perth because cars crowd up behind each other; then someone speeds along the fast lane and gets fined. It is causing many problems for and much dissension among people who use that very good highway that was constructed by the Labor Party.

We heard some rationale for why there is no money for infill sewerage; however, people in country towns are suffering most from the lack of it because the towns cannot expand. A place such as Donnybrook is a great example of that. It is not very far from Bunbury and is a great place to live, but it cannot expand its subdivisions because there is no infill sewerage. The developers have been asked to put in infill sewerage. However, the existing town needs infill sewerage all the way out to the metropolitan boundary so that new subdivisions can be hooked up to it. I am not saying that private developers should not pay their dues. I am saying that those existing areas should be hooked up to infill sewerage so that they can expand and people can move down there during boom times. There is no argument that the time is right for building modest three-bedroom, one-bathroom houses—not five-bedroom houses—which could really boost these towns. Capel is an example of that, where the school population numbers have gone up. Sustainability increases with a higher population and Capel needs that infill sewerage. Infill sewerage is, therefore, an issue that is certainly on the top of the list of issues in my electorate.

Another issue in the country is the across-the-board rise in electricity prices. The National Party has acknowledged this issue to some degree with the introduction of the fuel card. However, the rise is not justified in the country. In some areas people need an electric pump to pump water because they do not have scheme water. They have to have an extra freezer because they do not have access to a corner shop. All those things add up and they add up very quickly for people on a meagre wage in the country who are not working in the mining industry. They really do add up and hurt people. I would like to read out a letter from Kelly Peake of Cookernup —

Dear Mr Murray,

I am writing to you about my concerns about 'Power guzzlers face higher electricity bills' as in The West 21/12/09. I live in a rural community and I feel that this idea will hit us hard. Every time I turn on a tap I use power, if I flush the loo I use power (inverted leach drain) —

That is, no infill sewerage —

If I water the garden I use power, I use extra power to run a freezer as I don't have the convenience of the corner store, If I wish to keep warm in winter I use power as we don't have natural gas, If I am to carry out work in my workshop I use extra power because we don't have the luxury of three phase. On top of this I even have to read my own power meter! I don't call these things luxury items I call them necessities. ... I don't know how we can cope if it goes any higher.

That is just one of many letters and phone calls I have been getting from people in country areas who are not on top wages or the high incomes of fly in, fly out workers and who have problems paying their bills. Sooner or later they will have their power disconnected, which could mean they will have a black mark against their name. I do not want to see that. I am pleading with the government to ensure that some leniency is given to these people so that in future they can enjoy a standard of living much like many other people in the area.

Another thing I want to mention is the confusion over the alcohol laws. Last night I was driving around the riverside in Peppermint Grove and, surprise, surprise, antisocial people in that area were drinking wine and beer on the foreshore.

**Mr R.H. Cook:** That's street drinking.

**Mr M.P. MURRAY:** It was street drinking.

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**Mr M. McGowan:** Whose electorate?

**Mr M.P. MURRAY:** It was in Peppermint Grove. Why were the police not called to get rid of these malingerers drinking and carrying on by the foreshore of the Swan River? I cannot believe the police were not called to this area. If the local member were a good parliamentarian, that problem would have been cleaned up. I am saying that it is time to make sure the laws are fair and equitable across the board. The police commissioner says one thing, the Premier says another and the police minister refutes some of what the Premier says by saying, "No, you can't have a drink, but you can if you're in a tent." To top it off, the City of South Perth was given, I believe, \$250 000 to provide an alcohol-free area, in an alcohol-free area! I do not get that. Something has been lost along the way. The City of South Perth was given a grant to provide an alcohol-free area, but it was already an alcohol-free area! My electorate could have done with \$250 000; it might even have gone towards starting some infill sewerage down there. Those sorts of things really confuse the issue, so I ask that they be sorted out.

I am pleased that a much-needed inquiry has been established into the Racing and Wagering Western Australia Act. Time has moved on since RWWA was first established and certainly some aspects of the legislation need work. There is dissension within the industry and, with a bit of work, that can be resolved so that people can refocus on what they are supposed to be doing—that is, entertaining the public and employing people. Racing and gaming is the third biggest employer in Western Australia. We do not want to see the industry grind to a halt because people are losing confidence in it.

I return to the Forest Products Commission. It is disappointing that there has been no offer of any redundancy packages or compensation for people who may be put out of work. In light of the Forest Products Commission agreements and contracts, there was an expectation that they would be sold like cattle—just like cattle. The implication was, "You have no rights, if you don't go there you will be out the door without payment." That shows in many ways the attitude of this government towards ordinary working-class people, particularly school cleaners and teachers' assistants who earn very low incomes of around \$30 000 to \$32 000 but who help our children at school. The same is happening in the Forest Products Commission. They are not by a long way the highest paid people within a government department. But they are being forced out of the commission under pressure so that, hopefully, they will move to another job without having to be paid any form of compensation or redundancy, as is expected these days, especially in private industry. Again, I take the government to task on this issue. Why is the government different from a private company when it comes to reducing its workforce? A private company, when reducing its workforce, will comply with the award and provide the relevant redundancy packages? However, that does not seem to apply to government employees in the forest industry, which comes under the responsibility of an arrogant minister, Mr Redman. He is running riot and is not taking care of, or showing any compassion for, working-class people. He has got above himself, and if he does not correct that, I guarantee that he will not be here after the next election. The mood in the community is already strong against him. Another Liberal might take his place at the next election and that would make the Premier smile, because he would no longer have to deal with a fence-sitter on his side of the house. The real issue is about workers' entitlements and looking after those workers, some of whom have spent 30 years working for the government. They are being pushed out without any form of compensation.

The area south of Mandurah has, again, been hard done by in not rating a mention in the Premier's Statement. His statement is an insult to the people of the South West. The South West is one of the fastest growing areas in Australia and it did not rate a mention by the Premier. The people in that area will judge the Premier harshly, because for two years in a row that area has not rated a mention in his statements. In time, that will come back to bite the Premier.

**MR I.M. BRITZA (Morley)** [3.37 pm]: I rise today to place on record the excellent achievements of the people of my electorate and also the exciting new development that will be taking place this year. I have no doubt in my mind that hope has finally begun to be restored in my electorate and, indeed, our state on several fronts. Although not everything has been completed, the government is well on its way to fulfilling the promises and directions it embarked upon following its election to government.

For a long time Perth has needed a new destination for families and tourists—a new and exciting location to be tempted by Western Australia's gourmet produce, a new place to be impressed by our local arts and crafts and a new venue for entertainment by musicians and street theatre. This development will be built in the heart of Morley. The \$50 million Coventry Square development, which has just been given the go-ahead by the Minister for Planning, will be as exciting and vibrant as Melbourne's Queen Victoria Market. Transformed from a rundown industrial warehouse, Coventry Square will be part of a new town centre for the City of Bayswater. The Strzelecki Group, which will operate Coventry Square, is also behind the Sorrento Quay and Mandurah's Dolphin Quay. It is a locally owned and operated family business.

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The new Coventry Square market will include a microbrewery as part of the plan to make it a drawcard for tourists as well as locals. It will also feature the biggest range of fresh produce in Perth, with gourmet foods and specialty stores for the latest fashion, local arts and crafts and home wares. It will be the home to 200 new family businesses and will employ more than 1 000 people. A large public square fronting Walter Road will incorporate fountains and a dramatic water wall, with exhibitions and family entertainment to be held there. As well as being built in the heart of Morley, adjacent to Centro Galleria, Coventry Square will be a major part of the new town centre for the City of Bayswater. I know that the people of Morley will be proud of this new development, and I am honoured to have been partly involved in its final approval.

I would like to congratulate the City of Bayswater for its unwavering support for this development. Without its support, it would have been quite difficult to finalise. I would also like to acknowledge Mr Greg Poland, whose vision it was to put something back into the area he grew up in. He and his team have worked tirelessly to establish this development and they will have every right to fully celebrate its completion later this year.

Perth has numerous areas of remnant bushland within its metropolitan boundaries. Many of these areas are surrounded by urban development, yet still retain many of the values associated with natural bushland. These include aesthetic, cultural, historical and environmental values, which, once lost, are gone forever. Today there is an increase in public concern about the future of these tracts of remnant bushlands. Many people are concerned that if these areas are not managed in a sustainable manner, the values associated with them will decline until very few characteristics of the original bushlands remain. Lightning Swamp is just such an area of valuable bushland situated in Noranda, right within my electorate. It is a wetland and a conservation area with high recreational value and immense diversity of local flora and fauna, including some rare and endangered species of birds. It is in a location that is readily accessible to the local community and it is well utilised by residents. The conservation group Friends of Lightning Swamp Bushland was formed in 2000, with the support of the local council, by a small group of local residents. For the past 10 years the group has gained wide community support and presently has over 50 community members. Some of their major improvements include replanting over 35 000 seedlings; constructing 3.6 kilometre of limestone paths; and constructing a boardwalk in the eastern wetland.

They have recently obtained \$5 000 funding to install water quality monitoring bores in the area to monitor pollution in a network of stormwater drains, many in industrial areas like Malaga, which ultimately feed into the Swan and Canning Rivers. The group has also received a grant of \$3 820 to be distributed through the Swan Alcoa Landcare Program, which supports community groups for on-ground works. The funding is a necessary component. However, without the many local people who give up their own time to volunteer with these community groups, all the vital work to protect our bushlands would not be possible. I appreciate how difficult and time-consuming the rehabilitation process is and the dedication that it requires. These volunteers deserve our recognition and gratitude, and their current leader, Mr John Williams, deserves the highest praise for the articulate manner in which he shares and communicates the vision of Lightning Swamp, which is such a huge part of his life, as it is for all the volunteers who are vitally active in the pursuit of a common goal to make this wetland a protected and highly maintained area of Morley.

I want also to bring to the attention of the house a group of remarkable people in my constituency of Morley who collectively are doing a great service for the local community. Morley Training Centre is a not-for-profit community service now in its seventeenth year. It enjoys an excellent reputation for delivering skills training and special programs for people on income support. The centre has been very successful in assisting participants to find employment and engage in lifelong learning. Well known in the community, the centre also works with agencies through the Employment Directions Network, a state-funded body. Funding is not automatic and the centre has to tender regularly in competition with other facilities. Manager Karen Hackett has been with the centre for 25 years since its inception under a different name, and Peter Gardner is in his eleventh year. He works on a part-time basis as the centre's marketing coordinator and community liaison officer. The centre also employs one full-time office staff member. Trainers are contracted and although they are paid fees well below the market rates for registered training officers, they share the same remarkable loyalty to the centre as do the staff. Most of them have been with the centre for several years.

When prospective trainees come to the centre—there is a waiting list—Karen sits down with them for about an hour and helps them put a study plan together based on their situation and needs. Apart from this initial interview, the staff are also on hand to support and help with projects at any time during the course, at no extra charge. Seventy to 75 per cent of trainees are disadvantaged; that is, unemployed, redundant, injured, in need of retraining, recent immigrants or even disabled. A proportion of the trainees are seniors going through the First Click and Second Click programs, which teach them basic computer literacy skills, including how to operate a computer and how to use the internet and email. There is a high demand for these courses as a means to stay in touch with children and grandchildren who live interstate or overseas. Another group of trainees are mature-age

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women who are returning to work after raising a family and who need to build up their skills and self-esteem. According to my notes, an unsolicited letter from a rehabilitation consultant firm stated —

We consider Morley Training Centre the only training centre in the metropolitan area where we can confidently send people with significant physical, emotional or psychological disabilities and be utterly confident that all of their needs will be met.

The current group of trainees are aged between 16 and 63. They are people from all walks of life and all corners of the world. It is a very cohesive, supportive and integrated group, and there is a great bond among the trainees. The people whose first language is not English cope amazingly well and are well supported by the other group members. Husbands and wives often attend together and the centre has an air of a home away from home where people go to for social networking and support. The youngest ever trainee was a nine-year-old boy who needed to learn PowerPoint because none of his schoolteachers knew how to use it. His mother contacted the training centre and her son attended a two-day course as the only child among a group of adults, which he enjoyed immensely. The oldest ever participant in the program so far has been a 92-year-old gentleman who attended the First Click basic computer course. That goes to show that it is never too late to learn a new skill.

In closing, I have possibly left the best bit till last. I will talk about John Payne, who was a nominee for the 2009 Western Australian Senior of the Year award. John is the president of the Morley Noranda Recreation Club, which is a thriving community club in the heart of the electorate of Morley. He volunteers his time as president of the club and works there most days. John joined the club as a member in 1984 and quickly got involved in its leadership, first as secretary of the bowls club and later as president. He also has been involved in running the darts club. Now in his sixth year as the president of the Morley Noranda Recreation Club, he is still an active sporting member and continues to play darts and bowls for the club.

John comes from a background in teaching. He has worked as a teacher and deputy principal in schools all across Western Australia and is an expert in the English language. He specialised in teaching the basic rules of grammar and spelling to his young charges and he is passionate about preserving and promoting basic language skills in the community. He retired from teaching in 1999 but retains his love of language and is an avid reader of books. Having had a near fatal heart attack a few years ago, he keeps himself physically and mentally active. He is a tireless worker who keeps his finger on the pulse of the club. He works there every day of the week. He represents the club at meetings, negotiates with businesses for sponsorship, deals with day-to-day events and liaises with the City of Bayswater, which he praises highly. He confides that he has to know how to do everyone's job in case there are staff problems but he is blessed with an excellent committee. It is a never-ending process and John says that if a day goes by when there is not a crisis, it is a good day. The club membership has grown to 700-plus under his leadership. It is open seven days a week and there is something on during most evenings. John says that it is a community organisation that serves the community and does not knock back anyone. The fees are deliberately kept low to fulfil that promise. John is a humble man. He does not ask for anything and believes that if you are going to serve, you should do it for its own sake, not because there is something in it for you at the end of it. John Payne is a wonderful example of the quality of people in my electorate and I am proud and honoured to call him a friend.

The outcomes of the government's economic growth strategies are vital to electorates such as Morley. I am confident that the achievements and objectives outlined to this house in the Premier's Statement will finally give rise, if it has not already, to a sense of optimism and buoyancy that has been gravely missing for quite a while.

**MR R.H. COOK (Kwinana — Deputy Leader of the Opposition)** [3.49 pm]: I rise to make some comments on the Premier's Statement. In doing so, I firstly acknowledge the speech made by the member for Collie—Preston today. This place is much richer and better for members who have the courage to bring such personal stories into this place. I place on record my thanks to, and admiration for, the member for Collie—Preston for sharing that obviously painful story with us.

I want to begin today by first of all drawing attention to the teal ribbons that we have been wearing this week.

**The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr P.B. Watson)**: Member for Rockingham, before you go past another member, would you get the acknowledgement of the Chair? You just barged straight out.

**Mr M. McGowan**: Okay.

**The ACTING SPEAKER**: Next time I will call you to order.

**Mr R.H. COOK**: We have been wearing the teal ribbons this week as part of Ovarian Cancer Awareness Month. Ovarian cancer affects 1 500 people in Australia each year. On an estimate, 850 of those people will die from the disease. Ovarian cancer is a very difficult cancer to detect, and often by the time people are aware of it, it is too late. Therefore, I pay tribute to that cause.

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Since this house rose for Christmas, a number of developments have occurred in the areas that impact upon my shadow portfolios of health, mental health and Indigenous affairs, so I wanted to place on record today some of my observations about some of those events, announcements and developments. In particular, I want to comment on the departure of Dr Peter Flett from the position of Director General of Health. Dr Flett was a wonderful servant to health policy in this state, particularly in the area of pathology. As Director General of Health, he was the initiator of the four-hour rule project, and he deserves recognition for the work that he did; I think it is recognition that has not been paid to him.

I was disgusted by the treatment of Dr Flett by the government, particularly the comments of the Treasurer, who sought to bully, harangue and harass Dr Flett, and ultimately was the reason for his departure from that position. There is a reason why the Treasurer took that tack, and it is very simple. Dr Flett told the truth; under oath Dr Flett told the truth to a parliamentary committee. I think it is a dangerous precedent in our democracy that a public servant who, under oath, speaks his mind and provides the information asked of him in a very straightforward question before a parliamentary committee is then publicly ridiculed for those comments. Dr Flett found his position untenable, and felt that the only course available to him was to offer his resignation to both the Minister for Health and the Premier.

I think one of the most disturbing aspects of Dr Flett's departure is the complete failure of the Minister for Health to support him in terms of the comments of the Treasurer or to pay due respect to the service that Dr Flett provided. In fact, the minister could only make some glib remark to the effect that in politics there has always been tension between the Treasurer and the health minister. There has always been tension between the Treasurer and the health minister, but never has a Director General of Health been so harassed by a Treasurer for simply doing his job—for carrying out the policy of the government. I think it is sad that the minister was missing in action on that issue.

I want to digress for a moment to also discuss the situation that we currently have in Carnarvon. There are some community tensions up there in some of the relationships between different sectors of the community, particularly the Indigenous community and the police service up there. These are not insurmountable. However, for a good 72 hours, tensions were high and people were angry and frustrated. The president of the Western Australian Police Union made comments that I am sure do not reflect his sense of character and his sense of fairness, and I do not think they really reflect his values. But he made comments which were unfair and in some quarters regarded as racist, but which in all quarters were regarded as inflammatory. I think it is incumbent upon people who have an interest and a leadership role in this policy area to comment when they see that and to name that sort of behaviour. We are indebted to the Premier, albeit only after he was asked on radio, for the comments that he made to set the record straight on what the government's position or attitude is to these sorts of comments. Where was the Minister for Indigenous Affairs? He was missing once again. Who would the Aboriginal community be looking to to correct the record in relation to the government's position? It would be looking to the Minister for Indigenous Affairs. Sadly, he was missing in action.

We are also looking at the problems that exist within Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital, particularly with the cardiothoracic surgery unit. There are doctors in conflict and the clinical governance, a particularly important area of hospital services, is under question. We heard revelations in the media this week about problems in other sectors of the hospital. Where is the Minister for Health? Once again, he is missing in action. It is ironic that on an issue such as the closure of PATS services in Esperance earlier this year, the minister went to great lengths to explain to the chamber how he rode in on his steed and harassed the local regional manager of the public service to ask him the crucial question about the timing and configuration of PATS services in Esperance, but on a crucial issue such as potentially racist and inflammatory comments in the media and on a crucial issue such as the question marks over surgical services in one of our major tertiary hospitals, he is missing in action. I regret that those situations have occurred. On behalf of the Labor Party, I want to place on record our thanks to Dr Peter Flett for his service to the community, his service to government and, in particular, his service to health.

During this period the new clinical services framework was published. It provides a blueprint for clinical services as they are to be rolled out across the metropolitan area and, indeed, the country health service in this particular version of the CSF for the next 10 years or so. It provides a framework for the clinical needs of the community. Whereas the previous clinical services framework was based upon demand, a population projection and the clinical needs of the community, this one is riddled with political agendas and picks winners and losers across the medical field according to the political landscape of the day. What sticks out most starkly in the clinical services framework is that while Joondalup Health Campus was previously said to require an urgent upgrade of services because of population demand, the "WA Health Clinical Services Framework 2005–2015" states —

Note that by at least 2015–16, it is planned that Joondalup Health Campus also operate as a fully-fledged tertiary facility ... While this was originally not planned until after 2020, the demand for

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services as population growth in the north has resulted in building up of Joondalup earlier than previously anticipated.

The authors of the clinical services framework previously tried to say that the demand of population growth in the northern suburbs requires the upgrade of hospital services at Joondalup and in the northern suburbs generally. Yet in the “WA Health Clinical Services Framework 2010–2020”, there is no mention of the demand resulting from population growth to the north. There is no mention of the needs and the demand for clinical services at Joondalup. There is simply a one-liner saying it was going to do that, but it is not doing that any more.

When Mr Kim Snowball, the Acting Director General of Health, was quizzed during a parliamentary committee a fortnight ago on why Joondalup disappeared from the clinical services framework all of a sudden, he said there was only one reason why and that is a political decision by the government to redevelop Royal Perth Hospital and keep tertiary beds in the central business district. He is saying that the future of health is in the central business district, which is not where people live and not where the services will be demanded.

We will remind the people of Joondalup about this between now and the next election. We will remind the people of Joondalup about how the government has forgotten them and their need for an upgrade of hospital services. We will remind them that the government has decided that they will be the losers in the health landscape. The member for Joondalup will remind them of that, and the opposition will also remind the people of Wanneroo and Ocean Reef about the treatment of health services under this government.

The other big loser in the clinical services framework is, of course, Fiona Stanley Hospital and the people of the southern suburbs. They were promised that Fiona Stanley Hospital would be the new flagship of the Western Australian health system—a great hospital, developed in two stages, featuring both tertiary health care and rehabilitation health care. It was to be built in two stages and have up to 1 000 beds, but that is gone at the stroke of a pen by a government whose health policy is driven by political demands rather than the clinical demands of a population that is growing to the north and the south. The government is obsessed with hospital campuses in the central business district; it will spend money providing tertiary beds there, while services to the north and south struggle.

One of the comments made by the Premier in his statement was that the government would make sure that people do not miss out on the boom, yet the government has already indicated through the clinical services framework that two very key groups will miss out on the boom—people who live in the Joondalup Health Campus catchment area and people who live in the Fiona Stanley Hospital catchment area. However, the people who were to depend on the new Midland hospital for their health services will also miss out. The people of Midland and the electorates surrounding Midland could have been forgiven for thinking that they had nothing to fear at the time of the last election. The Liberal Party gave them every reason to believe that the Midland hospital would be developed as the Labor government said it would be, and they had no reason to believe that the hospital would soon be given over to a private sector operator, that local jobs would then be at risk, and that the Liberal government would give over to the private sector an asset that is a key piece of public social infrastructure. There was no mandate for the privatisation of Midland hospital, there was no mandate for people losing jobs to the private sector, and there is no mandate for this government to mistreat the people who depend upon Midland hospital for their health care needs. What will happen to jobs at Swan District Hospital? Will they be transferred to the new private operator? Will employees keep their current salary levels, conditions and entitlements? Nothing the government has said has provided any reassurance on these matters. We will remind people in the electorates around Midland hospital, including people living in the western wheatbelt, about the government’s treatment of health services and how they will be the ones missing out on the boom because the Minister for Health cannot be bothered taking the difficult steps in that area.

We also have a unique scenario in which the Rudd Labor government has stood up and promised \$180 million for the development of that hospital. I am not sure what will happen to that \$180 million, and neither is the Rudd government, because the state Liberal government simply plucked this idea of privatisation out of the air, and the federal government has no idea what the state government actually means by that. We have heard a one-liner and some other media remarks by the Minister for Health, but no comprehensive plan or explanation for why the government sees fit to privatise hospital services in that area.

This government is simply operating on ideological autopilot when it comes to health care. Look at Princess Margaret Hospital. That is a fantastic example of a government that quite frankly does not pay particularly close attention to the reasons it does things; it simply delivers glib, ideological one-liners that it is going to do something. Prior to the election the Liberal Party trumpeted with some confidence that —

The goal will be a completed new PMH, operational in 2014, with the cost of building a relocated PMH being borne by the private sector.

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Over the weekend, the Premier demonstrated his great arrogance and lack of accountability to the people of Western Australia when he said, “Oh, we might have mentioned 2014, but now you’re not going to get your hospital until late 2015 at the latest.” We all know what that is government speak for: 2016, rolling on to perhaps 2017.

The Liberal Party lied to the people of Western Australia when it said it would develop this hospital by 2014. Why is it doing it by public–private partnership? We do not know! All we know is that it wants to. What is the public–private comparator? Why is it doing it? What is the business case for it being a PPP, other than the fact that the government has an ideological predisposition to privatising government services? Member for Nedlands, what will be the dollar savings of using a PPP at Princess Margaret Hospital? The member does not know and the minister does not know.

**Mr W.R. Marmion:** I haven’t done a business case.

**Mr R.H. COOK:** Because there is no business case; it is simply an ideological whim that sounds as though it is a really good idea. The government pointed to the lessons of the Victorian government and its development of the new children’s hospital by PPP, but only after it, first of all, committed to building the hospital, then added the estimated construction costs into its forward estimates, and then did a public–private comparator to work out the best way to go about it. It was not done on the basis of some ideological whim.

[Member’s time extended.]

**Mr R.H. COOK:** The member for Nedlands asked a very valid question of the Minister for Health earlier this week. He asked why the hospital was late and why the government was not sticking to its election commitment to build the hospital by 2014. The member for Nedlands must have been devastated when the minister completely ignored the question. I am sure the member for Nedlands was keen to find out exactly when this hospital will be developed, why he went to the people of Nedlands with a promise that they would have a new children’s hospital by 2014, and why the government is now breaking that promise. But, of course, the Premier dismissed a broken promise as a mere mention that it might have been promised in 2014, and with a wave of a hand that that promise—a key election commitment to the people of Western Australia—has been broken.

The minister had a bit of a growl at me earlier this week after we criticised the government because there will be only eight extra beds at Princess Margaret Hospital. He drew attention to the clinical services framework and invented some fictitious consensus that somehow he was involved in designing the first clinical services framework, and said that the opposition was naughty for criticising the fact that there will be only eight extra beds. The reason the original plans for Princess Margaret Hospital had only a limited number of beds was that stage 2 of Fiona Stanley Hospital was planned and there would be an extra 200 beds at Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital and a significant redevelopment of hospitals elsewhere—projects that have been cancelled by this government. The minister cannot come into this place and talk about a consensus on the clinical services framework because there is no consensus. That consensus was broken the moment the government decided that political agendas should take over the design for clinical services in Western Australia.

Earlier, the minister said I was wet behind the ears before he scurried off like a coward for the protection of the Chair in that particular debate, but the fact of the matter is that he was never involved in the consensus on the CSF, and there is no consensus now. We will attack the government because it has duded the people about Fiona Stanley Hospital; we will attack the government for duding the people who depend upon a new Midland hospital; and we will attack the government for duding the people about Joondalup hospital and for downgrading their hospital services simply to pursue its political agenda. I will conclude on mental health. I was not going to speak about mental health this week because all we have heard is a rather ridiculous announcement by the government about establishing the Mental Health Commission. It was a ridiculous announcement because there is no detail at this stage. We were asked by journalists whether we would support it and we said, “Sure.” We will support any innovation in mental health, particularly given the cuts in the mental health area at the moment. If the government is going to create innovation and move forward, we would love to support it in that. But all we have at the moment is some back-to-the-future model that recreates the old department of mental health as it existed in the late 1970s and early 1980s. We remember those days. Grace Vaughan House was built to be the new headquarters for the department of mental health. Perhaps the new commission can move into that building—20 or so years late. There is a reason that mental health went into the Department of Health—that is, to create synergies and connectivity between health services generally and mental health services. We will wait to see the detail on the commission before we serve final notice.

I want to place on record the woeful performance by the Minister for Mental Health when he said that acute mental health care is important and that we should stand by it. I am glad that the member for Fremantle is in the chamber at the moment, because what has been done at Alma Street is a complete joke, and the Minister for

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Mental Health knows it. That facility was supposed to be opened last May. The construction of the facility was running late, as sometimes these things do. But one would have thought that, as the end of construction neared, there would be a bit of scurrying and scampering around to make sure that a service provider was ready to go in and that it had furniture ready to go in. As we know, patients were ready to go into that facility. We know that when construction eventually finished in a lackadaisical fashion around August, the government then tried to find a service provider. It lazily got around to finding a service provider in about November, and then the service provider thought about finding some furniture. We know the agenda. We know what is going on. The government delayed the opening of that facility to save extra dollars. It delayed the opening of that facility to meet the three per cent cut in mental health. That facility has now been grandly opened by the government, yet it still does not have any patients. The government has a gall coming into this place and talking about its commitment to subacute care in mental health, because we know that the department is suffering the most in the area of subacute care. We know that the subacute care services around Rockingham General Hospital have been cut. We know that only one group criticised the announcement by the Labor government to build the Alma Street facility in the first place—that is, the Liberal Party. So when the government says that it supports subacute care, the member for Mandurah obviously gets a bit hot under the collar because he knows what has happened to the community-supported residential unit in his electorate. It has been cancelled. Government members should not come into this place and lecture the world about their conviction to subacute care because they have none. The government is making its biggest cuts in the subacute care area, and that is where the neglect in mental health is most greatly felt.

**Mr D.A. Templeman:** I want to know where the money's going.

**Mr R.H. COOK:** Indeed, we might ask, member for Mandurah, where the money has gone. We know that mental health is the one area that is bearing the greatest burden in the health sector from the three per cent cuts. We regret that, as, I am sure, do members opposite. We know there is a lot of hurt among carers and patients awaiting care. This government has an absolute gall for allowing the Minister for Mental Health to produce a woeful performance and for producing a woeful performance on an issue on which it is comprehensively failing.

A range of issues are having an impact in the area of Indigenous affairs, and I have spoken about the performance of the Minister for Indigenous Affairs on the concerns about Carnarvon. However, at this stage I will conclude my remarks because I know a number of other speakers also wish to have their say today. We will campaign hard on the government's neglect of health. We will campaign hard in Liberal electorates where health care has been neglected through the government's cuts to hospital services, the downgrading of hospital beds and the downgrading of hospitals that deserve to provide the very highest level of services to their community. We will be coming for those members, and they will rue the day that they made such overt political gestures about the clinical services framework.

**DR M.D. NAHAN (Riverton)** [4.15 pm]: When I thought about what I would discuss today in my comments on the Premier's Statement, and when I looked back through my first full year in this Parliament, the overwhelming conclusion that I came to was: what a difference a year makes. Last year, the world was staring down the abyss of another Great Depression. The outlook was grim, even in Australia, the lucky country. Members may remember the debates that we had at that time. We discussed the collapse of some of the largest financial institutions in the world. We discussed the huge and unprecedented fiscal stimulus that Prime Minister Rudd was proposing. We discussed the closure of the Ravensthorpe nickel mine, rising unemployment, the decline in equity markets, which was felt by all those who have investments, the concerns about the housing market, and the loss of royalty income at an unprecedented level. The outlook was very grim. We will never know how close the world came to experiencing another Great Depression, but I suspect we came closer than many people think.

Western Australia and Australia proved to be very resilient in the face of the world downturn. In the past, when the United States caught a cold, we caught pneumonia. This time, the United States caught triple pneumonia, and we got the sniffles. The global economic crisis had a big impact on many people, not only in my electorate of Riverton, but throughout the state. Sure, there was real pain. The Leader of the Opposition has gone through the closure of mines and other operations at that time. But the situation could have been far, far worse. Throughout 2009, Western Australia and Australia staged a phenomenal recovery. We avoided the mass bailouts of banks, the mass bankruptcies, the mass rises in unemployment, and the collapse in housing markets and household wealth that was experienced around the world. If we look at the situation in Europe, Greece is on the verge of bankruptcy, and Spain, Portugal and Ireland are not far behind. Iceland has gone down the tube.

The United Kingdom and the United States, which historically are Australia's major trading partners, will take decades to pay back the debt that they have incurred to avoid collapsing into the abyss. For example, over the past year the United Kingdom and the United States have incurred more debt as a percentage of gross domestic product than they did during World War II. Western Australia and Australia have managed to avoid that. The

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outlook for the Western Australian economy is brilliant. According to the Department of State Development, in the resources and energy sector alone, \$139 billion worth of projects is either on the drawing board or very advanced.

The question I want to address is: how have we managed to avoid experiencing the severity of the global financial crisis that other countries have experienced, and how is that relevant to the seat of Riverton? First, we need to remember that it is not just because of luck. We are the lucky country. We make our own luck. But it is not just because of luck. It is because of the economic reform policies that have been adopted in the past. On current estimates, the United States has come out of this recession with a public sector debt equivalent to 80 per cent of gross domestic product. Japan has come out of this recession with a public sector debt equivalent to 150 per cent of GDP. We have come out of this recession with a public sector debt equivalent to 14 per cent of GDP. That is because of, firstly, the stringent fiscal policies that were put in place by the Howard government over 11 years to balance the books, reduce public sector debt and build up a budget surplus. Those policies gave the Rudd government the capacity to provide a large fiscal stimulus. Without the policies of the Howard government, Rudd would not have been able to provide that stimulus.

The Howard government also put in place policies to regulate the banks. The sound banking practices that were put in place as a result of those policies helped this country to avoid the bankruptcies and the collapses in the lending and housing markets that have plagued every other wealthy country in the world. Those are phenomenally beneficial. Another major reform was in industrial relations policies—which I will touch on later—first by the Keating government, built on by the Court government and then the Howard government. These industrial relations reforms allowed our businesses to be flexible, to adjust and to keep people employed and avoid the mass unemployment of other places. The Barnett government came in and faced the GFC, which was not as bad in Western Australia as in other places or in other states, with a good, sound fiscal policy to build on that allowed the budget deficits to adjust and to assist the economy and undertake capital works. It is as it should be. The take away from that is that the best thing going for my electorate and for this economy is continued reform, and particularly to make sure we have our house in order if this happens again.

Two other areas that were extremely helpful and indeed pivotal were, first, China and, second, the resources sector. Let us face it, the most important reason for our ability to avoid the GFC, in one word, is China. Mr Rudd is correct: the government stimulus did help, but not so much his government's but China's. The Chinese government undertook a massive fiscal stimulus last year of 11 per cent of its GDP—twice our stimulus! Unlike Mr Rudd's stimulus, the Chinese stimulus got to the market quickly and concentrated on capital and helped the economy. When the Chinese government decides to do something like build a port or a road, the bulldozers are on site next week. Shovel ready means shovel ready in China, even if the stimulus does result in excessive infrastructure. There are examples, if you follow it, of whole cities in north-east China being built, but they are unoccupied. There is a very good Facebook site about an empty city. I am sure the Chinese have done that, just like the fiscal stimulus here. When we try to rush things, we do not do so well, as Mr Garret found. In China, the demand for infrastructure is so great that that empty city in north-east China will soon be filled up; in other words, they have the demand. Unfortunately, in Australia and in all other wealthy countries, when we try to do things quickly, we run into delays. By the end of November 2009, 70 per cent of the capital being spent and spurred on by state and federal governments was actually committed to by the Howard government. In other words, most of the capital under the Rudd stimulus has not hit the market yet. It takes some time. The Rudd stimulus has not been a major reason for our avoiding the GFC; it has been China. China was also crucial in funding.

One of the problems of the GFC was a complete collapse of the financial sector: no one could get loans; no one could borrow or float money; no one could get cash. China did not have that problem. It has one of the highest savings rates, pushing 35 to 40 per cent of GDP, which is phenomenal. China had huge cash surpluses controlled by Chinese banks, and it wisely decided during the downturn in equity markets to look offshore and make major investments, particularly in the resource sector. It sent its investors offshore—mainly government-owned enterprises—to buy assets and to invest. China pumped \$40 billion worth of investments into the Australian economy, mostly in Western Australia. Talk to any miner and they will tell you who is funding them: it is China. They saved our bacon when the banks went dry. China stands to play an even greater role in the future, and it is overwhelmingly the reason for our rosy outlook. Take China out of the equation and it would not be that rosy.

Despite Western Australia's economic future being tied so tightly to China—I would argue more tightly tied to China than any other relationship around the world, except maybe Canada to the US—we do not know very much about China. We know even less about China than we knew about Japan when it played a similar role. Back in the 1950s and 1960s Charlie Court did many, many bright things. He saw the importance of Japan to our economy and he instituted a number of policies to foster this relationship. The way to foster a relationship is to get to know each other, so he encouraged the study of Japanese in schools. Now Japanese is the second most or

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maybe even the most commonly studied language in Western Australian schools. It is phenomenal; more students study Japanese than Italian or French. He also helped set up or spurred on an institute at the University of Western Australia where people study the Japanese economy and Japanese language. That school has educated more than 80 per cent of Australian ambassadors to not only Japan but also China and other Asian countries. We have to do something similar here.

I gave a talk earlier in the year on the study of Mandarin. To understand a people, their culture and their economy, we have to understand their language. The study of Mandarin in Australia is simply paltry. In 2006 only 1 200 kids were studying Mandarin in Western Australian public and private schools compared with 30 000 kids studying Japanese. That same year, only 21 students sat Mandarin at year 12 level. Luckily, with our knowledge of and links with China, one thing that we have with China over what we had with Japan is a large number of local Chinese people. Few Japanese people migrated to Australia. We have a very large, active Chinese community, many of whom, as many members know, live in my area. It is a phenomenal community of people who do not sit back and wait for other things to happen; they get out and do it. The Chinese community has established four schools, and each Saturday 2 500 kids attend for four hours to study Mandarin. More kids study Mandarin at the community schools than kids at all the public schools in the state. It is a very positive undertaking.

One of the issues that I have worked on is to try to encourage not only study but also the expansion of facilities in public schools and in the community for the study of Mandarin. A major initiative this year that we will work on involves Rossmoyne Senior High School in my area, which has become an independent public school—one of the first of 34, I believe. The school has long had a Chinese language program and now wants to expand its operations to include facilities for the community schools. That is an area I am working on very hard. If we go around the universities, although on the technical side they do a lot of work, on the strategic side they do very little. In a joint venture with Curtin University of Technology the University of Western Australia is proposing to establish a major centre called the Australian–Asian Centre for Energy Markets, which will focus on China as well as the rest of Asia. We should fully support that centre; these initiatives deserve our support.

The resource sector—imagine our economy without it! Resources dominate our exports and our investments and, of course, are the main attraction for China. The recovery in the resource sector was the essential reason for the recovery in not only Western Australia but also the nation. The outlook for the resource sector is phenomenal. It is easy to say it is simply an outcome of luck, but if we look around the world, we see many, many countries that have phenomenal resources—African nations such as Congo, Russia and many other countries. In fact, Congo has a better resource base than Western Australia but it has not nurtured it.

Resource wealth is of no use unless it is managed well, and there are two factors that can work against it. The first is the Dutch disease; that is, if a resource booms, it raises prices and pushes everything else up thereby destroying the rest of the economy. The second is that resource wealth can engender a rent-seeking mentality whereby people sit back and do not foster the growth of the resource sector but simply try to grab it any way they can. Historically in Western Australia, we have done that very well. A bipartisan approach has been adopted. This is why our resource sector grew and others did not. The Barnett government has done a couple of things very impressively. One of the first things that Hon Norman Moore did was step in to remove or reduce the regulatory burden faced by the resources sector. It was crippling. It needed to be looked at. He has done an excellent job on that.

Yesterday the Leader of the Opposition was correct when he said that one of the great challenges facing us in this state, and this government, is to sustain the growth to allow us to reach our potential. Although the Rudd government has supported it, particularly with capital in the form of its stimulus program and joint ventures, often with the state, and it has invested heavily in appropriate capital initiatives, there are worrying signs that the commonwealth government is succumbing to rent-seeking behaviour. When the Rudd government came in to power, one of its major policy changes was to industrial relations. Those changes took a long time to come to fruition. Those changes were largely gazetted in January this year. We are already starting to see worrying signs from that, with strikes at the Pluto project over the “hotelling” of workers, at Mermaid Marine Australia Ltd, at the Gorgon project and at Alcoa. These represent the greatest threat to the resource sector and the sustainability of our economic future.

Investors still remember the 1970s and the dysfunctional industrial relations system that plagued the sector. If we were to return to that time we would lose our future. If members remember, in the 1970s the Japanese, particularly in response to Robe River, said, “We have to find an alternative.” They went out and invested very heavily into India. That led to major competition with us for iron ore.

[Member’s time extended.]

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**Dr M.D. NAHAN:** That could easily happen today. The Chinese are investing very heavily in Africa, in iron ore and other minerals, and elsewhere for access to oil and gas. Even though the projects of Gorgon and Pluto are very lucrative, they can be stopped. Last night, on the ABC's *Lateline* program, the managing director of Woodside stated, in response to the illegal strike that was allowed to go for eight days in respect of hoteling, that the company has decided that it must safeguard its contracts and is out there looking to contract for replacement gas. When a company invests \$12 billion in a project, it has to sign contracts to meet a certain date. Because of the change in the industrial relations situation, Woodside now is fearful that it will not be able to meet its contracts. Woodside is out there spending money to purchase gas in case that happens. There could be no clearer signal to overseas investors that sovereign risk is rising in Western Australia.

The member for Rockingham made a couple of points about royalty arrangements in his comments. One of the problems with royalty arrangements is that royalties apply to very wealthy mines. Wealthy mines can very easily afford to pay, but they hurt the marginal ones. The same thing applies to excessive and inefficient industrial relations systems—maybe Gorgon can get through them and maybe Rio Tinto can get through them, but the marginal mines—the smaller and less profitable mines—will be killed off. It is not clear yet how Rudd will react. He has sat on his hands most of the time. However, there are some positive factors. The Howard government put in place the Australian Building and Construction Commission—ABCC. The Labor opposition has tried to get rid of it a few times but has not succeeded in doing so. The ABCC has taken action successfully against Mr McDonald of the Construction, Forestry, Mining and Energy Union for his illegal behaviour on the Pluto project. I understand other actions are being considered. However, there is no doubt that the biggest threat to the wellbeing and future growth of my electorate of Riverton is anything that threatens the resource sector.

Another threat lies with the commonwealth in an offshoot of the Henry review. The Rudd government committed to a so-called root and branch review of the taxation system—an appropriate action. The review has been released to the Rudd government but Rudd has not released it, although it has been leaked very heavily. One aspect that makes one suspicious of that review was the exclusion of certain measures, such as the goods and services tax; that is, the second-largest tax was excluded from the review. However, some of the statements coming from Mr Henry, the head of commonwealth Treasury, should send concerns to all sides of politics. One of his proposals is to impose a profit-based tax on the resource sector. He is not proposing this necessarily as a replacement for royalties, although we have not seen the fine print; it is just a separate tax on the resource sector. In other words, it is a discriminatory tax on the resource sector. What greater threat could be imposed on the very sector that is driving our economy and our future? It is what countries such as Indonesia, Papua New Guinea, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Russia did and which led to resources being left in the ground. On both sides of politics in WA—I am very encouraged by our leader's statement on this—it is also seen as a grab for our state tax base. If this proposal does not do that, it would be for a different reason. Nothing could be a greater threat to the state and the growth of our economy if the state were to lose the capacity to fund the infrastructure needed for the mining sector to develop. Nothing could be more threatening to our future if the state were to lose the capacity to provide the services that people expect and deserve, particularly from a booming economy. If the wealth of the next boom or growth phase goes to Canberra and is redistributed to New South Wales, South Australia, Tasmania and the Northern Territory and does not come back to Western Australia, the expansion will not happen. It is as simple as that. We need more bipartisan action on this and we need to act very quickly. I might add that bipartisanship should prevail in the industrial relations area in addition to taxation.

I would like to comment on independent public schools. My electorate is going through—I think the member for Victoria Park mentioned this—a regeneration. Seventy per cent of the people coming into my electorate—at least of those on the electoral roll—are less than 40 years old. Many suburbs and areas are going through such a regeneration. Of course there are huge numbers of migrants, more recently from South East Asia, but also from various Asian communities. More than 35 per cent of the new citizens are from Asia. Every time I ask them at citizenship ceremonies why they are coming into the electorate, the overwhelming reason is schools. They come in there, rent for a while and ask people where the best public schools are to go to. They hear about Rossmoyne and Willetton Senior High Schools and it is to there that they come in their droves.

**Mr W.R. Marmion:** Shenton College; do they know about it?

**Dr M.D. NAHAN:** Sometimes; I do not tell them about it. Real estate in the electorate of the member for Nedlands is too expensive, although Shenton College is a fine school. When I first became a candidate in the election, and after I had won my seat by a landslide, I asked the electorate what was needed.

**Mr D.A. Templeman:** They probably said for you to leave.

**Dr M.D. NAHAN:** I can assure the member they did not; they did that with the former member. In fact, for 10 years Willetton and Rossmoyne Senior High Schools had been working on a program to become what is known as independent public schools. They said, "That's what we want. We want money of course, but we want to

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rebuild things; we want freedom to cater to our local community. We will do it well because we are doing it well now. The community overwhelmingly supports it; that is why people move here.” They had been lobbying the Department of Education for more than a decade for something similar. Of course, when the independent public school proposal came up, Rossmoyne put up its hand and got it. Willetton put up its hand and I am confident it will get it next time. One of the things it allows Rossmoyne high school to do is not only retain staff and cater to the demands of the community, but also focus on a state centre for Chinese language studies. After all, 40 per cent of the Rossmoyne student body is of Chinese descent—a perfect place to put it. It is phenomenal.

Another issue raised during the election campaign in Riverton, which is probably one of the most significant issues the government has addressed in my electorate, was the extension of Roe Highway. It is the reason I won the seat. Its history is a long saga that I will not go into, but the government has committed to extending Roe Highway from the Kwinana Freeway to just past Stock Road. It is very expensive, and a lot of work is being done on it. Unlike the previous government, which ran a community consultative program more of a Stalinist-Trotskyite nature, this government has undertaken very comprehensive, open consultation with the broader community—both those affected by the road and those living close to the road and otherwise. One of the major issues is the popularity of the extension. We have heard during debate on it how crazy we are, how unpopular it is and how ridiculous it is to build it. I have the result of a very interesting survey. In fact, it should not surprise anyone because surveys done by the previous government, admittedly in the context of the Fremantle eastern bypass, found similar results; that is, net support for the road in the Perth metropolitan area is 70 per cent. That is so popular it makes us worry. Popularity of the road in the area affected by it is 73 per cent. Support for the road by those materially affected—right around the wetlands and other areas—is 65 per cent.

**Mr W.J. Johnston:** Get on with it.

**Dr M.D. NAHAN:** We are. We are bringing the people with us by listening to them rather than shutting them up, and that is working. One must look at the issue surrounding the highway and say, “Well, let’s build it and let’s address the environmental concerns because they are real.” The area was gazetted for a road 40 years ago. In the meantime it has been developed into parkland and people have built adjacent to it. A large, busy highway full of trucks—which it is meant to carry—will disturb their lifestyle. We need to listen to them and address their concerns, particularly about noise, and that is what we are doing. It is called good government.

One of the questions we will face is: once the trucks pass Stock Road, where will they go? Most of them will want to go to the port, but Labor has systematically put up barriers to that. The next challenge for us is to not worry just about our own electorates, where the extension is needed, but also those in Fremantle in the new member for Willagee’s electorate.

**Mr P.C. Tinley:** Tell us where the reactor is going. Let us get onto your real topic, the one you want the most!

**Dr M.D. NAHAN:** That is the member for Willagee’s first contribution to this issue, and it was pathetic and hopeless. This is a major concern.

In passing, it has been a phenomenal year for the government generally, both in economic terms and its success. The government has achieved much, but more is to be achieved. Even though Mr Rudd has helped this government extensively with funding over the past year, this government’s greatest challenge will be how he tries to react to the decline in stimulus.

**MS R. SAFFIOTI (West Swan) [4.45 pm]:** I take this opportunity to make my contribution to the debate on the Premier’s Statement. The past few months have been a very busy period for me and my husband as we have welcomed our little daughter, Grace, into the world. I would like to thank the opposition Whip, the member for Mandurah, for his support last year; the leader of opposition business, the member for Rockingham, for his support; and the member for South Perth, the government Whip, who assisted me in managing my duties last year.

It has been a very busy time not only for me personally, but also for my electorate as issues confronting the people of West Swan continue to present themselves. The people in the West Swan community have raised many issues with me and, as the local member, I have been pursuing them on their behalf. I will go through some of those issues, starting with the issue of planning in the West Swan electorate.

As members are aware, a number of housing developments are taking place within the West Swan electorate, particularly along the Lord Street corridor in the Swan Valley. Four major housing developments are either under construction or about to be commenced. The West Swan East development, or St Leonards estate, and the Caversham development, or Brookleigh estate, are underway with the first stages currently being constructed. The other two housing developments are the Albion housing development and the West Swan West housing development. These four developments are expected to bring 33 000 new residents to the area. It is a significant influx of people into the area.

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As with all new developments, a number of issues have arisen. Most of those issues go to the location of some key aspects of the new housing developments; for example, the location of public open space through the Swan urban growth corridor and also the location of the commercial and retail sectors. I have had serious concerns over the past 18 months about the location of public open space in these developments. We have before us a situation in which people's homes will be destroyed and bowled over because their homes are on land designated for public open space. This is the case even though within a few hundred metres there is vacant land which could be designated as public open space. Over the past 18 months we have lobbied the Western Australian Planning Commission and the City of Swan to ensure that public open space is relocated so that people's homes do not have to be bowled over. These residents and landowners accept that there will be housing development and redevelopment in the area, but they are questioning why their homes have to be bowled over to allow that to happen. Why cannot the planning be more sensible and rigorous to ensure that existing vacant land is designated public open space? The planning approvals for the West Swan East development are in their final stages and we are mounting a last-ditch effort to try to save these residents' homes. I do not think it is too much to ask that sensible planning means that basically people's homes can be saved and that football ovals or soccer ovals can be put on vacant land in a nearby district. We are planning a last-ditch effort to try to save these people's homes.

The same can be said for the commercial centre that has been designated along the new Lord Street alignment. The commercial centre is being put right next to current residents. There is vacant land across the road and further up the major connecting road. Why should the commercial centre not be away from the residents, again to allow them to continue living in their homes for as long as possible? I believe that the planning process has been flawed in a situation in which sensible planning was not incorporated and planners decided where public open space was put through a desktop analysis without looking at the livelihood of the people in the area. This is a major issue. Some residents and I are getting together in a last-ditch effort to try to save people's homes, because it just does not make sense that people's homes—there are some very nice homes in the area—will have to be demolished when there is vacant land nearby on which the public space can easily be located. The new developments along the Lord Street corridor, the Swan urban growth corridor, is putting a lot of pressure and imposing a lot of problems on landowners and residents in the region.

One of the other key issues is roads in the area. The infrastructure of roads in the area is basically insufficient to deal with current demand. There are very dangerous intersections and a big mix of commercial and tourism traffic, and now residential traffic, on those local roads. Lord Street, West Swan Road, Reid Highway and Gngangara Road all have too much traffic. Again, it is a mixture of commercial, residential and tourism traffic. All those problems will be exacerbated with the influx of the new 33 000 residents who will be moving into the area over the next five to 10 years. A lot of effort and a lot of funding need to be put into the infrastructure in the area.

I have written to the Minister for Transport and also asked him to come for a tour of the area so that we can go through some of the significant traffic hotspots and black spots in the area. I want to go through some of them today. There is Reid Highway. Tomorrow will see the opening of the new Middle Swan – Reid Highway bridge. That, of course, was the project commenced by the Labor government in August 2008. It is a brilliant project that will help alleviate some of the traffic congestion and pressure around that area. But, importantly, the next stage needs to be the dualling of the remainder of Reid Highway, and that is between Beechboro Road and West Swan Road. Without dualling that section, we will see bottlenecks on the new part of the highway that has been constructed. A key priority is to ensure that Reid Highway is completed to four lanes throughout that area. Along with that, a number of intersections along the Reid Highway have black spots and hotspots. In an RAC survey released at the end of last year, and also in the Main Roads black-spot list, a number of these intersections rate very highly. Of course, the Reid Highway – Alexander Drive intersection is the number one black spot in Western Australia. Again, the previous Labor government committed funding to that project, and it is expected that work will commence this year. I am advised that the works are expected to be completed in April next year. It is a much-needed project that will be welcomed by people along the whole Alexander Drive corridor, in particular the people in Landsdale, through Ballajura, through Alexander Heights and through Morley as well. Two other key intersections that are posing significant traffic risk to residents are the Reid Highway – Malaga Drive intersection and the Reid Highway – Lord Street intersection. I just want to touch on Reid Highway and Malaga Drive. That is a major traffic hot spot. It is where we see a significant amount of commercial traffic lined up in the mornings and afternoons in particular but also throughout the day. Effectively, that intersection is not big enough to cope with the volume of traffic that flows through it. Reid Highway is reduced to a single lane in the mornings and afternoons because of the amount of traffic in the right-hand lanes wanting to turn right. That is a significant pressure and I believe that, although the overpass would be extremely costly to build, funding should be allocated to improving the intersection. Also, more right-hand turn lanes could be put into Reid Highway.

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The intersection of Reid Highway and Lord Street is another major traffic hot spot that affects a lot of people, including those who live in Ellenbrook, as they try to access Reid Highway from Lord Street. The influx of new homes along the Lord Street corridor will put more pressure on that intersection. That is another key intersection that must be upgraded in conjunction with the significant developments that are occurring along that corridor.

More broadly, Gngangara Road suffers from being a local government road. It is split between the Cities of Wanneroo and Swan and therefore the state government does not have any responsibility for it. However, given the significance of the road, we must look at upgrading it to a state road because it is a major connecting road and will carry more commercial and other traffic over the next five to 10 years. The Perth to Darwin highway is another issue, about which the member for Swan Hills I are often lobbied. Because there is not a Perth to Darwin highway, a lot of traffic uses the Great Northern Highway, which is mainly a residential and tourist road but carries a lot of trucks and other heavy traffic. With the further development of resources in the north, the construction of this highway will continue to be of importance because there will be an increase in the amount of traffic as a result of more trucks taking supplies and other equipment to the resource projects in the north. This must be on the government's agenda. There is a dispute about whether the responsibility for this lies with either the federal government or the state government. It is a national highway and is therefore technically a federal government road. However, I believe that the state government must put this road on the agenda. We will see movement on this matter only if the state government pushes this onto the federal government's agenda and puts it in front of Infrastructure Australia. The state government has a role to play, given that it is encouraging the development of projects in the north and the Gorgon project is under way. It is incumbent upon the government to ensure that it provides the necessary infrastructure to service that region. That infrastructure includes not only the developments in the north, but also some of the key roads that are used to provide the necessary equipment to those projects.

Roads are a significant issue and I will continue to lobby the government about those roads. As I said, tomorrow the new Middle Swan Bridge will be opened. The people in the area have been calling for that much-needed project for a long time and construction on it commenced in August 2008. Hopefully, major works will commence on the Alexander Drive – Reid Highway overpass.

Another major issue in my electorate is public transport. I will touch upon a number of issues about transport needs, commencing with bus services. My electorate, particularly around Caversham, is poorly serviced by buses and public transport and people within the area are unable to access key services in Midland. I understand that the member for Forrestfield has raised this issue. It is fine to build new hospitals and we all welcome the construction of the new Midland hospital, although maybe not as a private hospital. Although we welcome the construction of the new hospital, we need to ensure that there are public transport linkages to it. There is no use creating precincts of that sort if people cannot access them on weekdays and weekends. We want people to be able to access those types of facilities by public transport. Similar to the member for Forrestfield's electorate, there are a number of parts of my electorate where people just cannot connect to Midland, even though they live in Caversham, which is not a very long way away—it is a neighbouring suburb. Again, there is huge pressure to improve bus services. This is especially for the elderly. Again, there is no use offering free public transport if there are no buses to use.

Another big issue is the Ellenbrook rail line. What we have seen over the past 18 months is basically a government doing everything possible to walk away from a core and key election commitment. There is no ambiguity. This was a key election commitment given by the Liberal Party at the time of the 2008 election. Over the past 18 months we have basically seen the government doing everything possible to try to walk away from that commitment. Now we are waiting with bated breath to see what the next step will be regarding their commitment to the Ellenbrook rail line. There was a clear commitment to start construction in 2012, and we need to see something from this government relatively soon for that commitment to be met. A couple of feasibility studies on other options have been undertaken, including a busway down Alexander Drive, but I do not think it can be an either/or option. Basically, enough residents and enough patronage would be available for the Alexander Drive busway. This project is a stand-alone project, and I know that the business case has proved that it is a very viable project. Again, that should be supported by the government.

I want to touch briefly on a couple of other issues in the area. I will deal briefly with education. Some of the key issues in the education area include the need for an auditorium at Ballajura Community College. It is something that Labor committed to at the 2008 election, and it is something that I know the principal of Ballajura Community College, Dr Stefan Silcox, and the community are very supportive of—that is, the construction of a new community facility that provides a service not only to the school, but also to the wider community and to other schools in the area. It would be a great venue for school graduations, performances and other events. I am also looking at the need for a school to be built at Bennett Springs estate. The land has been set aside for that school and, because of the need, we are looking at trying to get that school built.

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I have a couple of final issues to deal with. I want to talk briefly about law and order. The Minister for Police will be happy to know that I will not talk at length about the Ballajura Police Station today.

**Mr R.F. Johnson:** I am always happy to listen to you talk about the Ballajura Police Station.

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** I will only say that the rhetoric that we hear on law and order is not matched by the reality of what is happening in my electorate. In Ballajura the police station has been closed, and people in the community are very angry about the closure. Basically, law and order issues are on the rise. As I said, the Minister for Police can stand there and say that the government is tough on crime and tough on law and order, but when the government closes police stations in suburbs and does not effectively replace them, the people out there know that the rhetoric does not mean anything. Law and order is a significant issue in Ballajura. The closure of the Ballajura Police Station was a mistake, and the people of Ballajura understand that. The government can talk tough on crime all it likes, and government members can sit in this place and say whatever they want, but when the community is not seeing results, the rhetoric does not mean anything.

Lastly, I will touch on health issues. As I said, we want the new Midland hospital to be built. We would like to see a proper time frame for it and we would like to see money in the budget for it, but we do not want a privatised hospital. That was never the commitment that was made at the time of the election. It is not a private hospital now, so the government is not replacing like with like. We need a new public hospital in Midland, but we do not need a privatised hospital.

Debate adjourned, on motion by **Mr R.F. Johnson (Leader of the House)**.