

Mr Joe Francis; Mr Peter Watson; Speaker; Ms Alannah MacTiernan; Mr Brendon Grylls; Mr Tom Stephens;  
Mr John Quigley; Mr Colin Barnett; Mr Eric Ripper; Mr Troy Buswell; Acting Speaker; Mr Mark McGowan;  
Mr Ben Wyatt

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**ADDRESS-IN-REPLY**

*Motion*

Resumed from 13 November.

**MR J.M. FRANCIS (Jandakot)** [3.12 pm]: Firstly, I congratulate you, Mr Speaker, on your election as Speaker of this house. I look forward to working with you and other members in the interests of all Western Australians. Secondly, I thank the people of Jandakot for the trust they have placed in me, and for the privilege of representing them in this place. It is an immense honour to join this chamber as their advocate.

Jandakot is a new seat recreated by the recent redistribution. The Aboriginal word “Jandakot” means “place of the whistling eagle”. Therefore, it is appropriate that the seat includes Australia’s largest general aviation airport. Jandakot is a seat that reflects the cosmopolitan nature of Perth itself. Situated south of Perth and covering some 67 square kilometres, it is part semi-rural and has many first home buyers and young families, and many small and large businesses. It is bounded by Roe Highway and South Street in the north, by Kwinana Freeway to Banjup in the south, and by the three lakes of South, North and Bibra in the west.

I remain an unreconstructed fan of John Howard. One of his overarching themes was aspiration, meaning the essential goodness of each citizen’s desire to improve their position by effort, risk and endeavour. In equal measure, I oppose the instinct of the left to lump people into vast, faceless collectives, to treat them as a powerless class of victims being acted on by forces beyond their control, and to reduce the romantic and heroic adventure of life into a capricious casino of chance.

If there is any group of 24 000 Australians who could rightly be called aspirational, it is the people of Jandakot. Very few of us were born into great wealth, but we are hard-working people who are determined to pass on a better standard of living to our children. I live in the seat of Jandakot. I know the people, and I share their values and hopes. I am determined to work hard to not only represent their concerns and interests in this place, but also to make Jandakot an even better place to live. There is no electorate on this vast continent that I would rather live in or represent.

Australia is the developed world’s model economy. Yes, we are experiencing tough economic times, but we are far better off than comparable countries and Western Australia is the reason why. Although we make up just 10 per cent of the national population, we contribute 36 per cent of Australia’s exports. If Australia were a business, 10 per cent of its employees would contribute 36 per cent of the profit. Western Australia has the lowest unemployment rate in the country—a full one per cent below the national average—and this, Mr Speaker, is just the beginning. Western Australia’s greatest days are ahead of us. There was a time when Asia frightened Australia. Today, Asia is both our partner and our friend. The three billion people between Mumbai and Beijing are not going anywhere: they want our natural resources and it is our duty to sell to them. There will surely be ups and downs in demand and commodity prices; however, the twenty-first century will be the century of not only the Asia-Pacific region, but also the state of Western Australia. I believe it is entirely possible that by 2050 Perth will have overtaken Sydney as Australia’s financial centre and premier city. It is not that the city of Sydney will go into a decline; it is simply that we will overtake it.

If the longest journey begins with the first step, the first step begins with the spark of belief. When I look across the Indian Ocean to the tiny specks of land called Dubai and Qatar, and the other Gulf States, I am thrilled that those countries have been so successful. I ask the house: what can Western Australia achieve? It is up to us. The moment is now and the potential is enormous. Political leadership is not everything but it is an essential ingredient in the prosperity of a people. Add to that the octane of human aspiration; abundant natural resources; a rich legacy of democracy, community and the common law; and we have a combustible cocktail of opportunity.

President Reagan of the United States was one of my favourite political leaders of the twentieth century. I liked his policies and, perhaps even more importantly, his ability to renew an optimistic sense of belief in the American people. After the difficulties following the Vietnam War, and with the threat of mutually assured destruction hanging bleakly in the air, President Reagan revived the can-do spirit of the American people. Mr Speaker, I want the people of Western Australia to embrace again their can-do spirit. We have always had it but every generation needs renewal and I hope to play a role in the regeneration of that can-do spirit.

We have everything here: the greatest natural resources in the world; world-class human capital; and the underpinning political, judicial and social systems inherited from the British. All around the world it is former British colonies that are renowned for their harmony. We are only at the beginning of the great unfolding story that is Western Australia. Our best days are still ahead of us and the only limitations are those that we place on ourselves.

**Extract from Hansard**

[ASSEMBLY - Tuesday, 25 November 2008]

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Mr Joe Francis; Mr Peter Watson; Speaker; Ms Alannah MacTiernan; Mr Brendon Grylls; Mr Tom Stephens; Mr John Quigley; Mr Colin Barnett; Mr Eric Ripper; Mr Troy Buswell; Acting Speaker; Mr Mark McGowan; Mr Ben Wyatt

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Prior to my election I was proud to serve as an officer in the Royal Australian Navy and equally proud to serve as a submariner. The submarine service cannot be fully understood by those who have not experienced its associated camaraderie and mateship. That is why I want to pay particular tribute to those submariners who instilled in me an ethic of leadership and professionalism—those men who have led by example and for whose friendship I am grateful. First among them, and perhaps the greatest, is Mr Max Shean, Australia's most decorated submariner, who quietly achieved so much during World War II and changed the course of history. Also included are my former Commanding Officers and Executive Officers in HMAS *Farncomb*, Commander Mark Hammond, Lieutenant Commander Shane Doolan, along with Lieutenant Commanders Michael Mitchell, Michael Jacobsen, Lieutenant Dean Barr and Lieutenant Trent Yates. It was these men who taught me so much and with whom I had the pleasure of sharing extended periods underwater.

The Navy has a saying, "You can take the sailor out of the lower decks, but you can't take the lower decks out of the sailor." I pay special tribute to Leading Seaman Andrew Hume, Leading Seaman Jason Edhouse, Able Seaman Stuart Walz, and Able Seamen Wayne Morgan and Amy Harris. As a former sailor, I understand the challenges and rewards of their jobs, and I salute them.

I am reminded of Theodore Roosevelt's statement that "a good navy is not a provocation for war but rather the swiftest guarantee of peace". Under the watch of such sterling men and women, our country's defence is in good hands. In their honour, I undertake to be a passionate fighter for the rights of veterans and ex-servicemen. Both my father and my grandfather were career sailors in the Royal Australian Navy, so my decision to serve my country by following their footsteps came easily. Navy values of honour, honesty and loyalty were infused in me early. I believe that, like military service, politics is an honourable vocation. To serve in this house is a privilege; it is one that I will not take lightly in the discharge of my duties. It is worth noting community surveys of the trust placed in certain positions. Journalists, lawyers, politicians and used-car salesmen usually end up at the bottom of the list; doctors, teachers and military officers generally end up at the top. My goal, with the help of other members, is not to drop from the top of the list, but to raise the esteem of public office.

My gratitude goes to the Liberal Party of Australia. One of the first things I did when I turned 18 was to join the Liberal Party. Generally speaking, the older one gets, the more interested one becomes in politics. It was not a particularly cool thing to do, and I cannot explain why, but ever since I was young I can remember being interested in the television news and the newspapers. I can remember asking my parents to explain what was happening. The Liberal Party and its forerunners have governed Australia for around two-thirds of the time since Federation. It is a party with a proud history that has helped make Australia great. I am proud to belong to a party that includes the likes of Sir David Brand, Sir Charles Court and Richard Court among its leaders. They were men of vision who preferred decisions to committees, who did not fear failure and were animated by a burning desire to fulfil some great destiny for the west of Terra Australis. My political and philosophical views were formed with the support of Hon John Howard, Hon Tony Abbott and the late Bob Santamaria. I will always be indebted to them for their influence and help. In addition I thank those friends who were always willing to offer their encouragement, advice and support: Mr Stephen Gallilee and Mr John Ruddick. I could not want for better friends or confidants. I also thank former National Party Senator Bill O'Chee, current New South Wales National Party Senator John Williams and my good friends Mr Christopher Pearson and Hon Ross Cameron for their support. Mr Phil Edmand, Mr Rick Palmer and Mr Frank Parker were always available when I needed counsel. My campaign chairman, Mr Donald Gibbs, went above and beyond the call of duty, and Mr Cameron Schuster, as the man who signed my cheques, was a godsend.

I have always felt passionately about the humane treatment of animals. I am proud to have been a life member of the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals for almost 15 years. We have a long way to go in alleviating the suffering of animals. Animals are not as intelligent as people, but they are intelligent and they feel pain. As long as I am in public life, I want the RSPCA and similar organisations to know that they have a friend in this house.

I am a Liberal because I believe the role of government is to give people a hand up and not a handout. I believe in limited government regulation, with unlimited business opportunities. For benefiting both business and consumers, the spirit of capitalism and free enterprise beats red tape and central planning every time.

I believe people who work long hours trying to stay afloat while costs rise and earnings fall should not have to come home and clean graffiti off their fences, repair vandalism and be kept awake by hoons during the night, as well as feeling unsafe or insecure in their own houses.

I believe effective representatives are elected to solve problems and not dwell on them.

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I believe conservatives should also be conservationists, and protecting our environment needs more than just lip service.

I believe government spending should be determined by what a community needs and not by how it votes.

I believe that a dollar in the hand of a citizen is usually more wisely spent, saved or invested than a dollar in the hand of government. It follows naturally for me that we should aim to leave more money in the pockets of citizens and put less in the treasuries of governments.

I believe it is better to honestly disappoint people by doing what is right rather than temporarily appease them by doing what we know is wrong.

I believe the primary function of government is to promote conditions in which the individual enjoys freedom.

The great Australian Rupert Murdoch recently said that, while there is a genuine scientific debate about global warming, the planet deserves the benefit of the doubt. That leads me to an area on which I disagree most strongly with Australian Labor Party members, because I have a passionate belief in uranium mining in Western Australia. During the recent election campaign I noted with regret the deafening silence from advocates of uranium mining on the other side of politics. The reality is that mining uranium and reducing carbon emissions go hand in hand. Any response to carbon emissions that does not include a substantial role for nuclear energy is simply not credible. Solar, wind and geothermal power have a role, but they need the sheer grunt of fission. Nuclear power plants produce barely any carbon emissions. Coal-fired power plants are the biggest contributor to the world's carbon output. Its opponents in Australia have worked hard to invest the words "uranium" and "nuclear" with fear and loathing, but many nations, including France and Japan, generate over half of their electricity from nuclear sources. It is morally and logically incoherent for us to say that we are happy to mine and export uranium for other countries to use as low carbon energy sources but we are morally opposed to the development of nuclear energy in our own country. If the Greens and the left wing of the Labor Party really had the best interests of the environment at heart, and not the instinctive blocking of progress, they would surely agree.

I want to make special note of my experience of Aboriginal people in our state. I recall driving through New Mexico in the United States of America a few years ago—Navaho country. I pulled into a gas station and noticed that the guy filling the vehicles was a Navaho Indian. The girl behind the counter was a Navaho, as were the waitresses, chefs and the people who ran the hotel. In fact, in that town almost every small business was owned and staffed by Navaho Indians. It occurred to me that I would not see that in Australia. I pondered this situation to ascertain the reason. The answer is simple: what those people have that Aboriginals do not have is a sense of purpose. That is the reason that I applaud the intentions of Andrew Forrest, because governments are not the only answer to improving Aboriginal living standards. People like Andrew Forrest are and real jobs are.

I pay tribute to the mining companies of this state, who are by far the largest employer of Indigenous Australians of any sector of the economy. Mining companies are doing far more for practical reconciliation than all the social workers, academics, liaison officers, government agencies and sorry days combined.

There are of course reasons that I am a Liberal. One reason is that I believe in a fair go and giving anybody who wants to try a real chance at success. It is the reason that I am committed to fighting for the quality of life and basic services. The first priority of any government should be prosperity with a purpose. As Sir Robert Menzies said —

... we were determined to be a progressive party, willing to make experiments, ... but believing in the individual, his rights and his enterprise ...

I am a strong proponent of federalism. I believe that sovereignty should be constitutionally divided between a central governing authority and the states. Our founding fathers were deliberate in creating checks and balances. They felt strongly that the state's interests should be respected and safeguarded; they were wary of an intervening national executive. Government at a central and distant point can never be government of the people. The great Austrian-Jewish philosopher Karl Popper talked about the limited ability of any central agency or plan to understand, govern and control something as diverse, unpredictable, fast moving and innovative as a democratic society. That is why I reject the premise that state legislatures should cede more and more functions to the commonwealth. However, I accept that Australians are over-governed and that local, state and federal powers should approach their task with a listening ear, a light touch and a desire to increase the realm of the private, civil and voluntary society and reduce our call on the state's monopoly over coercion and compulsion through the law and regulation.

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I was not born in this state, but I chose to call Western Australia home. In the past decade over 300 000 people have made the decision to cross the Nullarbor or oceans to start a new life in Western Australia. Eight years ago I was one of those people. This collaboration of different nationalities, ethnicity and interstate parochialism contributes to the special diversity that is Western Australia. I fell in love with this state the day I moved here.

I would also like to express my appreciation for the love and support of my wife, Vicki, who is in the public gallery, and our beloved fur kids—our German shepherds Sasha and Rex. Vicki has not just stood behind me during this campaign; she has walked next to me each day and I am forever in her debt.

Without the support, help and love of my family, I would not be here. I could never adequately express the thanks that my father Charles deserves for the gifts he has given me. Dad came to Perth for the last week of the campaign and he turned 76 on the day of the election. He is a true Australian hero and a proud Vietnam veteran. There is nothing my mother would not do to help me. From the sacrifices my parents made to provide me with a Jesuit education, through to the day-to-day tasks they still happily perform, I am eternally grateful. My sister Janelle, who is ill and I wish her the best, is the best sister a bloke could ever want.

I have also been blessed with the support of Margie and Brian and would like to thank them for everything they have done to assist me.

Every member knows the value of local supporters, such as my friends in my own suburb of Atwell, including Steve Portelli and Sharon Leitch. The warm welcome we have received from the Leeming Bowling Club has been outstanding.

In conclusion, I would like to remind the house of the 10 commandments of William Boetcker. These are the principles I will keep in mind every time we are called upon to act in this place —

- You cannot bring about prosperity by discouraging thrift
- You cannot strengthen the weak by weakening the strong
- You cannot help little men by tearing down big men
- You cannot lift the wage earner by pulling down the wage payer
- You cannot help the poor by destroying the rich
- You cannot establish sound security on borrowed money
- You cannot further the brotherhood of man by inciting class hatred
- You cannot keep out of trouble by spending more than you earn
- You cannot build character and courage by destroying men's initiative and independence
- And you cannot help men permanently by doing for them what they can and should do for themselves.

[Applause.]

**MR P.B. WATSON (Albany)** [3.32 pm]: Here we are on the other side of the house. It is different being on this side of the house, but we can still have an impact. I congratulate the Premier. It shows that the good Claremont Football Club supporters will always come through in the end. There is disappointment for members on our side of the house, as I have said to a few people who have mentioned the Labor Party losing the election. Four years ago, the now Premier made an election promise about the canal project as one of the big ticket items in that election and he messed it up. I did not think he would be here for the last term. I told some of our members that we have to take it as it comes and that we are lucky to be here.

I congratulate the National Party. I thought that the royalties for regions campaign was a tremendous advertising campaign. The National Party caught the imagination of country people and its members did very well. I especially congratulate the member for Central Wheatbelt and Hon Wendy Duncan. I would not necessarily like to congratulate the other members of the National Party, considering that the members for Moore and Blackwood-Stirling would not be here today had it not been for the preferences of the Labor Party. The member for Central Wheatbelt and Hon Wendy Duncan had the foresight that enabled the National Party to go forward and they had the courage to take that chance. I say that not just because I am a member of the Labor Party. Everyone in the bush knows that the National Party has always been the dog that sits at the feet of the Liberal Party and that the National Party rolls over and the Liberal Party tickles its tummy. That is why when we formed government, the roads and the powerlines in the bush were bad. The National Party got nothing from the Liberal Party.

**Dr K.D. Hames:** The former Minister for Transport was a National Party member. Have you forgotten that?

**Mr P.B. WATSON:** The Deputy Premier was a member of that cabinet and should be ashamed of himself, too.

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When the election was called, the National Party said it would be independent and give its preferences to the candidates that it believed were the best. Albany and Geraldton are two perfect examples. The current member for Geraldton knows about the tremendous amount of money that the Gallop and Carpenter governments put into Geraldton and I know how much was put into Albany. Some \$300 million or \$400 million was spent in Geraldton. The National Party said it wanted to look after the regional areas, but what did it do? It decided not to give its preferences to either the member for Albany or the member for Geraldton. The National Party was interested only in getting its members elected. The Labor Party got 27.5 per cent of the vote in Albany. Not all the people in the country were fooled by the National Party. They agreed that the royalties for regions scheme was a great idea but they put in a proviso and voted for “Watto” because they knew that I had done a good job. I got 27.5 per cent of the Nationals’ preferences and the member for North West got 37 per cent. The National Party has said that it understands what the people in the country were saying. I am glad that the member for Blackwood-Stirling is here because he is probably the one member of the National Party who I would like to have a crack at the most. When he got off the plane at Albany, the pilots used to check the engine because they could hear a whining noise, but the whining noise was the member for Blackwood-Stirling!

The Labor Party completed the footbridge that links the waterfront development to the Albany central business district; upgraded Albany’s water supply, including the construction of a 25-million litre water storage tank on Mt Clarence; completed the new Albany justice complex and the great southern district police complex; completed stage 1 of the Albany ring-road; completed the new Albany Primary School; upgraded 10 Albany schools —

**Mr D.T. Redman** interjected.

**Mr P.B. WATSON:** Can I have some protection from the member for Blackwood-Stirling, Mr Speaker?

**Mr D.T. Redman** interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Order, member for Blackwood-Stirling!

**Mr P.B. WATSON:** I will say it again because obviously the member for Blackwood-Stirling would like to hear it again. We upgraded 10 Albany schools and turned them into hi-tech computer schools; completed the redevelopment of the Great Southern TAFE, including the industrial skills training centre; allocated more than \$2.3 million to the new Great Southern TAFE horticulture and conservation land management centre —

**Mr D.A. Templeman** interjected.

**Mr P.B. WATSON:** I will get to Mandurah in a minute. We invested \$1.7 million to provide housing for people living with mental illness; started work on the Albany waterfront development, and everyone in Albany can see that it is going very well; completed the new purpose-built legal aid office; refurbished the Albany Fire Station; started work on the new hospital in Denmark, but the Member for Blackwood-Stirling never mentioned that; and we started work on the new One Community, One College project in Mt Barker and on the Mt Barker bypass. If members of the National Party were really worried about the bush, they would have said that the Labor Party had been doing a very good job there and given us their preferences. What did they do instead? They gave a couple of preferences here and a couple there. They said they were independent of the Liberal Party. I went to the Albany show recently. For the past four years the National Party has had a big tent at the show. Was it there this year? No. The National Party is too busy. People asked me where the National Party was and I told them that its members were driving around Perth in their four-wheel drives or sitting in their big offices or flying in a plane up north, but they were not down there. I was at a school the other night and people asked me where the member for Blackwood-Stirling was because he was not there. He was too busy in Perth.

**Mr D.T. Redman:** Can I ask you a question?

**Mr P.B. WATSON:** No, the member cannot. I have asked for the Speaker’s protection. The member had his chance.

People told me that they read in the newspaper that I did not get the Deputy Speaker’s position. I told them that I got rolled by the Nats because they wanted to give it to a lawyer from Mt Lawley instead of a boy from the bush. The Nats have forgotten about us guys in the country. What are people saying now? The member for Central Wheatbelt and Hon Wendy Duncan were courageous to take on the National Party. There was a rumour that two members—the member for Blackwood-Stirling and the member for Wagin—rang the Liberal Party because they wanted more ministerial jobs. They were not worried about their electorates; they were worried about becoming a minister. I have been the member for Albany for eight years and I have never once put myself ahead of my constituents. I go to Denmark a bit because I have relatives there, and by gee can they talk! It is all over Denmark that some Nats, but not all of them—as I said, the member for Central Wheatbelt and Hon Wendy

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Duncan showed courage—took the cash and ran. It is great that the regions will be given royalties. I fully support the member for Central Wheatbelt and Hon Wendy Duncan if we can get services provided to the regions, because they desperately need it.

I find it funny when I sit in the chamber and listen to the maverick from Mindarie say that he wants a freeway through his electorate because people have to travel some distance to get to a hospital. A place such as Wellstead is 80 or 90 kilometres from Albany, yet the maverick from Mindarie has complained about driving for 10 or 15 minutes to a hospital and that, when people are turned away from that hospital, it takes another 10 or 15 minutes to get to another one. People who live in Wellstead or Many Peaks have to drive to a hospital over a long distance on dark roads; there are no freeway lights or anything like that. I get very disappointed when I hear city people complain that they must travel that sort of distance when people in my electorate have to travel much greater distances.

The hospital is another concern to my constituents in Albany. I have spoken to the Minister for Health about it. I do not want to make a political issue out of the Albany Regional Hospital. All I want is for that hospital to be built.

**Mr D.T. Redman** interjected.

**Mr P.B. WATSON:** I seek your protection, Mr Speaker.

**The SPEAKER:** There is a tradition that the Address-in-Reply be heard in silence. It is perhaps in the nature of the member's delivery that some members on both sides feel the urge to respond.

**Mr P.B. WATSON:** Thank you for your protection, Mr Speaker, especially when I am having a go at the National Party!

My congratulations to the National and Liberal Parties; well done. I accept the result. Labor Party members must do better, and we will do better; this time in opposition will give us a chance to regroup. It is a shame the member for Central Wheatbelt is not here. One of the National Party commitments was to provide fuel cards to country pensioners. I want to make sure that commitment is extended to disability support pensioners and carers. That is something that should be considered because people on disability pensions are just as disadvantaged as ordinary pensioners.

I refer now to Liberal Party candidate promises in Albany. The president of the Albany Junior Soccer Association was told that \$1 million would be given for ground improvements. That has not come to pass. I will chase up the sport and recreation minister about that. About 500 emails were sent to all the members of the soccer association with that promise, but the government has not yet come good. Liberal Party candidates told the president of the Albany Surf Life Saving Club it would match Labor's offer of \$550 000 for new clubrooms. I will follow-up that also. The Liberal Party also told the North Albany Senior High School P&C Association that it would match the Carpenter government's commitment of \$500 000 to upgrade the students' covered areas. That funding has also disappeared.

I refer now to the election win. The swing of primary votes to the Labor Party was 2.5 per cent, and the swing was also 2.5 per cent for the two-party preferred vote. We were written off by most pundits and commentators. When I was talking to the member for South Perth today, he said, "Watto, they said you couldn't win." They said that three times.

I will talk about all the people who helped me win. I have already referred to National Party people winning their seats on the basis of Labor Party preferences. One of my electorate staff wrote on my notes, "Members will have heard of Reagan's Democrats or Howard's battlers; well, in Albany we have Watto's Liberals!" Liberal Party supporters manned my election booths and they gave third-party endorsements. People do not always vote for a party. If we look after people in our electorate, they will look after us.

I thank Heather Marr; she did a fantastic job as returning officer on the ground in Albany and during the tense times of the recount held at the Fremantle Passenger Terminal. I appreciate her professionalism in getting the job done. Election times are tense for not only MPs but also their staff. I thank my electorate officer Julie Hooper for being a calming influence on me during the build-up to the election—she kept getting hit by the stress balls—and during the campaign proper. I thank also my campaign brains trust of Ian Bishop and Guy Wroth. We met every day about 7.30 in the morning to map out continuous campaigning from the week after the 2005 election. I say to all new members on this side of the chamber that they should not sit back and rest on their laurels. Work must start now because the next thing we know, the election will be around the corner. Together, we compiled a plan for the election campaign that we were confident would work in a very different climate from that of the 2005 election. I received help from a range of people who had not been previously involved in political campaigns. They believed in me, and each one contributed to my win in different ways. My thanks to Paul

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Lionetti, Steve and Karen Birkbeck, Merv Pegler, Purdie Gough, Jeff Woodward, Karen Rendell, Annie Roberts, my cousin John Wood, April Overington and two keen young first-time voters in Kaggan Ausma and Stash Rowe, who have showed a real passion for political campaigning and no doubt will make a bigger contribution in the future. No election campaign is complete without those dedicated people who spend hours at a polling booth handing out how-to-vote cards. Ninety-two of these fine people made sure that we were the only campaign team that manned every polling booth for the whole day—even those four booths that saw only 130 or fewer voters.

Before I finish speaking about the election, I want to talk about Alan Carpenter and Geoff Gallop. When I first came into Parliament, Geoff Gallop was the Premier. He is a tremendous man and was a great leader. Unfortunately, through illness, he had to stand down. At the time, Alan Carpenter was away on holidays overseas with his family and had to fly back to Perth, where he was elected unopposed as the Premier of Western Australia. I do not know of any other Premier or anyone else who has had to sack four ministers, people he has known very well; chief executive officers, people with young families; in what was, I think, the 18-month period he was Premier. He was under attack from people who were not preselected as well as from *The West Australian*. In the midst of all that, people said he was arrogant. When someone is constantly being attacked by people from within their party and from outside, it is very difficult to come out smiling every day and say, “Isn’t the world wonderful?” A lot of people should sit back and think about what they did to force Alan Carpenter into the position he was in when he called the election. Alan has a lovely wife and family. He stood down as leader of the Labor Party because of the pressures on his family. He could have continued as opposition leader and he would have made a fine Premier again in the future. However, the constant attacks on him by *The West Australian*, *The Sunday Times* and some of our own supporters were abhorrent. When people become public figures, they take on board things that people say about them. Most of the time only half the people in the electorate vote for us. However, it is very difficult for someone who is in a position of power in government, trying to take the state forward, when people from the same side constantly attack for their own personal reasons. They were not interested in the Labor Party; they were interested only in themselves. I applaud the work the member for Willagee did as Premier and I hope he returns to that position. We saw what happened to the member for Cottesloe; he came back from the dead and became Premier. On behalf of my constituents, I congratulate the former Premier on the great work he did. He should not shake his head; I am making this speech. He is not the Premier so I do not have to take any notice of him.

We recently held in Albany the hospice golf day. David Gee, along with John Palandri and Rod Adams, organised another successful fundraiser for the hospice, with more than \$23 000 raised in the past two years. David Gee is a good mate of mine and, over the years, we have raised a lot of money for the hospice and for equipment for the Albany Regional Hospital. David, himself, does not have the best of health. He and his wife, Robin, do tremendous work in our community. I cannot speak highly enough of them.

[Member’s time extended.]

**Mr P.B. WATSON:** It was great to get out into regional areas and see what is happening with regional sport and what needs to be done in regional areas. People involved in sport in regional areas and in the city must think differently in future. For years now, everyone has taken the same approach. They now have to think differently. We travelled from as far as Esperance to Kalumburu where some really good ideas came out from young people about how people from the community should be trained. Rather than enlisting sport and recreation people, we should be enlisting the help of young people who have the respect of the community. We were also made aware that there are not enough sporting fields in regional areas. I would like to thank the member for Kingsley, who worked for the Department of Sport and Recreation. I forgot to mention her during our campaign launch; she was a great help. I kept wondering why she was asking me how things were going in Parliament, and I found out after the election!

Albany Farmers Market won the best service to industry award at the recent WA Food Industry Association’s beverage industry award. The award recognises the contribution made to the food and beverage industry by service providers. Since its inception in 2002, the Albany Farmers Market has been bringing the community face to face with local growers and farmers who are selling their produce direct to customers. Congratulations must go to coordinator Ian Haynes, chairman Howard Shapland and the producers Andrew and Jocelyn Bathgate from Albany Fresh Potatoes; Aard and Eve Brink from Gilgie Organic Produce; Bill Watson from Albany Oceanic Shellfish; Glen and Susan Battersby from Battersby Fishing; Billawarra Dairy; Box Organics Bio Dynamic Vegetables; Bridgarts Orchard and Gourmet Preserves; CarrieLea Yabbies and Gourmet Foods; Coffee to Go; Daniel Felton, vegetable farmer; Tony and Vivienne Davis from Deer-O-Dome; Ray and Ros Gerovich from Dr Goodness Free Range Pork; Andre Roy and Amanda Noack from Eden Gate Blueberry Farm and Microgreens; Charles and Lee Reynolds from Florescence Quality Cut Flowers; Habitat Tree Farm Living Herbs; Howard and

**Extract from Hansard**

[ASSEMBLY - Tuesday, 25 November 2008]

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Mr Joe Francis; Mr Peter Watson; Speaker; Ms Alannah MacTiernan; Mr Brendon Grylls; Mr Tom Stephens; Mr John Quigley; Mr Colin Barnett; Mr Eric Ripper; Mr Troy Buswell; Acting Speaker; Mr Mark McGowan; Mr Ben Wyatt

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Bev Shapland, vegetable growers; Jeni Schuh, growing avocado and macadamia nuts; Simon and Sue Keast from King River Avocados; Kowbrup Asparagus Farm; Payneham Vale Organics; Kojonup Perfect Poultry; Steve and Anne Piacun from Piacun Honey and Olive Oil; Anthony Johnson from Rainbow Coast Shellfish; Ravenhill Dairy; Red Gum Hill Orchard; Redmond Wildflowers; Stanley Date from Royale's Bakery; Pat and Marcus Wood from Sandon Farm; Jo Plug and Steven Jackson from Spring Valley Farm; Heather Marr and Malcolm Traill from Summer House Supplies; Roger Tschabotar from the Honey Shop; Phillip and Sheelagh Marshall from Torbay Asparagus and Raspberries; Craig Tristram and Sharon Webb from True Blue Providore; Waggle Dance Honey; Jocelyn and Tom Wilkinson from Willow Creek Strawberries and Youanmi Cherries. Albany Sunday Market provides fresh fruit, fresh seafood and all fresh food, so it is a great part of the Albany culture.

I congratulate Ross Stephen who received the Chance to Shine national coach of the year award in England. The award is an international award for excellence, and Ross is the cricket coach at Shrewsbury School, but he was really happy to bring it back to Albany where he grew up and first started to play cricket.

Albany winery Oranje Tractor won the trophy for the best aged Riesling at the 2008 Qantas Wine Show of Western Australia awards with its 2003 vintage. Pam Lincoln and Murray Gomm have been growing their grapes organically for seven years and described winning the trophy as a real shot in the arm by showing that organic grown vines can produce award-winning quality wine.

Steve Hurley is the Three Gun National Open Lever Action champion after competing in the three-day event in Queensland where fellow Albany shooter, Martjin McKennal, also won a gold medal in the AA grade. After winning this award, which he has aspired to do for so long, Steve's next goal is to receive the Hall of Fame badge that recognises dedication to the sport and consistent shooting excellence.

At the West Australian Regional Small Business Awards, David and Gaynor Clarke from Cape Howe Cottages won the micro business award. They were also a finalist in this year's Telstra business awards and won the Albany Chamber of Commerce and Industry award for one to four employees.

Graeme Drew was awarded WA Local Hero of the Year at the Western Australia's Australian of the Year awards and now becomes a national finalist in the Australian of the Year awards. Graeme is the driving force of the Nathan Drew Memorial Trust for Coastal Safety and has taken the message of ocean fishing safety to school groups and the wider community. As a professional fisherman, he has also been there to help in sea search and rescue operations and on many occasions has donated his time and the use of his boat and equipment to help families continue to search for bodies long after an official search has ended. I hope that the current government will continue the Nathan Drew Trust, as the previous government did, so its important work in implementing new coastal safety systems can continue.

Sonja Johnson and her horse, Ringwould Jaguar, competed in her first Olympic games at Beijing as part of the Australian equestrian team that won a silver medal. Sonja had a deep desire to compete in the Olympics. She has had a couple of goes to win a medal. This has now come true for her after long years of hard work and frustration, which it takes to perform at an elite level. She hopes to compete again at the London Olympics but may have to do it on another mount as 18-year-old "Jag" may not be up to it in four years' time.

Trevor and Debbie Hannig from Southern Brake and Services won the category best workplace safety and health in small business award at the 2008 Work Safety Awards Western Australia. The award recognises businesses with outstanding health and safety management and is a first win of this type for a local business. Southern Brake and Services employs 14 staff including one apprentice and one special needs trainee. They entered as a result of accessing the ThinkSafe small business program last year as they felt it benefited the business and their customers by recognising the high level of importance they place on workplace safety.

Hockey-mad twin sisters, Meghan and Kathryn Slattery, were members of the Western Australian team that won the under-15 girls hockey title held in Newcastle recently. Veteran shooter Doug Attwood was a member of the Australian team who won a silver medal at the National Rifle Association Spirit of America match held in New Mexico.

**Mr D.A. Templeman** interjected.

**Mr P.B. WATSON:** Mr Speaker, may I have some protection from a member on my side of the chamber!

My constituents in Albany are very concerned that they should get the same rate for the patient assisted travel scheme as the people in Mandurah do. I am not saying that people in Mandurah should not get it, but I think that people who have to travel 450 kilometres and people who have to walk 400 metres to a railway station should not be in the same category. We must increase the amount for PATS for the regions, because my constituents

Mr Joe Francis; Mr Peter Watson; Speaker; Ms Alannah MacTiernan; Mr Brendon Grylls; Mr Tom Stephens;  
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Mr Ben Wyatt

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must travel 450 kilometres by plane, by bus or by car. People from Mandurah just hop on a little train and are in Perth in 40 minutes.

**Dr K.D. Hames:** Did you read our election campaign commitment to PATS?

**Mr P.B. WATSON:** Is it the government's intention to increase the allowance in regional areas?

**Dr K.D. Hames:** Yes, very shortly.

**Mr P.B. WATSON:** Has it happened? It is another broken promise.

Police stations are closing. I heard Hon Terry Waldron speak on the radio the other day. I remember those National Party boys when the government of the day said that it was going to close a police station. They mounted a big protest. Farmers drove their tractors up a road. I asked Hon Terry Waldron what was happening about the police stations. He said that it was a decision for the Commissioner of Police. It was a political issue when the National Party was in opposition and now that it is in government the police cuts are kept secret. That is another bit of transparency that has not emerged from the Liberal-National Party minority government.

**Mr D.A. Templeman** interjected.

**Mr P.B. WATSON:** Every time I make a speech, I have to seek protection from the member for Mandurah. It is interesting that the member for Mandurah says that he represents the regions. He is a fringe dweller and is not in the regions.

**Ms A.J.G. MacTiernan:** The Minister for Regional Development has confirmed that he is a regional dude.

**Mr P.B. WATSON:** If the member for Armadale wants to speak she should get on her feet.

The three per cent cut that must fall on the police causes me great concern in Albany with the PCYC. Terry Eaton has been the policeman of the year at the Albany PCYC, and he does a tremendous job. A lot of pressure was put on him because when the PCYC first started we could not get him any extra staff. We worked for probably 12 or 18 months putting pressure on my government to get him some extra staff. We got them, and now we are told there will be a three per cent cut across the board. The Commissioner of Police has said that the cut will not affect front-line police but the bagpipe players, the bands and the PCYCs. To my mind PCYCs are front-line because they get young children off the streets, teach them the right thing to do and teach them discipline. I am attending a fundraiser at the PCYC in a couple of weeks. The Commissioner of Police will be bringing his band to Albany. I might turn his music off until he agrees not to carry out the cuts! We cannot afford to lose the PCYC at Albany. All the young kids go there during their school holidays. They go not only for sport but also to mix music and other things that get them off the streets. They have role models, such as Terry Eaton, who do a tremendous job there.

**Dr K.D. Hames:** And Mr and Mrs Smith!

**Mr P.B. WATSON:** I am not worried about Mr and Mrs Smith; I am worried about my electorate. I can understand that the Deputy Premier would stick up for the member for Mandurah because he is from the same area, but I am looking after the people of Albany.

A book entitled *Dinosaurs on the Page* was launched in Albany recently. Local author Dianne Wolfer had gathered some stories from the seniors in the town. I will rattle off some of their names. I hope there is a Smith here. Ray George, Joan Blight, Don Hamilton, Edith Webb, Steve Baesjou, Astra Warren, Wendy Wood, Eileen Hodgson, John Genoni—via Peg—Mollie Smith, George Riches, Peg Vickers, Joyce Shiner, Betty Kane, Jann Hood, June Bailey, Ruth Sheppard, Katie McAllister and Imogen Crump all spent some time with Diane Wolfer to contribute to this book. It includes stories about the early days in Albany, with titles such as “By the Riverbank”, “An Army Drape Coat” and “Quarantine Station”. This is a history of Albany. When I first got into government, I wanted local governments to get people to do things like that. When I first doorknocked, I met a lady who was 94 years of age. When I asked her whether she was living on her own, she said, “Of course I am; why not?” I asked her what she did when she was younger. She told me that she and her friends used to go down to the railway station on Saturday afternoons when the trains came in. They would run along the tracks, and the smoke from the trains would blow up their skirts and lift up their bloomers. That was their entertainment on a Saturday afternoon. They are simple things. I have been down there a couple of times and it has done nothing for me! We are in danger of losing that history.

*Amendment to Motion*

**Mr P.B. WATSON:** Since we are worried about regional infrastructure, I move —  
That the following words be added to the motion —

Mr Joe Francis; Mr Peter Watson; Speaker; Ms Alannah MacTiernan; Mr Brendon Grylls; Mr Tom Stephens;  
Mr John Quigley; Mr Colin Barnett; Mr Eric Ripper; Mr Troy Buswell; Acting Speaker; Mr Mark McGowan;  
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but regret to inform His Excellency that the government has failed to commit to many important infrastructure, community and housing projects that would greatly benefit the people of Western Australia

**MS A.J.G. MacTIERNAN (Armadale)** [4.02 pm]: I support the amendment moved by my colleague the member for Albany.

**Mr P.B. Watson** interjected.

**Ms A.J.G. MacTIERNAN**: I was not interjecting; I was assisting. It is important to recognise the member for Albany's great achievement in retaining his seat at the last election. I had the joy to be in Albany with the member over the past couple of days to see, even though he is not in government, how highly regarded he is by members of his community and his absolute determination to keep on representing them and their interests. As he said, he will ensure that the commitments to the Albany Regional Hospital that were made during the last election campaign are honoured. We are very pleased to see the building of the Albany entertainment complex on the foreshore, a Labor initiative, taking place. We want to ensure that the marina and the associated foreshore development goes ahead as a quality development, not a second-rate development, given the commitment, planning and money that we had allocated towards them.

Today I want to focus on some of the projects that concern us. We will not be focusing on regional projects, although we recognise that if the royalties to regions policy is honoured, the projects that we committed to will be met. We do have some concern about the lack of strategy that has accompanied some of the pledges in the royalties to regions policy. We do not think that the Minister for Regional Development should carry around a sackful of lollies on his back, sprinkling them across the regional areas of Western Australia. This is very important money and it must be spent strategically. It should be spent on projects that would not otherwise be funded, and not be spent on projects that the private sector and the federal government have already quite clearly said that they can deliver. We also want to ensure that the big road projects upon which we entered into an agreement with the federal Labor government in 2007 to deliver in the Pilbara also go ahead.

Today I want to focus on our concern about some projects in the metropolitan area and where they are going. We understand that an incoming government has an entitlement to review the projects of the previous government, provided that it has not inferred that it had commitments to those projects during the election campaign. We are very concerned that certain projects that are very much needed by our community will be abandoned or delayed due to the desire to recast them in their own image and likeness, even though there is no obvious need to do that.

**Dr K.D. Hames**: Like Princess Margaret Hospital.

**Ms A.J.G. MacTIERNAN**: From what I hear, the Minister for Health is coming around to a project that is very similar to ours.

Many members want to make a contribution today so I will not go on at length, but I want to talk about a few projects. We made a \$300 million-plus commitment to the waterfront project over the long term. We had embarked on very detailed planning and environmental studies that were needed to underpin that project. I seek clarification from the government as to what it proposes to do in relation to the completion of those studies. The government has said that it will give priority to the Northbridge Link rather than to the waterfront development. It is within its rights to do that but it is crucially important that we not interrupt the planning and environmental studies that are currently underway for the waterfront project. I do not want a commitment from the government that it spends the money developing the civil works, but a commitment to ensure that that planning process does not stall but that it proceeds so that future governments can make the decision regarding whether to go ahead with this project. We have seen an enormous amount of stop-starting with the waterfront over the past decades. This project was highly acclaimed and is critically important for the future of Perth, even if the government does not want to give it priority. Nevertheless, the important environmental monitoring that is currently underway, the planning work and the work that has been done by the steering committee continue. I seek some clarification on that matter.

The government has said that it will leave the city centre development project in abeyance and move to the Northbridge Link. I am very curious about what is happening with the Northbridge Link project. The new master plan was signed off earlier this year. The original master plan was subject to a number of peer review processes. A new plan was then developed and was formally adopted by the East Perth Redevelopment Authority and signed off by the previous government. Indeed, we were about to start work and we had money allocated in the budget to begin work on stage 1 by the end of this year. We would have started site clearing and work on the subdivisions fronting Wellington Street. That, of course, would have allowed the construction of the entertainment centre. Not only would that have released a hotel site to allow for a critical development in Perth, which is short of hotels, but also necessary work would have commenced to allow the rather derelict Perth

Mr Joe Francis; Mr Peter Watson; Speaker; Ms Alannah MacTiernan; Mr Brendon Grylls; Mr Tom Stephens;  
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Entertainment Centre site to be cleared and redeveloped. As far as I can see, all of this work is in abeyance. Although the government says that it has a commitment to the Northbridge Link and that it is putting the waterfront project behind so that it can give priority to the Northbridge Link project, no activity is in fact taking place on the Northbridge Link and it is in fact further behind. There is not even a commitment to the current master plan.

Mr Deputy Speaker, I am sure you would be very interested in this issue, and perhaps you could help us get some clarification about what the government is proposing. Rather than an aggressive prosecution of the case for the Northbridge Link, the project in fact appears to be undergoing delay. The very deliverable parts of the project in the following year, such as the freeing up of a hotel site for development and marketing, which would allow Channel Seven and Ace Properties to redevelop that derelict site, are now in abeyance. Indeed, it appears to the opposition that what we have here are delays, not decisions. We need some clarification.

Several members interjected.

**Ms A.J.G. MacTIERNAN:** Do those guys opposite actually have any ideas? Do they have any capacity to put anything in place?

**Dr K.D. Hames** interjected.

**Ms A.J.G. MacTIERNAN:** It is for the government to choose its priorities, but when it has made that choice of its priorities it must actually do something to advance them. What I am saying is that rather than advancing the Northbridge Link project, the government's decision to support it is actually putting it behind. The government is therefore supporting the project but in fact delaying delivering on it.

**Dr K.D. Hames:** What about Peel hospital and others?

**Ms A.J.G. MacTIERNAN:** Has the government done them already? Has it built them already?

**Dr K.D. Hames:** Compared to what you did in your eight years.

**Ms A.J.G. MacTIERNAN:** We built some 16 regional hospitals during the time we were in government, and we would certainly compare our record with this government's any day.

I hope the government will give us some clarification on this issue. Is the supposed support for the Northbridge Link moving the project ahead, or will the government not proceed at all with the project until it gets federal government support? These are questions that we need answered.

I also seek some clarification on what the government is proposing to do with Reid Highway and Alexander Drive. The members for West Swan and Nollamara are particularly interested in this issue, and I am sure the member for Morley is interested in this project. We made a commitment to allocate \$72 million to this project earlier this year and had negotiated a federal government contribution to this very important project. It is the number one black spot in the metropolitan area and we certainly want confirmation that the project is going ahead.

I will raise one further issue. It is an issue in my electorate that concerns me. Bearing in mind the questions that were asked in Parliament today about schools in Cottesloe and the whiteboard approach to funding for schools, I am very concerned about whether there will in fact be an upgrade of schools in my electorate, particularly for specific needs at Cecil Andrews Senior High School. We had obtained a commitment —

**Mr B.J. Grylls:** Was that a priority three months ago?

**Ms A.J.G. MacTIERNAN:** It was a priority three months ago and a commitment was made; however, we had made commitments generally to schools in my electorate.

**Dr K.D. Hames:** I bet you did!

**Ms A.J.G. MacTIERNAN:** This is an area of considerable social need. In the Australian early development index work that was done, Armadale was one of the six areas in Western Australia that was highlighted as needing special attention. We had made a commitment to those schools, and I very much want a response from the government on how it proposes to distribute funding to schools. Will it be based purely on schools that are in conservative electorates or will it be based on the way we assessed the projects? Indeed, the former Minister for Education and Training demonstrated time and again, by listing the schools, that we had not given preference to schools in our own electorates but had genuinely based the projects right across the state without fear or favour. I have a very great concern when I see phrases like "schools in Cottesloe" and "blanket funding", and knowing the schools that are proposed for the funding, that schools in electorates such as my seat of Armadale, where there is grave social need, will not get a fair allocation of the infrastructure dollar. I will certainly be pursuing this issue.

Mr Joe Francis; Mr Peter Watson; Speaker; Ms Alannah MacTiernan; Mr Brendon Grylls; Mr Tom Stephens;  
Mr John Quigley; Mr Colin Barnett; Mr Eric Ripper; Mr Troy Buswell; Acting Speaker; Mr Mark McGowan;  
Mr Ben Wyatt

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Members on this side of the house will want some fair and rational explanation of how funds, both for building new infrastructure and upgrading existing infrastructure, will be distributed.

The opposition acknowledges that an incoming government has the right to look at projects and to reconsider and re-establish new priorities. However, we are concerned that the government has a grave lack of strategy; that the government has come in almost by surprise and has done none of the work of developing a rational, coherent and strategic approach to the provision of projects; and that there will be a high degree of pork-barrelling and indeed a desire to change projects for the sake of changing them, not because they need changing but because the government wants to put its own image and likeness on those projects. I therefore particularly seek some answers about the waterfront proposal and whether it is the government's intention to allow the planning and environmental process to continue, albeit we understand that the government is not proposing to commit to funding the capital for that project. Secondly, we want to know what the government is doing with the Northbridge Link project; whether the government's commitment is totally contingent on the federal government; and whether the government will proceed with the current master plan. For the Premier, who has just come into the chamber, our concern is that stages 1 and 2 of the Northbridge Link project would have been underway by the end of this year if we had continued in government. We had an agreed master plan and would have proceeded with stages 1 and 2. I now gather that there is not even a commitment to the current master plan, which means that we will need to go back to the drawing board. I also want some clarification on the proposal for Reid Highway and Alexander Drive—it was not an election commitment—and whether the commitment remains for an allocation of funding made by our government prior to the election. Finally, I seek some clarification about how the government will be dispensing funds for capital upgrades and new capital infrastructure in schools, and about what processes the government will be putting in place to ensure that these funds are spread equitably and on the basis of genuine need, rather than on the basis of the electoral needs of the current regime. We have raised a significant number of questions.

**MR B.J. GRYLLS (Central Wheatbelt — Minister for Regional Development)** [4.20 pm]: The member for Albany has moved that the following words be added to the motion —

but regret to inform His Excellency that the government has failed to commit to many important infrastructure, community and housing projects that would greatly benefit the people of Western Australia

When I heard that the member for Armadale had risen to her feet, I thought I had better get back into the chamber and listen to what she was saying, because the member for Armadale, being the shadow Minister for Regional Development, would clearly be putting on the agenda a heap of regional issues that she is concerned would not be funded. However, I think that what the member for Armadale was doing in her contribution to this debate was lobbying the new Leader of the Opposition to have her portfolio changed. I say that because the member for Armadale did not make one mention of regional infrastructure —

**Ms A.J.G. MacTiernan:** I mentioned Albany hospital, roads in the Pilbara —

**Mr B.J. GRYLLS:** The member talked about planning for the Perth waterfront, the Northbridge Link, Reid Highway and Alexander Drive, and Armadale schools. The member did not make one mention of important regional infrastructure.

Several members interjected.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order, members!

**Mr B.J. GRYLLS:** That just shows that the reason the member for Armadale now finds herself sitting on that side of the Parliament, rather than in this seat here where she used to sit, is that she is focused only on Perth projects. All those projects that the member has talked about are very important. However, I would have thought that when making this contribution to the Address-in-Reply to the Governor's speech at the opening of Parliament, the member for Armadale would have made some mention of her portfolio areas. Perhaps the member for Pilbara, the member for North West or the member for Kimberley should be lobbying for the position of shadow Minister for Regional Development. I know that the member for Pilbara has some very clear ideas about how we should get royalties for regions right. I am very happy for those ideas to be put to me, because I am trying to make sure that royalties for regions is a project that delivers bipartisan benefits to all regions in Western Australia. I made it very clear in question time today that the map that the member for Armadale was referring to was used only to illustrate the disadvantages that country residents have when it comes to representation in the Parliament, and that royalties for regions —

**Ms A.J.G. MacTiernan:** So are you saying that those areas that are inside the red part of the map are not disadvantaged? Why did you put them in with the metropolitan area?

Mr Joe Francis; Mr Peter Watson; Speaker; Ms Alannah MacTiernan; Mr Brendon Grylls; Mr Tom Stephens;  
Mr John Quigley; Mr Colin Barnett; Mr Eric Ripper; Mr Troy Buswell; Acting Speaker; Mr Mark McGowan;  
Mr Ben Wyatt

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**Mr B.J. GRYLLS:** We were pointing out that there are 48 seats on the coastal strip between Perth and Margaret River, and only 11 for the remainder of the state. It was pretty clear. We had television advertising that made it clear.

**Ms A.J.G. MacTiernan:** If that area from Perth to Margaret River was regional, why did you lump those areas in with the metropolitan area?

**Mr B.J. GRYLLS:** We made it very clear that the true regions—the remote regions of Western Australia—had no representation under the current model. The member for Pilbara made it clear, the member for Kimberley made it clear —

**Ms A.J.G. MacTiernan:** Oh! So we have regions and true regions! Is that right?

**Mr B.J. GRYLLS:** I would like to suggest that maybe Mandurah is a fairly urbanised community and maybe Bunbury is a fairly urbanised community. I do not think anyone would actually deny that.

**Ms A.J.G. MacTiernan:** And they will get royalties for regions?

**Mr B.J. GRYLLS:** Yes. May I just say as well that we certainly have not ruled out that the metropolitan area will benefit from royalties for regions projects. There may be issues in the metropolitan area that are linked closely to —

Several members interjected.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order, members!

**Mr B.J. GRYLLS:** I will give an example. The Royal Agricultural Society of Western Australia has put forward a proposal to build markets at the Claremont Showgrounds to give regional producers a market precinct in those showgrounds. I think that proposal has some real merit. When the Royal Agricultural Society gets to the stage of being able to present that proposal, I look forward to having that discussion.

**Ms A.J.G. MacTiernan:** We need a new agricultural hall in Kelmscott. Would that be eligible?

**Mr B.J. GRYLLS:** The member for Armadale should write to me! The only thing the member has written to me on so far is daylight saving—which, after being the greatest champion of daylight saving ever, the member has now decided she does not like any more!

**Ms A.J.G. MacTiernan:** I love it when it works!

**Mr B.J. GRYLLS:** The member knows that she is in serious trouble!

Can I just suggest that the member's focus on the boundaries of royalties for regions does not have much relevance in the way that we are rolling out the program. We believe—and I thought the member would believe as well—that all of Western Australia will benefit from having strong and vibrant regional communities. Does the member agree with that?

**Ms A.J.G. MacTiernan:** Absolutely—100 per cent!

**Mr B.J. GRYLLS:** Exactly right.

**Ms A.J.G. MacTiernan:** We are just trying to understand who will get the money.

**Mr B.J. GRYLLS:** All of Western Australia will benefit. The member will see, as we make our announcements, that all the areas covered by the regional development commissions will benefit. There will be other programs that obviously will be more specific. We are doing a project in the Pilbara to alleviate the chronic shortage of housing and the ridiculously high rentals there. Obviously, only the Pilbara will benefit from that, because if it is a Pilbara project, it is a Pilbara project.

**Ms A.J.G. MacTiernan:** I just want to ask you about that Pilbara housing stuff, because today I was really surprised by your comments. Although I thank you for your compliments about Revolution Road, were you not aware that we were doing an identical project in Karratha and that we had those same builders going up to Karratha?

**Mr B.J. GRYLLS:** The point I was making was that, in the past four years, rents have skyrocketed, and the availability of both land and housing has been excessively restricted, so perhaps that should have happened four years ago rather than just now.

**Ms A.J.G. MacTiernan:** Do you know how many lots we released in Karratha?

**Mr B.J. GRYLLS:** I know that rents are still over \$1 500 a week. Are rents in Armadale \$1 500 a week?

**Ms A.J.G. MacTiernan:** Of course they are not.

**Extract from Hansard**

[ASSEMBLY - Tuesday, 25 November 2008]

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Mr Joe Francis; Mr Peter Watson; Speaker; Ms Alannah MacTiernan; Mr Brendon Grylls; Mr Tom Stephens; Mr John Quigley; Mr Colin Barnett; Mr Eric Ripper; Mr Troy Buswell; Acting Speaker; Mr Mark McGowan; Mr Ben Wyatt

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**Mr B.J. GRYLLS:** What would happen to Armadale if rents were \$1 500 a week? What would happen to the community of Armadale—for which the member for Armadale is the local member—if rents were \$1 500 a week? The member for Pilbara has to deal with a community in which the average rent is over \$1 000 a week. We will make that an absolute priority. I would have thought that the shadow Minister for Regional Development, in making her contribution to this debate today, would have mentioned the Pilbara housing initiative, which she clearly has knowledge of—

**Ms A.J.G. MacTiernan:** That is our next motion! You are pre-empting it!

**Mr B.J. GRYLLS:** I hope that will be the case, because the member for Armadale is the shadow Minister for Regional Development, and she talked about the Perth waterfront, the Northbridge Link, Reid Highway and Armadale schools. I do not think there is much substance to this amendment. I think the member for Albany may have been playing a bit of petty politics in moving this amendment. I certainly do not think any of the arguments put forward by the shadow Minister for Regional Development add to the debate in this Parliament today.

**MR T.G. STEPHENS (Pilbara) [4.28 pm]:** I want to point out a characteristic of this government. This government seems to have some of the features of those Indian goddesses that we see, because it has multiple heads and waving arms, but it makes contradictory speeches! The comments that have been made by the Minister for Regional Development in the bush seem to be completely at odds with the comments that have been made by the Treasurer—on behalf of the same government—when it comes to the needs of regional Western Australia.

I want to refer to some answers given today to questions that I asked of the Treasurer about infrastructure projects in the bush. Members should listen to this. The former Minister for Planning and Infrastructure will be horrified by this, because if we are to believe the answers being delivered by the Treasurer to this house, in contradiction to the answers being delivered to this house and to the people of Western Australia by the Minister for Regional Development, it is clear that some of that former minister's hard work is being systematically undone by those members opposite. This is in reference to, for instance, the port of Port Hedland. My question to the Treasurer was whether he could confirm that the complete allocation of \$225 million would stay in place to ensure that the Port Hedland Port Authority could complete the construction of the Utah berth project within the original time lines. I might have thought that there would be a long answer from the Treasurer, but the simple answer was no. After all the hard work by the former minister, the member for Armadale, to secure those funds for the expansion of the goose that is laying the golden eggs, the Treasurer says that he will not guarantee that those funds will flow.

**Mr T.R. Buswell:** Scope the answer accordingly.

**Mr T.G. STEPHENS:** So there are some tricky words here. Is the Treasurer waiting to hear from the Leader of the National Party as to whether he is allowed to give the money to the Port Hedland Port Authority? Put aside the scope of the question—

**Mr T.R. Buswell:** Read the question again.

**Mr T.G. STEPHENS:** All right, I might have got the question wrong, but does the Treasurer have a smart answer or a truthful answer? Will the Port Hedland Port Authority be able to expand to meet the demands on that port, as is envisaged by the budget allocations made by the previous government? Is the answer yes or no?

**Mr T.R. Buswell:** You've already asked the question.

**Mr T.G. STEPHENS:** Yes, and the answer was no; the government is not going to do it.

**Mr T.R. Buswell:** That is not what the question asked. It asked whether there was any guarantee.

**Mr T.G. STEPHENS:** So the Treasurer will not guarantee it? What does that mean? Does he have to wait for the National Party before he can guarantee it?

**Mr T.R. Buswell:** It means that times are changing.

**Mr T.G. STEPHENS:** Does that mean the port will get the money or not? This is only a minor industry we are talking about here! It is only the iron ore industry! Will the funds be made available to see that port expand to meet the demands of industry to deliver iron ore to customers around the globe? The Treasurer's answer was no. He might have a tricky answer there, but we are dealing with a rather significant issue.

**Mr T.R. Buswell:** Has anything changed in the forecasts for the iron ore industry lately?

**Mr T.G. STEPHENS:** Yes, but forecasts come and go, and we will see—

**Mr T.R. Buswell:** Do they?

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**Mr T.G. STEPHENS:** Is the Treasurer basically saying that he will not allocate the funds to the Port Hedland Port Authority that would see the orderly expansion of that port?

**Mr T.R. Buswell:** No, I am not basically saying that.

**Mr T.G. STEPHENS:** What is the Treasurer basically saying then? It is a one word answer: no. The Treasury is too tricky by half. It is reasonable for the people of Western Australia and the iron ore industry to know the answer.

**Mr C.J. Barnett:** Do you agree with the berth allocation at Port Hedland?

**Mr T.G. STEPHENS:** I think that the Port Hedland Port Authority's expansion plans make a hell of a lot of sense. If the Premier wants to know the answer to that, I would allocate the gas project there as well. I think we would get a good piece of gas infrastructure on that Port Hedland Port Authority land, and the Boodarie estate, which the Premier knows reasonably well, to accommodate the orderly expansion of the north west gas industry in ways that would not damage the environmental interests of the state and the north west.

**Mr C.J. Barnett:** Don't you support LNG in the Kimberley?

**Mr T.G. STEPHENS:** I support a sensible expansion of the Port Hedland Port Authority and the delivery into that region —

**Mr C.J. Barnett:** Who is giving ambiguous answers now?

**Mr T.G. STEPHENS:** If the Premier consults the Port Hedland Port Authority, he will see that an expansion plan available for rollout is now placed at risk by the answers delivered to this house by the Treasurer. Another question was answered today by the same Treasurer. It reads —

- (1) Will the Treasurer guarantee the \$12 million in state funds allocated in the 08/09 State Budget for the joint Federal/State Government project to:
  - (a) upgrade the Great Northern Highway for the upgrade of the intersections at Pinga and Wallwork Road;
  - (b) the construction of a 4<sup>th</sup> lane from Wallwork to the Port Hedland turnoff;
  - (c) the completion of overall works on the Broome turnoff; and
  - (d) including an improved left turn off lane towards South Hedland to make two lanes to turn off into Wallwork Road and the Shell roadhouse?

Does the member for Armadale remember the hard work she did as minister?

**Ms A.J.G. MacTiernan:** Absolutely; as I said in my contribution, I presumed that the government was proceeding with these projects.

**Mr T.G. STEPHENS:** Does the member know what the Treasurer's answer was? It reads —

- (1)
  - (a) No.
  - (b) No.
  - (c) No.
  - (d) No.
- (2) No.

That is the Treasurer's response to the infrastructure needs of the Pilbara region and the Pilbara port. Is the government planning to export some uranium through some of these ports? Will it not require orderly expansion of these ports, or will we mix the yellowcake into the busy traffic lanes of the road system in Port Hedland?

**Mr C.J. Barnett:** You're the member for the region. Do you support uranium mining?

**Mr T.G. STEPHENS:** I am asking the questions at the moment, and the Premier can give the answers.

**Ms A.J.G. MacTiernan:** This is not just the forward estimates; this is the actual budget allocation. Are these projects stopping? Are they not going ahead?

**Mr T.G. STEPHENS:** That is what I mean about this government. It is only dealing with major industry here, and major companies, and we have opposite this Indian goddess, with a range of speakers making different statements at different times, waving their multiple arms around. The government does not have a consistent line. Do people in the bush have to believe Treasurer 1 or Treasurer 2? The government must get its act

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together—the resource sector of Western Australia is a reasonably significant industry—as to whether there should be an expansion of the Port Hedland port to meet the needs of the resources sector.

I am still waiting for a number of answers, but I will go to another answer that I received today.

**Mr T.R. Buswell:** When did you ask them?

**Mr T.G. STEPHENS:** I asked these within a couple of days of the house coming back. I think I put these on notice on opening day, and the answers were delivered today.

**Mr T.R. Buswell:** Is that a long time or a short time?

**Mr T.G. STEPHENS:** It is not the quality of answer that I would have liked. I would have liked the right answer, not the wrong answer. If the Treasurer had delayed the answer and given me a better reply, I would have been happier, but he gave me a prompt answer and just said no. “Help” is surely the cry of the people of the Pilbara and the people of this state. What sort of chaos are we about to descend into with the Treasurer running riot and putting at risk incredibly important projects like the port expansion and the access roads into the Port Hedland port?

**Ms A.J.G. MacTiernan:** These were projects, you will remember, that the previous government negotiated with the federal government. The Howard government was not interested.

**Mr T.G. STEPHENS:** There is some good news from the Treasurer. This is in reference to whether the three per cent efficiency dividend will apply to the port authority. The answer reads —

It is currently not intended that the 3% efficiency dividend will apply to Public Non Financial Corporations.

God knows what will happen if the intention changes, but at the moment —

**Mr B.J. Grylls:** What would be your intention?

**Mr T.G. STEPHENS:** My intention would be that that efficiency dividend would not apply to the needs of major deliverers of infrastructure programs across the Pilbara region, and that should be the same now.

**Mr T.R. Buswell:** I can see why you never became a minister when you swapped houses.

**Mr T.G. STEPHENS:** The Treasurer’s problem is that he is a minister and he should not be, and everybody on his side of the house knows that.

I support this amendment. This is a great opportunity for those with an interest in regional Western Australia to support this amendment and to carry this rather embarrassing message to the Governor. It would not be the first time that a chamber has delivered an embarrassing message like this. When we had the numbers in the upper house, we used to successfully move amendments like this, and then we would go and read to the Governor these embarrassing rebukes to the government of the day. For anyone with an interest in regional Western Australia, this is an opportunity to remind the government of the importance of infrastructure in regional Western Australia.

**Mr B.J. Grylls:** The rebuke has been delivered from regional Western Australia. That is why you’re over there.

**Mr T.G. STEPHENS:** I am happy for the 27 members on this side to join the National Party on that side any time.

**Ms A.J.G. MacTiernan:** Twenty-eight.

**Mr T.G. STEPHENS:** Yes—28. Me and 27 others. I am happy for our 28 members to join the four Nationals any time they are ready. I say to the Leader of the National Party that if we continue to get answers like this from the Treasurer, the Leader of the National Party should be inviting us over there to join him on the government benches, and dispatching the Treasurer back to this side of the house, where he should be, with answers like this. In fact, he should not even be on this side of the house as far as I am concerned; it would be even better if he were outside the house. We can arrange that. A simple motion of the house with a majority vote can achieve that result.

Major pieces of infrastructure across regional Western Australia need the support of government. In the Pilbara, for instance, Hedland Senior High School requires ongoing upgrade and maintenance. However, that is not on the government’s list. It did not fall into the list that includes schools in Cottesloe. Instead, Hedland Senior High School, which is an important feature of that town and is absolutely critical to the successful attraction and

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retention of the community and people within the region, is not on the government's list for a major upgrade or maintenance.

**Dr K.D. Hames:** Was it on the list in the eight years when you were in government?

**Mr T.G. STEPHENS:** Not only was it on the list, but also we delivered significant upgrades to it and we had scheduled more. It received good quality upgrades by the member for Willagee when he was the Minister for Education and Training, and when the member for Rockingham was the Minister for Education and Training, he added some \$7 million to the program that was either over and above or at least equal to the amount provided by the member for Willagee. An additional major upgrade was needed to bring that high school at least up to the standard of Shenton College or another needy institution in Cottesloe. These are not just minor needs of the Pilbara or the north west. Infrastructure requires the attention and focus of government. This matter should not be left to the current Treasurer, who gave an answer and then said that he did not really mean it. I think that was the gist of his interjection. He did not really mean that funds were being cut off from the Port Hedland Port Authority. He asked me to go back to the question and find a clever way of extracting the information about the allocation of funds by the government. It is reasonable for the iron ore industry to expect to be told whether or not it will get the support of the government throughout the existing 2008-09 budget. More than that, we are entitled to know how the forward estimates will protect the interests of regional Western Australia beyond the state budget.

It is the government's ambition to force state agencies to deliver a three per cent efficiency dividend. That is playing havoc with agencies that already have huge pressures placed upon them. The Pilbara Development Commission operates under high rental prices to which the Leader of the National Party has referred.

**Mr B.J. Grylls:** Are you suggesting that the commissions were previously chronically underfunded? That is a major problem. They cannot afford to keep people in towns because of the rental costs.

**Mr T.G. STEPHENS:** What we inherited when we were in government and maintained while we were in government was a failed business model for the delivery of housing for Port Hedland and Karratha. We adopted from the Court government the concept of selling off government housing into the private rental market as though the market could deliver in Karratha and Port Hedland to meet the orderly needs of government. That is absolutely impossible. However, that business model, which was championed by Treasury, persuaded the Court government —

**Mr T.R. Buswell:** Has public housing stock been sold off in South Hedland?

**Mr T.G. STEPHENS:** There is a fantastic new program underway.

Several members interjected.

**Mr T.G. STEPHENS:** The Deputy Premier has done some good things. The New Living program sensibly thins out the public housing stock and involves selling off high pockets of welfare accommodation in parts of South Hedland that need to be thinned out. The New Living program is ideally positioned to tackle the challenges of South Hedland. It will thin out the public housing stock and secure a better amenity in South Hedland. I urge the Minister for Housing and Works to not tamper with the good initiatives put in place by his predecessors in his portfolio, including the current Deputy Premier and me.

**Mr T.R. Buswell:** You just said that you were opposed to the sale of public housing stock.

**Mr T.G. STEPHENS:** I am opposed to the policy of flogging off government-owned accommodation, which is what happened under the Court government. It flogged off government-owned accommodation for its employees as a matter of policy under a business case that failed. It never put back in place an acquisition and construction program for government employees, which is needed in towns such as Port Hedland.

**Mr C.J. Barnett:** That is not true. Do your research.

**Mr T.G. STEPHENS:** It is absolutely true.

Several members interjected.

**Mr T.G. STEPHENS:** How did I go in my efforts to get the business case overhauled and overturned? I regret to say that I was not overly successful. I was nevertheless able to get a response from the government and it allocated some funds to secure additional housing across the Pilbara. However, more is desperately needed. I say to the Leader of the National Party, his colleagues and anyone else who is listening that despite what the Leader of the National Party is saying, and on the basis of the answers that have been provided in this chamber, the infrastructure needs of the Pilbara and of regional Western Australia unfortunately appear to be at risk. They are being put at risk not necessarily by the Leader of the National Party but by a far more important member in this

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chamber—the Treasurer. I urge members to keep an eye on him. If he does what he says he will do in the answers that he has provided to the questions asked of him in the house, there is good cause for us to join the Leader of the National Party in the formation of a government that will actually deliver to the people of Western Australia a single speech that we all mean; that is, we will really deliver and improve the conditions of regional Western Australia in ways that the Leader of the National Party's colleagues cannot even dream of.

**MR J.R. QUIGLEY (Mindarie)** [4.47 pm]: I support the amendment. I am very concerned about at least two important infrastructure projects in the electorate of Mindarie. I will list them because I know that the member for Wanneroo supports me in both of these areas, as he is a councillor for the City of Wanneroo. My electorate falls within the City of Wanneroo and I understand that he supports these projects. The member for Wanneroo is a constituent of mine who lives at the northern end of my electorate. The two projects to which I will refer are the rail line extension to Butler and Brighton. I have made a colourful and demonstrative speech on that issue already. However, because the Treasurer and the Premier are here, I will address the issue a little more calmly today. I will address the very serious impact it might have upon young people looking for housing and upon the state's budget.

The Minister for Housing and Works is currently looking for a joint venturer to develop with LandCorp the Alkimos area to build a city with a population of between 50 000 and 60 000 people. Western Australia's largest urban land bank is contained throughout the northern reaches of my electorate. That land is unrealisable as a public asset without public transport and the extension of the railway. The total project is estimated to cost \$137 million. I plead with the Premier and the Treasurer to complete the rail line through to Butler, bearing in mind, as the member for Wanneroo knows, that work has been undertaken and the cutting is complete. The state has invested money in buying the land. All the subdivisions were done with the City of Wanneroo and the developers, including LandCorp, the state corporate entity, predicated on the fact that a railhead would be delivered into Butler and Brighton. I made an error when I addressed this chamber last time by saying that the land was being divided into 350 square metre allotments, 40 kilometres north of Perth. The member for Esperance should think about that—350 square metres, 40 kilometres north of Perth. When I recently discussed it with Nigel Satterley, he corrected me. Some of those allotments are in fact 205 square metres with a seven and a half metre frontage. As I was describing them, they are really cottage blocks clustered around the clearing for the station. As I am sure the Minister for Housing and Works is aware, a lot of public housing stock is in that area. It was intended that a lot more public housing stock be built in that area, as the member for Wanneroo knows.

The government can get the public transport monkey off its back quite easily. In each of the three elections that I have been involved in, there has been one chant from my party: the Liberals have never laid down a metre of metropolitan rail track. Obviously, one cannot lay a metre to nowhere; it must have some purpose. As I have pointed out on a previous occasion, the Butler rail track is only five kilometres long. Of that five kilometres, 2.4 kilometres have been built through to the marshalling yards, which leaves 2.6 kilometres. By building this final 2.6 kilometres of rail to Butler, the government will keep faith with all the customers of LandCorp who bought those small allotments predicated on the fact that rail was going to be delivered there.

I refer members to the second-term Court government, which announced in 1996 the intended extension of the rail from Currambine through to Clarkson. Such were the lead times that it was unable to build it. Rather than getting onto the case in the first year, that government left it and could not build that section of rail within its term of government. The government changed hands and once again the Liberal government maintained its record of never building a metre of metropolitan rail track. There is a compelling state economic need and benefit to be derived from completing these five lousy kilometres, which, in reality, is only 2.6 kilometres long. It will allow the Treasurer, the member for Vasse, and his agencies to market that vast tract of land. What will happen at the moment, given LandCorp is looking for a joint venture partner to develop Alkimos? How can LandCorp approach in good faith a joint venturer, whether it be Peet Ltd or Satterley Property Group? I like Satterley; that company's developments in Brighton and Butler have been first rate. I do not know whether either of them will participate in the Alkimos joint venture. LandCorp is looking for a joint venturer, but how will it keep faith with a joint venture partner when the last time it undertook a massive land development out there, it promised that public transport would be available to enable the developer to sell the pocket-handkerchief sized allotments? Public transport would maximise the return on the state's asset if 350 square metre allotments are sold that will be further than 45 kilometres from the CBD. Due to the low price of the land, the people who are buying this land, of course, are the first home buyers, the very people who need the railhead out there. It is a long way north of Joondalup. Members from the south think of Joondalup as being in the north but, as the member for Wanneroo can vouch, Joondalup is a long way south of Butler. Without public transport, it will be a devil of a situation for young families trying to access education and health services in Joondalup.

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**Dr G.G. Jacobs:** Will they use the train?

**Mr J.R. QUIGLEY:** The member for Eyre probably saw the photograph of me hanging out my thank-you signs at the Clarkson station, which is only five kilometres to the south of Butler. That station is packed by a quarter to seven in the morning, when there is not a parking bay to be found. It will be packed. The land asset out there cannot be sold without rail being built. That is the tragedy. That is the state's biggest metropolitan land bank. That was the first infrastructure I wanted to talk about.

The second infrastructure in my electorate I wish to talk about, which is now at risk—the member for Wanneroo has been nodding in assent to what I have been saying, not in support of this amendment, about the need to allow this land to be subdivided and sold. That is why the City of Wanneroo, upon which the member sits as a councillor, has itself passed urgent motions calling for its completion. Although the member for Wanneroo must adopt one position within this chamber, I appreciate his support of rail to Butler when he sits as a councillor on the City of Wanneroo. The other matter, of course, impacts directly on the member for Wanneroo's electorate as it does on all my constituents in the northern half of my electorate. I refer to Two Rocks Police Station, which is approximately 32 kilometres north of Clarkson. It is a small station that is so run-down that a police car cannot be left there overnight. When the last shift finishes, the officers must take the police van to Clarkson Police Station and lock it up because it is too much of a risk to leave it at Two Rocks Police Station. The member for Wanneroo attended a public meeting at Two Rocks Community Centre about six weeks ago. Western Australia Police wanted to publicly address the fact that it was reviewing the future of Two Rocks Police Station because it was looking at policing it from other areas. The line put initially by WA Police at that meeting was that every police car is in fact a police station, and a caller need only ring 13 14 44 to be switched through to the nearest car, which would soon be at the caller's house. At that meeting, I borrowed the mayor's phone and rang the number to see what happened when it was rung from the public meeting. The assistant commissioner was talking at the time. A voice said, "Good afternoon, Constable Bloggs, Gingin Police Station". I said, "Good afternoon constable, the assistant commissioner would like to speak to you." After I passed over the phone, the assistant commissioner asked, "Why am I speaking to Gingin, Mr Quigley?" I said, "While here at this public meeting in Two Rocks, we have rung the number you gave us to see what the response time would be, and the nearest police station I was switched through to was Gingin." The people at Two Rocks are very concerned about the prospect of Two Rocks Police Station closing. As members may have noticed, I was speaking today with the WA Police Union of Workers and the hierarchy of the police department.

**Mr A.J. Simpson** interjected.

**Mr J.R. QUIGLEY:** I know; they were here today. The member might make light of that, but they are. The police themselves are very concerned to maintain a police presence in the Yanchep-Two Rocks area. The extension of Marmion Avenue has just opened. For members who are not familiar with the area, Marmion Avenue starts at Karrinyup Road, Karrinyup, and now runs through to the roundabout at Yanchep Beach. As the member for Wanneroo understands, Two Rocks is at the extremity of the gazetted metropolitan area, so it is nearly regional. As the member for Wanneroo knows, the land there is now becoming very desirable with the extension of Marmion Avenue and the Capricorn joint venture now beginning to market the land. There is no way the area can survive with a law-abiding community without a police presence at either Yanchep or Two Rocks. I am glad that the Minister for Police has re-entered the chamber at this point, because I raised this with the Minister for Police last week. The Capricorn joint venturers have allocated eight hectares that they are prepared to cede to the state of Western Australia. I hope the Treasurer is listening, because that means no money from the regions and no money from Treasury. The joint venturers are prepared to give to the state eight hectares of land at Yanchep for a justice precinct. I realise that there is not currently a need for courts, lockup facilities etc, but there is a need for a police station. The question is: does the government pour good money after bad to try to save the Two Rocks Police Station, which is beyond its use-by date and hence the police review, or does the government communicate with the Commissioner of Police and ask him to please accept the joint venturers' free offer—there is no better bargain than a free offer—of eight hectares for a justice precinct upon which can be established a police station? It might be established as a small police station and grow, but the infrastructure is badly needed there.

I said I would raise two matters, but there is another on the list. We can go back in history, because the inaction on this may have spread over two or three different governments. Yanchep District High School, as the member for Wanneroo knows, falls below par on the benchmark set by the Department of Education and Training for high schools. It seems to have been ignored because it is not in the regions or in the metropolitan area. However, now that Marmion Avenue has opened up and now that the joint venture has built the road for the community between Butler and Yanchep, the land is starting to sell, and people are turning up there. The member for Wanneroo could corroborate that, at the recent land sale, people were camped and sleeping at the joint venture

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sales office and lining up for the first tranche of blocks to be sold after the opening of the road. Young families are moving there in the knowledge that Yanchep District High School is approximately 22 kilometres north of Mindarie—it might be 21 kilometres—and Two Rocks is about 14 kilometres beyond that. Yanchep District High School cannot service those families. Although there was no plan before, there was an identified need. I am not ducking that.

**Mr R.F. Johnson:** Under your government.

**Mr J.R. QUIGLEY:** It was also under the one before that.

**Dr G.G. Jacobs:** You are talking about the tyranny of distance. Come down to my electorate and I will show you some distance!

**Mr J.R. QUIGLEY:** I am sure the member can. If he comes to my electorate, I can show him people and not sheep. Anyway, all these young families are moving into this area.

**Mr R.F. Johnson:** Is it your area?

**Mr J.R. QUIGLEY:** It is the area I advocate for and in which the member for Wanneroo chooses to live because it is such a fine area. I heard the Premier's crack about asking whether I live there. The Minister for Education lives in Peppermint Grove and she would not be seen dead in Floreat. As I have said, I visit Mindarie every day. The Premier invited everyone to the opening of the freeway and then did not attend the function. I might go to Mindarie every day, but the Premier cannot show his face in Mindarie at the moment because people there are so angry about what has happened with the railway. I have been wound up by my friend the member for Hillarys because we are dealing with the economic imperative of putting the railway through to Butler so that LandCorp can proceed with its marketing plans for the land at Butler and north of Butler.

For those three reasons I most earnestly and fervently support this amendment, which is for a railway to Butler, the urgent need to upgrade the police facilities in the Yanchep-Two Rocks area and the urgent need to bring Yanchep District High School buildings up to an acceptable standard.

**MR C.J. BARNETT (Cottesloe — Premier)** [5.08 pm]: I will not surprise members when I say that I do not agree with this amendment. This is probably day 62 of the Liberal-National government. We will, as a good government, with proper consideration, progressively work through all the major capital items, both those commitments that the previous government foreshadowed in its forward estimates and obviously our own election commitments, and other issues that might come to pass. Parliament is a place in which members should get up and advocate projects, as the member for Mindarie has done, whether it be schools, rail extensions, highways or whatever else. That is our job. May I say that just in the past 10 days the new government has committed to the Muchea saleyards, which is a project that had stalled yet again. Construction will start on it in the new year and be completed in January 2010.

In the past two weeks, on a visit to Kalgoorlie with the minister and local member, a decision was made to start work immediately on the redevelopment of the Kalgoorlie Regional Hospital, which is a project that had been promised for eight years. We can all remember the former member for Kalgoorlie repeatedly making speeches about it. Members should therefore not be too self-righteous when they come into this place and talk about projects. It is the role of any government to go through and look responsibly at all projects. The Treasurer has primacy in the carriage of that. There are issues with capital costs, with many of the costs for the projects appearing to be significantly greater than may have been foreshadowed. We also have the reality that the world, the national and the state economic scenes have changed dramatically in the past two months. The state is experiencing a fairly rapid revenue decline, particularly in property tax revenues. We will also probably see a downward movement in royalty income. We must adjust to that. We cannot spend money that we do not have.

**Mr E.S. Ripper:** Do you think it will have an impact on costs as well?

**Mr C.J. BARNETT:** It may have some impact, but the revenue impact is immediate and great. There has been debate about the sports stadium. The government has not made a decision about the stadium. There has been debate about hospital projects. We have confirmed that the Fiona Stanley Hospital project is going ahead in its full form, with no modification and no downsizing of it. We have said publicly that we give priority to a new children's hospital, which I am sure all members would agree is long overdue. Yes, all governments must make choices. I have said on a number of occasions and in the media that if it comes down to facing a choice between one project and another, hospital projects will come first and in particular a children's hospital will come first. I do not resile from that or apologise for it.

The former Minister for Planning and Infrastructure talked about city projects. I had a briefing with the Lord Mayor and senior staff from the City of Perth yesterday. We spoke about a number of projects, including the

**Extract from Hansard**

[ASSEMBLY - Tuesday, 25 November 2008]

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Mr Joe Francis; Mr Peter Watson; Speaker; Ms Alannah MacTiernan; Mr Brendon Grylls; Mr Tom Stephens; Mr John Quigley; Mr Colin Barnett; Mr Eric Ripper; Mr Troy Buswell; Acting Speaker; Mr Mark McGowan; Mr Ben Wyatt

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Northbridge Link project, the foreshore development, a project that the East Perth Redevelopment Authority is promoting to redevelop the eastern section near the Causeway, a proposal to make improvements in West Perth and so on. They are all good projects and they all have merit. It is quite proper to reconsider them. Members opposite made the assertion that the new government cannot dare to reconsider the Northbridge Link or look at the way it is structured. I am sorry, but we can. I had one look at the plans and I could not see large areas of public open space. That did not impress me, so I questioned that. We are committed to progressing that project. I nominated it as our highest priority in city projects. Hopefully, if the federal government comes to the party under Infrastructure Australia, the railway will be sunk through the City of Perth, after 100 years. That will provide enormous potential.

To the best of my knowledge, this is day 62 of the new government. We will systematically work through projects and make decisions. By all means, members should raise issues in this place, but they should not assert that the government has failed to commit. Comments were made by the member for Pilbara about Port Hedland harbour. There are a lot of issues surrounding the Port Hedland harbour. We cannot allocate berths that do not exist; we cannot overallocate berths. They are the issues that we are trying to work out.

I do not support this amendment. Members should sit back and watch this space. We will continue to make decisions and we will continue to announce major capital works programs. There will be a new budget and a new set of forward estimates in May, which will answer most of members' questions.

**MR E.S. RIPPER (Belmont — Leader of the Opposition)** [5.11 pm]: I support the amendment. We are seeing the slow death of one of the greatest, most visionary infrastructure projects that this state has ever seen; that is, the infrastructure program that the incoming government inherited from the previous Labor government. There are a couple of reasons we suspect that we are seeing the slow death of that great program. One is that we seem to have two Treasurers in this strange partnership government. We have the Treasurer Treasurer promising us three rounds of belt-tightening, looking to be the Treasurer that conservative financial commentators will like. Meanwhile, the Leader of the National Party is going around three-quarters of the state raising expectations and promising buckets of money for the regions. In their own way both are threats to the infrastructure program. Treasurer 1, the notional Treasurer, is a threat to the infrastructure program because of his promised three rounds of belt-tightening, his review of the capital works program and the doubt that he has been casting on infrastructure project after infrastructure project. Treasurer 2, the Leader of the National Party, is more of a threat to every metropolitan electorate and community and its projects because of the way he threatens to completely overwhelm the government with absurdly raised expectations in the regions for the amount of money that can be delivered in a responsible fashion.

We would expect that the Premier might arbitrate between Treasurer 1 and Treasurer 2, but he has contributed to the same doubt about the forward capital works program. He has said publicly in *The West Australian* that forward estimates are only guesstimates. He has also said publicly in *The West Australian* that projects in the forward estimates have no special status. Members should think about that. There are \$26 billion worth of projects in the budget and forward estimates that the Premier says have no special status. How many of those projects with no special status are in members' electorates? The Premier went on to confirm that impression by saying that he is not committed to every single dollar in Labor's forward estimates. He means that he is not committed to any single dollar in Labor's forward estimates. That means that every project in that \$26 billion program has a big question mark and a big cloud of doubt over it. Some of the projects have concrete on the ground, so they will be proceeding.

My view is that there is a \$20 billion vacuum in the capital works program. There are \$20 billion worth of projects on ice—\$20 billion worth of projects whose future is uncertain and unclear because of the way in which this government is handling the issue and because of the dishonesty of its election campaign given what it is saying in government. In the months leading up to the election campaign, did members of the Liberal Party ever say that there was any doubt about any of the capital works projects that Labor was proposing? No; they supported all of them. Then they went out to the community and said, "You can have more with the Liberal Party." Once ensconced on the Treasury benches, albeit tenuously, they now say that everything is under review and that projects in the forward estimates have no special status and do not count because they are only guesstimates.

The Liberal Party has confirmed its approach by the way in which it deals with emerging issues. Western Power went to the Economic Regulation Authority of Western Australia with its proposed access arrangement. The Premier has described the proposed capital works program put forward by Western Power to the ERA as extraordinarily aggressive. That was the Premier's description of that Western Power capital works program. What is the government saying to the community? Is the government saying to the community that it will not take the professional advice of Western Power about the investment needs of the electricity network?

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**Mr T.R. Buswell:** Did you always?

**Mr E.S. RIPPER:** The former Premier made a commitment to this house, in answer to opposition objections, saying that if the ERA approved a Western Power access arrangement, the government would meet the capital requirements of the investment program for that access arrangement. Can the incoming government, the minority Liberal government, make that same statement about Western Power's capital works program? If it will not support the capital works program that Western Power has put forward or at least what the ERA approves, what trouble is it storing up for the future in terms of electricity blackouts, bushfires and unreliable, poor quality power? During our period in government we had to deal with the former minister's underinvestment in the electricity network. Why did we have to pour billions of dollars into the electricity network? Because of underinvestment during the previous period of coalition government when the Premier was the Minister for Energy. Judging by the Premier's comments, the government is set to do that again. After our period of government, when we poured hundreds of millions of dollars into the electricity network every year and budgeted \$1.2 billion for this financial year, after that massive program of investment, the government is set, judging by the Premier's comments, to underinvest in the electricity network again.

I want to talk briefly about a number of projects. It is very important to invest in the regions. It is also important to invest in our capital city, because it is an important part of our competitiveness as a state. If we want to attract skilled workers and promote biotechnology and information technology, science and new industries, people with the required skills have to be willing to migrate to this place. They will come to this place only if the amenities it offers are competitive. Investing in Perth is part of investing in Western Australia. We had a magnificent program of new attractions for Perth that I think are now in doubt.

What is the situation with the Museum?

**Mr B.S. Wyatt:** Under review.

**Mr E.S. RIPPER:** Yes, it is under review. I predict that this government will junk the Museum. I predict that there will not be a Museum project by the time Treasurer 1, the vandal, concludes his review of the capital works program. What are we getting with the stadium? We are getting proposals for a substandard refurbishment instead of a new stadium. There will be no facilities for soccer or rugby. What are we getting with the waterfront development? Either no development or a small town, no vision, micro development instead of the amenities that we need from a big waterfront development that will at last connect this city to its major asset, the river.

When I think about Western Power's capital works program, I worry about a couple of our proposals that might not be funded. For example, will the new transmission line to Albany to support the Grange Resources iron ore project go ahead now? While everything is under review and the Treasurer and the Premier will not make commitments, I have to say that we are perfectly entitled to go to the people of Albany and say that it does not look as though they will get their transmission line because the Treasurer and the Premier will not commit to it. The Treasurer can stop me going to the people of Albany and saying that there is doubt over that transmission line if the Treasurer hops up now and says that the money is there and the government will build that transmission line. If the Treasurer stands now and says, "Yes, that transmission line is going to be built", I know that you, Mr Acting Speaker (Mr P.B. Watson), will take that message back to Albany.

Several members interjected.

**Mr E.S. RIPPER:** What about the transmission line to Geraldton? I am sure the member for Geraldton would not want us to go to Geraldton and say that that transmission line is in doubt, but we cannot give him an assurance that we will not do that unless we hear from the Treasurer in today's debate that the transmission line to Geraldton in the forward estimates will be built, rather than that it is subject to the review.

Many members of this place are interested in schools as well. In our program 15 schools were under construction and 21 were promised. Every school has a question mark over it. Every new school has a cloud over it. Every member must be worried about his or her school program while there is this lack of capacity from the government to provide any certainty about the contents of the budget and the forward estimates. It may be, because of the election promise for schools in Cottesloe, that the whiteboard for Cottesloe will say that those schools will get some consideration but that no other school will get the same consideration.

I will now refer to one or two other projects. One project that members must be very concerned about is the new Midland hospital. With the focus of the incoming government on Royal Perth Hospital, I predict that the Midland hospital will be the victim of a review of the capital works program. I would like the Treasurer to say right now that the Midland hospital is still in the program, that it will go ahead and that it will be built. The Premier has said that Fiona Stanley Hospital is okay, and also that Princess Margaret Hospital for Children is okay.

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**Mr C.J. Barnett:** Don't you support that?

**Mr E.S. RIPPER:** I do support a new children's hospital, but I am worried that the Liberal Party promised to do it under a public-private partnership and proposed to account for that off the books.

**Mr T.R. Buswell:** Who said that?

**Mr E.S. RIPPER:** The Treasurer said that when he was questioned by the *Financial Review* in the concluding days of the election campaign.

**Mr T.R. Buswell:** Read *Hansard*.

**Mr E.S. RIPPER:** When we looked at the Treasurer's costings, we saw that he had allocated \$8 million for an \$800 million project. We therefore knew what the Treasurer was doing. Now he would have been told by Treasury that he must account for that public-private partnership on the books in a proper fashion. That means that he must find \$800 million in official state debt to cover the Premier's commitment for Princess Margaret Hospital for Children.

However, there is a project in my electorate about which I am very concerned—that is, the \$225 million Great Eastern Highway project. It is an important project for the electorate of Belmont and an important project for the city and the state. Great Eastern Highway is the entrance to Perth for many visitors. It is blighted at the moment. A lot of private sector investment will be unleashed and the redevelopment of properties along Great Eastern Highway will take place if and when that project is built.

As soon as the Premier said that projects in the forward estimates were just guesstimates and as soon as he said that they had no special status, I became alarmed about the future of the Great Eastern Highway project. I therefore wrote to the Minister for Transport. I simply asked, in the light of the Premier's comments in that day's edition of *The West Australian* that he was not committed to every single dollar that Labor had in its forward estimates, whether the minister would please provide an assurance that the upgrade of Great Eastern Highway would proceed. I have had no answer to that letter, which was written on 24 October. The Minister for Transport could easily have responded by now to say that the Great Eastern Highway project would proceed.

Several members interjected.

**Mr E.S. RIPPER:** Therefore, all the electricity transmission lines, museums, stadiums, waterfront developments, hospitals, schools and police stations are under a cloud, all on ice, all uncertain and all unclear because the new government, contrary to what it said in the election campaign, is now reviewing them. In the months before the election campaign the now government supported every single one of them. The government is now not displaying the honesty and integrity that the Premier promised in the election campaign. It is not as though there is a lack of inherited capacity to deal with these projects. We spent \$30 billion on capital works in seven and a half years in government and we left state debt \$900 million lower than it was when we were elected. We therefore left the incoming government with a substantial capacity to invest in infrastructure. This is the time when there should be investment in infrastructure to support the economy, to support the prosperity that Western Australians want in the future and to support the service delivery that Western Australians want and need into the future.

The government can clear up some of these doubts, some of this confusion and some of this uncertainty by making statements right now about some of these projects—for example, about the transmission lines to Albany and Geraldton and about the investment needed to support the Economic Regulation Authority's approved—when it is approved—access arrangement for Western Power. I support the amendment.

**MR T.R. BUSWELL (Vasse — Treasurer)** [5.26 pm]: I will make some broad, overarching comments in response. If I am Treasurer 1 and the member for Central Wheatbelt is Treasurer 2, perhaps the former Treasurer is Treasurer Yesterday. However, the interesting issue is that although it is true that the former Treasurer left the incoming government with a significant capital works program moving forward, it is also true that he left the incoming government with some significant financial challenges. It is those financial challenges that we are now dealing with.

**Mr E.S. Ripper:** Welcome to government! Every month, every day in government there are financial challenges. Don't whinge!

**Mr T.R. BUSWELL:** I know that it is busy being Leader of the Opposition, but I do not know whether he has noticed since the election until today that a few things have happened around the world: international financial turmoil, massive flow-on impacts into the real economy in Australia and massive flow-on impacts into the real economies of our trading partners. All of these factors, as the Leader of the Opposition—the former Treasurer—

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knows, have impacted on this state's finances. Let us focus on what the former Treasurer left us with. He left us with a state heading towards record debt levels, with a debt-to-revenue ratio rapidly approaching the AAA credit rating limit and a state with a surplus that had almost evaporated based on the budget figures of May this year over the years of the forward estimates.

**Mr E.S. Ripper:** What about the pre-election financial projection statement? Had the surplus almost evaporated in that statement? Why do you go back to one statement earlier?

**Mr T.R. BUSWELL:** What the former Treasurer left us with was a train on the road to financial ruination.

**Mr E.S. Ripper:** Stellar financial management, said the ratings agencies. It's just not credible.

**Mr T.R. BUSWELL:** What has come along has been a collapse in the state's revenue streams due to the impact on the state of the global financial crisis, and we have to deal with that. I must tell the former Treasurer this: it has been exacerbated by his inability to rein in recurrent spending. He will see that tomorrow when the first quarter results are released and he will see it again on 18 December, give or take a day or two, when the *Mid-year Review of Public Sector Finances* is released—not on 27 December as it was last year while everybody was on holiday. It will be produced as early as possible so that it can be properly scrutinised and not hidden away in Christmas wrappers. It will be released for everybody to look at on or near 18 December, and the former Treasurer will see the challenges we face. The former Treasurer stood in this place today and listed all the major infrastructure projects in the budget that he had committed to. They are under review. I will say no more today than that they are under review and that the information will be made public at the time the *Mid-year Review* is released and as we cycle into the budget process next year.

**Mr E.S. Ripper:** So, is the transmission line to Albany going to go ahead?

**Mr T.R. BUSWELL:** I have already given the Leader of the Opposition an answer.

**Mr E.S. Ripper:** What's the answer?

**Mr T.R. BUSWELL:** It is under review.

**Mr E.S. Ripper:** Is the transmission line to Geraldton under review too?

**Mr T.R. BUSWELL:** Does the Leader of the Opposition know who he reminds me of? I was at an ABC Shop, with my son, and I was looking for some DVDs, and I saw one there that reminded me of the Leader of the Opposition and his deputy. It was called *Captain Pugwash*, and it was about Captain Pugwash and his faithful offside, Roger the cabin boy! There they were! They spent all their time in government robbing the taxpayers of this state and delivering nothing, yet they now have the gall to sit there —

Several members interjected.

**The ACTING SPEAKER:** Order! I am sure the member will be speaking to the motion.

**Mr T.R. BUSWELL:** Mr Acting Speaker —

**The ACTING SPEAKER:** Order! Does the member want me to say it again?

**Mr T.R. BUSWELL:** No, Mr Acting Speaker. I am very clear in hearing your instruction.

**Mr E.S. Ripper:** He is telling you not to be a bully! That is what he is telling you! He is telling you not to bully people!

**Mr T.R. BUSWELL:** You had the gall to sit through this motion, Pugwash —

**The ACTING SPEAKER:** Order! The member will address other members by their electorate or their position, please.

**Mr T.R. BUSWELL:** The member for Belmont. I am dealing with the motion, because the motion is premised on a nonsense. The fact is that we are now having to recast capital spending in this state to account for the thing that members opposite pretend has not happened—a major change in the international economic environment, which is having a sustained impact on the state's finances. What have we done? We are doing the sorts of things the former government never thought of doing. We have decided that the capital works program in this state needs to be reviewed. The main reason it needs to be reviewed is that the former government failed to build anything—with the exception of a couple of projects—on time and on budget. Therefore, we have a capital works program that was never delivered in a timely way and that was never delivered in a cost effective way. We now need to understand the cost implications of that moving forward. We also need to understand how we will be able to fund that capital works program in this time of rapidly changing economic circumstances. It is not easy, and members opposite know that, yet they stand here and refuse to prioritise the projects that they would

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possibly defer or that they would consider for re-scoping, because they do not have to do it anymore. Members opposite have left us in a very difficult situation. They wasted the single most significant financial growth period in the history of this state, and all they were able to deliver was a recurrent spending program that is going through the roof. Members opposite will see the evidence of that as we cope with the financial management of this state moving toward. We will not be negligent as members opposite were. That is why we have set up the economic audit. The economic audit is a fundamental part of this process. I could list project after project that has blown out in cost, but I will not. Our response is to say that the economic audit has been set up to assess those projects and to make sure that the projects that we commit to in a proper and timely way are projects that we can afford and that we can deliver according to the commitments that we will give. We will not be the sort of government that promises projects only to see the time lines pushed out and the costs doubled and tripled because of mismanagement.

I know that the Leader of the House is keen for me to wind up, but I want to address a couple of comments that were made by the member for Pilbara about housing. The member for Pilbara was happy to criticise this government by saying we have failed to deliver on housing. I have taken the time to look at the housing statistics in Western Australia. They are very interesting. They show clearly that when the member for Pilbara was the Minister for Housing, the stock of public housing in Western Australia went down. From the way he spoke, we would have thought it had gone through the roof! It went down! When the member for Pilbara was in charge of public housing in Western Australia, the housing stock collapsed, yet he now stands in this place and criticises us! In 2001, when the member for Pilbara was the Minister for Housing, he set up the state housing strategy and said that would solve all the problems that were confronting people in Western Australia who were seeking affordable and appropriate housing. It was never delivered! He failed as a minister, because despite multi-billion-dollar budget surpluses year after year, the state housing stock remained static, yet he dares to criticise us! The former minister has absolutely no credibility when he attempts to criticise us.

Members opposite have also talked about the three per cent efficiency dividend. It is a difficult job for government to implement the three per cent efficiency dividend, but we have to do it. The three per cent efficiency dividend was a tool introduced by the former Treasurer. He has often talked about it in the media. His shadow Treasurer was asked what he would do if he had to implement the three per cent efficiency dividend, and he said, "Oh, well, one per cent of the three per cent ...!" He could not answer that question, because he was happy to introduce that efficiency dividend, but we are the government that now has to drive that change through.

**Mr E.S. Ripper:** So what is your answer? What will you do? What is your answer? Give us the answer right now!

**Mr T.R. BUSWELL:** We have committed to a three per cent efficiency dividend, and we are delivering on it.

**Mr E.S. Ripper:** What will you do? You criticised him. What is your answer right now? What will you do?

**Mr T.R. BUSWELL:** Recurrent spending growth in the departments will be cut by three per cent. Simple.

**Mr E.S. Ripper:** What will you do? You cannot answer! You cannot say!

**Mr T.R. BUSWELL:** It is happening. It is being delivered. We have delivered on the difficult decisions that the former government left us with.

**Mr E.S. Ripper:** What are you doing? How are you delivering? What decisions have you made?

**Mr T.R. BUSWELL:** The economic audit and the capital infrastructure audit. I want to close by highlighting again the capital infrastructure audit. Every project in Western Australia worth over \$20 million will be subject to the capital infrastructure audit. Some projects will have to be re-scoped, some projects will be deferred, and some projects will go ahead. At the end of the day, I will give members this guarantee: we will expend the funds that are available to the state to deliver the infrastructure projects—no more and no less. In doing so, we will make sure that we underpin a sound set of state financials moving forward.

**The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr P.B. Watson):** Order, members! I want to bring up a point. It is a policy of the house that when members leave the chamber or come into the chamber, they acknowledge the Chair. It is not the new members who are not doing this; it is some of the older members. That is something that is done in the house, and it is a point of order. If any members do not observe that rule in the future, I will call them to order. Those members who are sitting in other members' seats and making comments will also be called to order.

**MR M. McGOWAN (Rockingham) [5.38 pm]:** I am pleased that the Treasurer has spoken before me on this amendment. I recall that when the Treasurer was in opposition, he sat in different seats on this side during those

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four turbulent years for him. He sat there and there and there; he moved around a lot. I recall also that when the Treasurer was in opposition, he berated the then government for the size of its budget surplus and the fact that we were ensuring that there was good financial management in this state. The best definition of good financial management is the provision of a hefty surplus. The now Treasurer berated us on that score regularly in speech after speech, yet now he is saying that we were bad financial managers! When the Treasurer was sitting on this side of the house, he was saying that we were stealing money from people and were doing all sorts of wrong things by providing a hefty surplus, yet now he is saying that we were bad financial managers! As Richard Court used to say, we cannot have it both ways. In my view, we were good financial managers, and that fact needs to be acknowledged.

The Treasurer has also just said that the capital works program needs to be reviewed. He has said that his government will review everything in the capital works program before it proceeds with any of the projects that he deems were Labor projects. The Treasurer throws into that grouping things like the Perth foreshore redevelopment. In fact, that is not under review; it has been cancelled by the Premier. He also throws into that grouping the Perth stadium, which is now under threat from the new Premier. Earlier this year, on 20 January, the now Treasurer and then Leader of the Opposition made a number of comments on these issues. He said —

“We (the Liberals) want to have Perth as one of those cities that, when you’re a young person finishing university somewhere around the world, you think ... I want to go to Perth and WA.

“But what do the (State) Government do?

“They vacillate over the stadium, they talk about developing the foreshore, and they do nothing.

“There’s no focus on using the good economic times that we’re enjoying, to put in place a platform to take the state forward.”

He said he would take the approach of former Victorian premier Jeff Kennett which saw projects “rammed” through bureaucracy and red tape.

That is what he said earlier this year, and now he is saying that not only is the government not ramming things through; it is reviewing everything. The foreshore project, talked about for decades in the city, not only is not being rammed through, but also is not even in the review; it is out the door, according to the new Premier. The present Treasurer berated the then government about these things a few months ago, and now will not even put them into place, and the government has diminished the prospects of a decent stadium in Western Australia. I have many quotes by the present Treasurer on these subjects, but that is a taste of what he had to say all those months ago.

I want to talk about a few things. One of the quality aspects of the previous government was that it had a theme of building Western Australia. With the good economic times that Western Australia was enjoying, we would try to provide decent infrastructure into the future. Therefore, the previous government had a record infrastructure program. On a per capita basis, that infrastructure program was far better than that of any other state in Australia. The only state that came close to Western Australia was Queensland, but Western Australia was far better. We wanted to provide a firm basis for business investment in the future. That is why we commenced the state infrastructure strategy. In doing so, we looked at what had been successful in other states. Queensland has put in place a similar approach and in fact it has now completed its state infrastructure strategies. I have the strategy documents here. They outline to business where the ports will be, where the electricity will be supplied, and where the community infrastructure such as schools and hospitals will be located. It deals with roads and rail services catering for not only industry but also the development of the south east metropolitan corner of Queensland. Business now knows where to invest, and knows what the state government is planning into the future. As a government, we did the same thing.

**Mr T.R. Buswell:** When did you start it?

**Mr M. McGOWAN:** In 2006. That state infrastructure strategy is now sitting on the desk of the new Premier. As he said earlier, it is day 62 of his term in office. It has been sitting on his desk for some considerable time. I suggest to the new Premier and the new Treasurer that it is time to release that strategy. A lot of work went into it, and there has been a lot of commitment from very significant people in the private sector in this state. It is time that that strategy was released so that business can have that confidence in the future, as it does in other states.

The other issue I wanted to talk about is the foreshore project. A few short months ago the opposition was totally supportive of the foreshore project. Indeed, the present Treasurer was saying that it was something that needed to happen in Western Australia. There is a template for this project, again in Queensland. I refer to the South Bank

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of the Brisbane River on the old expo site. This is an example of the way in which programs such as this can work, and how they can attract private sector investment. The idea is to draw people from the city down to the river. An unfortunate freeway was built through Brisbane in the 1970s, cutting off access to the river. I understand the motivations for the construction of that freeway and at the time it made some sense. In hindsight, getting people to access the water is the sensible thing to do. We have that opportunity in Western Australia, and I do not think it would be any more difficult than it was in Brisbane. The South Bank project is a very successful strategy that we should be copying. We should invest in that kind of positive infrastructure, as the previous government intended to do. It will make a material difference in the long term for the city, and benefit people the length and breadth of the state. I know it is a project in the central business district, but like South Bank it is the sort of project that people from all over the state will come and visit. It is very capricious of the Premier to say just a few weeks after being elected that the foreshore project is gone. It is petulant and capricious.

**Mr C.J. Barnett:** Who has ruled it out?

**Mr M. McGOWAN:** The Premier has.

**Mr C.J. Barnett:** We have delayed it.

**Mr M. McGOWAN:** It might happen in 20 or 30 years, but I am pretty sure the Premier will not be around then.

**Mr C.J. Barnett:** I said that the Northbridge Link is a priority.

**Mr M. McGOWAN:** It is possible to walk and chew gum at the same time. The government can do more than one project at once. I think the foreshore project is more important, but I think they are both important. The foreshore project gives a historic opportunity to link the city with the river, as has been done in other cities around Australia with incredible success. For the government to favour one over the other is irresponsible. The previous government intended to do both; it had the capacity to get out there and do both at once. If we look around the city, we see the magnificent new railway stations, the Perth Arena and the performing arts complex. If anyone was spending money on infrastructure, it was the former government.

**Mr T.R. Buswell:** You could have accommodated 10 families with the money you spent on your office.

**Mr M. McGOWAN:** Does the member for Vasse want me to be nasty back?

**Mr T.R. Buswell:** No, please don't.

**Mr M. McGOWAN:** That is enough, then. I can tell the house what the women in my office said when they found out that the Treasurer was assuming my office. Does he want me to tell him what they said?

**Mr T.R. Buswell:** You can tell me.

**Mr M. McGOWAN:** How about the Treasurer cutting out the bullying and nastiness towards people? I can tell the house what they said if he wants. I could say a few things about him if I wanted to be nasty.

The amendment specifically talks about the issue of housing. One of the previous government's policies was to implement the shared equity scheme, which was very successful. It was designed to ensure that people were able to access their first homes. Although house prices in Western Australia have come down of late, there is no doubt that access to a first home is a very important issue for people in Western Australia. The previous government cut stamp duty to zero for people purchasing houses for up to \$500 000. It was a big effort designed to enable people to own their own homes. I know there has been much talk about public housing, and I know that that is a very significant issue, but the government also wanted to make sure that people could own their own homes. In effect, we cut stamp duty to zero for first home buyers. We also put in place the first shared equity scheme, which was designed to allow people to get into their first homes with some government equity. It was amazingly successful, and in January this year the present Treasurer said—he said a lot back in January —

... the housing issue is the single biggest issue confronting our State going forward ... if people can't afford to come and live here then we're in a lot of trouble moving forward.

He said that it was the biggest issue in the state, but the first thing he did on becoming Treasurer was to cut the First Start shared equity scheme—the best thing, according to the property industry, for keeping the housing industry moving forward and getting people into their first homes.

**Mr T.R. Buswell:** What was your plan?

**Mr M. McGOWAN:** The Treasurer said one thing in January and another thing on coming into office. He said in January how the foreshore project was incredibly important, but then he ruled it out once he came into office. He said that housing is the biggest issue in the state, but he cut the First Start shared equity scheme.

Mr Joe Francis; Mr Peter Watson; Speaker; Ms Alannah MacTiernan; Mr Brendon Grylls; Mr Tom Stephens;  
Mr John Quigley; Mr Colin Barnett; Mr Eric Ripper; Mr Troy Buswell; Acting Speaker; Mr Mark McGowan;  
Mr Ben Wyatt

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**Mr T.R. Buswell:** I haven't cut it; it's still there.

**Mr M. McGOWAN:** He changed the criteria and made it so much harder for people.

**Mr T.R. Buswell:** So what?

**Mr M. McGOWAN:** Did the Treasurer say "so what"?

**Mr T.R. Buswell:** Tell me this: how many people have now been pre-approved in the shared equity scheme, and how many people would have been approved on your previous criteria?

**Mr M. McGOWAN:** It must be understood that the previous government put the scheme in place. There was \$300 million in the first tranche of funding, and hundreds, perhaps thousands, of people were beneficiaries of that. The Treasurer said, "So what?" about those people.

**Mr T.R. Buswell:** I did not.

**Mr M. McGOWAN:** Every member heard the Treasurer say it. I suppose that they are only first home buyers who live in the outer suburbs. They do not live in Shenton Park but in the outer suburbs. They are ordinary folk who go to work each day and work hard. They are the sorts of people that the Treasurer would not care much about. I have letters from many people who are very upset about the destruction of this scheme, which helped ordinary people.

**Mr T.R. Buswell:** What would you have done?

**Mr M. McGOWAN:** We created it and it was very effective. The Treasurer has gutted it and that will be on his record.

The last thing on the provision of decent infrastructure that I want to talk about is the stadium. We went through a long process concerning the stadium, which is necessary in the provision of infrastructure of that size. We set up the stadium task force and it delivered a very substantial report that provides a decent analysis. I recall that the report cost \$1.5 million. The task force found that the best outcome was to have a single stadium in Western Australia. I looked at the stadium arrangements in other places, particularly in Brisbane. It has a two-stadium solution, which so far as I can tell appears to be the solution that the new government is heading towards. The Gabba and Suncorp Stadium are small stadiums and allow different sports to be played at the different venues. Therefore, fewer people are able to attend a sporting event. That solution is not an optimum solution for providing a venue that can cater for other events. We looked at that proposal and came up with the single-stadium option.

The point I will conclude on is that the most viable financial option for the state is the provision of a single stadium. A two-stadium solution would be more expensive. It is another of the Premier's whimsical, petulant and capricious acts to say that the government is doing away with our recommendation after studying and examining the options. Page 56 of the stadium report clearly demonstrates that the two-stadium solution is either just as or more expensive than the single-stadium solution that we would have put in place. The single-stadium solution will ensure an optimum outcome for sports and provide for other events to be held at a stadium of that nature in Western Australia. I urge the new Premier to stop being petulant and to listen and learn and to take account of these sorts of reports that were done because they are sensible and reasonable. Just because it was done by the Labor Party does not mean it is wrong. That is the way the government seems to look at things such as the shared equity scheme, the foreshore development and now the stadium. According to the new Premier, because the Labor government did it, it must be wrong. That is no way to conduct public policy in this state.

**MR B.S. WYATT (Victoria Park) [5.53 pm]:** I have a question for the Treasurer: is the commitment that the Liberal Party made at the 500 Club to provide it with \$250 million in tax cuts under review? We all remember the beautiful scene on TV when the then Leader of the Opposition and now Premier accepted a \$400 000 donation from the 500 Club in return for providing it with \$250 million in tax cuts.

**Mr T.R. Buswell:** How much did you get from Kevin Reynolds?

**Mr B.S. WYATT:** Nothing.

That commitment is not yet under threat, we note. It is not yet under review.

**Mr T.R. Buswell** interjected.

**Mr B.S. WYATT:** Look at this: the toolie from Dunsborough! I am surprised he is here. It is schoolies week in his electorate. He should get down there where he belongs.

**The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr P.B. Watson):** Order! The member for Victoria Park will call the Treasurer by his correct title.

**Extract from Hansard**

[ASSEMBLY - Tuesday, 25 November 2008]

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Mr Joe Francis; Mr Peter Watson; Speaker; Ms Alannah MacTiernan; Mr Brendon Grylls; Mr Tom Stephens;  
Mr John Quigley; Mr Colin Barnett; Mr Eric Ripper; Mr Troy Buswell; Acting Speaker; Mr Mark McGowan;  
Mr Ben Wyatt

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**Mr B.S. WYATT:** I am sorry. The one thing that is not under review is the dirty little deal done by the 500 Club to give the Liberal Party \$400 000 in return for getting \$250 million in tax cuts. It is worth noting that in the house. I am aware of the time and the Leader of the House is glaring at me. It is a matter that I will follow up on.

Amendment put and a division taken with the following result —

Ayes (26)

Ms L.L. Baker	Mr F.M. Logan	Mr P. Papalia	Mr A.J. Waddell
Mr A.J. Carpenter	Ms A.J.G. MacTiernan	Mr J.R. Quigley	Mr P.B. Watson
Mr V.A. Catania	Mr J.A. McGinty	Ms M.M. Quirk	Mr M.P. Whitely
Mr R.H. Cook	Mr M. McGowan	Mr E.S. Ripper	Mr B.S. Wyatt
Ms J.M. Freeman	Mrs C.A. Martin	Mrs M.H. Roberts	Mr D.A. Templeman ( <i>Teller</i> )
Mr J.N. Hyde	Mr M.P. Murray	Mr T.G. Stephens	
Mr J.C. Kobelke	Mr A.P. O’Gorman	Mr C.J. Tallentire	

Noes (30)

Mr P. Abetz	Dr E. Constable	Dr G.G. Jacobs	Mr D.T. Redman
Mr F.A. Alban	Mr M.J. Cowper	Mr R.F. Johnson	Mr A.J. Simpson
Mr C.J. Barnett	Mr J.H.D. Day	Mr A. Krsticevic	Mr M.W. Sutherland
Mr I.C. Blayney	Mr J.M. Francis	Mr W.R. Marmion	Mr T.K. Waldron
Mr J.J.M. Bowler	Mr B.J. Grylls	Mr P.T. Miles	Dr J.M. Woollard
Mr I.M. Britza	Dr K.D. Hames	Ms A.R. Mitchell	Mr J.E. McGrath ( <i>Teller</i> )
Mr T.R. Buswell	Mrs L.M. Harvey	Dr M.D. Nahan	
Mr G.M. Castrilli	Mr A.P. Jacob	Mr C.C. Porter	

Amendment thus negated.

[Continued below.]

*Sitting suspended from 6.00 to 7.00 pm*