

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY

Motion

Resumed from an earlier stage of the sitting.

MR A. KRSTICEVIC (Carine) [7.04 pm]: Mr Speaker, firstly, I congratulate you on your election to the chair and I also congratulate everyone in this chamber on their personal victories in their respective electorates.

I feel both honoured and privileged to stand here today to represent the constituents in the state seat of Carine. I would like to thank them for placing their trust in me and to say that I am absolutely committed to representing my constituents' interests over the next four years. I feel humbled to have become a member of the government in the thirty-eighth Parliament of Western Australia and I look forward to both the challenges and the opportunities that the next four years will present.

At the outset, I would like to thank a number of key people in my life, because without their support I would not be standing here today. To my beautiful wife, Nada, who has been by my side supporting me every step of the way: I love you, Nada, and I thank you for being my best friend for all these years. To my lovely children, Mara, Michael and Natalie: thank you for being so understanding and for all your hugs and kisses. To my parents, Slavko and Mara: I love you both for supporting me always and for being there when I needed you the most. I also owe a debt of gratitude to the members of the Liberal Party who have given me the opportunity to represent our great party. Finally, I would like to thank God for making all this possible and for being with me every step of the way.

I was born in Croatia in 1966 and migrated to Australia in 1969. My father arrived first, having borrowed the funds from his cousin in Perth. He bought a house, borrowed more money to pay for our journey, and we—his family—followed soon afterwards. We arrived with nothing more than the shirts on our backs. I have very fond memories of those early days in Australia.

I was raised in a working-class family in which hard work and respect, and a belief in one's ability to succeed, formed the fundamental principles of my childhood. My father always said, "Hard and honest work will reap you the benefits of a happy and prosperous life." He also taught me that everything in life worth having is worth working hard for. On the basis of my life experiences, I strongly believe that policies based on equality of opportunity, the generation of wealth, free and competitive enterprise, consumer choice, and reward for effort are crucial for the future success of our state.

I still reflect fondly on my childhood, remembering how we knew nearly everyone in the street, slept on the lawn during the hot summer nights, eagerly waited for the bread and milk to be delivered, left home in the early evening to go for a family walk around the neighbourhood and never needed to think whether the front door was locked or someone was going to steal the milk or bread money—it seems like only yesterday. Today I am sad that I cannot let my children have all those same experiences: I not only lock the door, but also make sure the alarm is turned on before we leave home. In today's complicated and busy society, neighbours are getting harder to find and family walks are something for which we have to remember to find the time.

Like Sir Rolf Harris, I too am a boy originally from Bassendean: swimming in the Swan River, playing footy on the BIC and supporting my beloved Swan Districts Football Club are all treasured parts of my life.

I attended a Catholic primary school and a public high school before entering university to complete a Bachelor of Business degree with a major in accounting and computing. After completing my degree I joined the Australian Taxation Office, where I forged a successful career for the next 20 years. Interpreting and applying legislation were a part of my everyday life. I learnt to take a very keen interest in the legislative process and its impact on the community. All too often, politicians and bureaucrats implement changes without any real idea of the impacts on families, business and the community in general. I remember when the federal government introduced a simplified tax system all those years ago. Many of my former colleagues were continually frustrated by the complexity of the so-called simplified tax system. As a member of the thirty-eighth Parliament I will be doing my best to make sure that such complexities do not find their way into our legislation.

Mr Speaker, I have never been far from my local community. During the last 20 years I have always been involved in one way or another; it seems that I have been destined to find myself in a leadership role at many crucial points. Helping others is what my life has always been about: it is my passion and my reason for being. As a member of this Parliament I will have the opportunity to turn that passion into a profession. Entering Parliament has given me the chance to really make a difference—to listen to members of the community and to try to turn their dreams into reality. I know that it is not going to be easy. I know that reaching for the stars is difficult, but I also know that anything in life worth having is worth working hard for. Barack Obama is reaching for the stars; some people in history, such as Martin Luther King, have managed to touch the stars. I, too, am

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hoping one day to touch the stars. I have two fundamental life principles; namely, to make a difference with everything I do, and to remember that it is not about me—it is about what I can give to the community.

I believe that I am fortunate to be representing one of the best electorates in Western Australia. The state seat of Carine is a picturesque beachside electorate, located in Perth's northern suburbs. It is bounded to the east by the Mitchell Freeway, to the south by Karrinyup Road and to the west by the beautiful Indian Ocean. Its northern boundaries consist of a series of roads, including Warwick Road and Clontarf Street. It includes the suburbs of Gwelup, Marmion, North Beach and Waterman and parts of Duncraig, Karrinyup, Sorrento and Trigg. The schools in the area include Carine Senior High School, Carine Primary School, Davallia Primary School, Karrinyup Primary School, Lake Gwelup Primary School, North Beach Primary School, Poynter Primary School, Marmion Primary School and Our Lady of Grace Primary School. I have already been in contact with all these schools and met most of the presidents of the school P&C groups. As a result, I have discovered that there are a number of issues that the schools need help with. I have certainly made it one of my priorities to assist the schools in my electorate all I can. I have also started to work with many community groups that exist in the Carine electorate, and was delighted to have been welcomed by the people involved. Two groups, the Gwelup Progress Association and the Hamersley-Carine Amateur Football Club, have asked me to become their patron, an honour I was delighted to accept.

As the member for Carine, I am proud to have followed in the footsteps of Hon Jim Clarko, AM, and Ms Katie Hodson-Thomas, who between them represented the area for 35 years. Both of them have assisted me along the path that led me here today. Jim worked closely with me in my campaign, as did the outgoing member, Katie Hodson-Thomas, who offered me considerable guidance and advice, and endorsed me to her constituents as her successor.

Many people have given up their time to give me the privilege of being here today. To each and every one of those people, I wish to say thank you from the bottom of my heart. I promise to do my best at all times. I especially acknowledge my campaign team: Hon Jim Clarko, AM; Hon George Strickland, OA; Martin Noakes; Shane Earnshaw; Des Riley; Sammy Yap; and my ever reliable campaign chairman, Chilla Porter. I also give special mention to Zak Kirkup, Ben Morton, Genevieve Lyon, Zara Saliba, Jan Graham and my amazing son, Michael Krsticevic, whom some members in the chamber have already encountered in political debate.

I know that Katie Hodson-Thomas feels some regret that the opportunity to give her valedictory speech was prevented by the calling of the early election. I would like to take this opportunity to pay credit to her 12 years in Parliament. Katie has often told me what an enormous privilege she feels it was for her to represent both the Liberal Party and the electorate of Carine as a member of Parliament. I know she would want to thank members of the Liberal Party organisation for their ongoing support and, likewise, pay credit to the people of the electorate of Carine who elected her three times. She has always emphasised to me how rewarding she found her job. One of Katie's insights was that at times the tasks appear small and at other times simply impossible, but when success is achieved the rewards and sense of worth that result are immense. I have already been lucky enough to have some minor successes and understand exactly what she means.

On Katie's behalf, I would like to mention some of the worthwhile achievements she made in her term as the member for Carine. The extension of Reid Highway from Erindale Road to Marmion Avenue was a project many years in the planning and execution. It was detailed and frequently controversial and affected many residents very personally, so it inevitably created a very high workload for Katie and her staff. She was very firm in her support of the extension. I admire the fact that she chose not to sit on the fence despite criticism from some quarters. She believed the extension was in the interests of the whole community, and this has proved to be the case. I want to continue her work in supporting the enhancement of Reid Highway by developing it as a dual lane carriageway, and will work with the new Minister for Transport to that end.

The saga of the Karrinyup Lakes Lifestyle Village is an issue some members will recall. Residents of that retirement village were placed in a very difficult position by the actions of management and sought Katie's help to resolve the situation. I know that Katie had hoped that this matter would be resolved prior to her departure as the elected member, having moved a motion in Parliament that the issue be referred to a standing committee. It must be said that this would not have happened without the support of two former ministers, the Minister for Planning and Infrastructure, the member for Armadale; and the Minister for Consumer Protection, the former member for Kenwick. Katie would also like to thank the former member for Yokine Hon Bob Kucera, for his outstanding work as chair of the committee and, indeed, all the committee members. The committee's report upheld the concerns of the residents that Katie had represented to Parliament. However, the matter of the Karrinyup Lakes Lifestyle Village is far from over. Residents are still awaiting the resolution of long-delayed planning approvals before they can sell their units and have been anxiously awaiting the re-formation of the Economics and Industry Standing Committee to ensure its recommendations are carried out. In addition, with the

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Retirement Villages Act 1992 coming up for revision, I believe that all members of the house should become familiar with the sad saga of the Karrinyup Lakes Lifestyle Village so that we can ensure that the new legislation improves the protection of seniors' interests and rights, and also ensure that the terrible experiences of these Gwelup residents are not repeated. I am committed to seeing this matter through and to ensuring that the residents of the Karrinyup Lakes Lifestyle Village receive justice.

Another long-term project Katie was committed to was the extension of the North Beach jetty. I know that she would like to acknowledge the work of two local residents in particular, Mr Laurie Birchall and the late Rick Hammond, who were both committed to this project and gave her enormous support in trying to raise the necessary funds. The project stalled because of financial implications, but I will be working with the federal member for Stirling, Michael Keenan, to continue Katie's battle to restore the North Beach jetty.

Like Katie, I believe that communities need to make financial investments in infrastructure that properly consider the long-term social benefits to the community in terms of recreational activities, social benefits and support for people with disabilities. Katie was the member for Carine when the decision was made to close the Carine TAFE, an event that may have been inevitable but that was naturally greeted by the community with some dismay. She worked hard to ensure that all courses were transferred to the Joondalup campus to ensure that residents retained easy access to an education facility. She also became involved in the process of determining what that large area of land could be used for. This is a process I have inherited and I will keep a very close eye on the plans for the old Carine TAFE site to ensure they meet residents' needs. Vandalism on the site is also an issue that I am working with the authorities to address.

Carine, like all electorates, occasionally suffers from lack of law and order, usually when young hooligans get out of control and make the community environment uncomfortable for its legitimate residents. I look forward to working with the new Minister for Police, who I know shares my firm belief that we need to extend the work of the police force into the community to ensure that law abiding citizens are not subjected to these types of events.

The wider issues for the state of Western Australia are also matters I wish to make my concern. I believe we have a great society and, despite a somewhat gloomy financial situation globally, Western Australia is still well positioned to continue to improve its services and infrastructure. I am committed to helping the members of this government improve our systems of health and education, along with our police force, so that they can provide greater benefit to the community.

One area of great interest to me is that of small business. From many years of working with the Croatian community, many of whom have established their own successful businesses in Western Australia, I know how important the small business sector is to the future of Western Australia and its people. I also know how hard small business people work, often in the face of bureaucratic structures that they feel hold them back or make running their businesses more difficult rather than easier. This is an area I would also like to improve while I am a member of Parliament. I will try to make it easier, not harder, for small business to operate.

Inevitably, the question of trading hours is going to be an issue before this house and somehow we must find a way to ensure that the interests of small business are seriously considered in the process. From talking to small business proprietors, I consider they have a number of legitimate concerns in accepting the notion of extended trading hours. I believe we must acknowledge the validity of these concerns and find ways to resolve them in the process. The first concern is the problem of the owner-operator. The normal extension of trading hours at Christmas time is now taken for granted, and there is no doubt that consumer enjoys this variation from the norm. It is nonetheless a good example of the difficulties small businesses might face in making regular extended shopping hours worth their while financially. I have been told on many occasions that the increase in trading revenue at Christmas does not really justify the employment of extra staff. Consequently, owner-operators are forced to work seven days a week for little or no extra benefit. The extension of trading hours during the rest of the year will, they are sure, result in exactly the same situation, or even worse. Therefore, it is imperative that owner-operators of small businesses are given some degree of choice about whether or not they will open. I have been told that large shopping centres often use the terms of leases to demand that smaller shops remain open when extended hours are in place, which puts these smaller operators in a truly lose-lose situation.

I am pleased by the Premier's recent announcement that the Liberal-National government will honour the decision of the 2005 referendum and will not seek further deregulation on Sundays. I believe that this is to the benefit of small businesses that do not wish to be forced to compete—and remember that many small businesses with few employees can still choose to open on Sundays if they wish. I also believe it is to the benefit of the community, ensuring that there is one day at least partially preserved for families and leisure. Even middle-sized businesses have expressed concern to me about being forced to compete with the larger businesses on their territory. They feel that these larger businesses favour extended hours because they know they can afford to stay open and lose money until financial pressures force smaller operators out of business. Clearly, this is a situation that would not benefit Western Australia. I have every confidence, however, that we can deal with these issues.

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We must, however, never forget that small business is the backbone of Western Australian industry and employment, and that understanding this sector is vital for the welfare of the wider community.

When we hear the voices of change calling, we must never forget that we live in the best state in the best country in the world. The last thing we should do is lose that simply for the sake of change.

The expansion of regional Western Australia was the dream of one of our greatest Premiers, the visionary Sir Charles Court, whom I have always admired, both as a politician and as a man. In this government that has been formed in an alliance between the Liberal and National Parties, with its stated objectives to develop regional Western Australia, I believe that we have the potential to further advance Sir Charles's dream. However, I also believe that this can and will be done in an environmentally sustainable way. No person in the twenty-first century could fail to be aware of the fragility of our environment and the challenges that global warming and environmental degradation hold. If we fail to protect our environment, this society itself could fail. I believe that through good government we can walk the tightrope and find the balance between development and protection.

[Member's time extended.]

Mr A. KRSTICEVIC: Together we can build a better Western Australia. We can show the rest of Australia that by working together we can make a difference to our future prosperity. Working smarter, listening to the community and respecting each other with a positive attitude will lead to a prosperous society. I am ready, willing and able to work with each and every one of you to deliver the results that will benefit all Western Australians.

Finally, I would like to mention how I see the positioning of this state in its interaction with the Australian government and the world. We cannot live and grow in isolation, despite our physical separation. I consider that Western Australia needs to strongly maintain its position in the Federation of Australia, and work closely with the rest of the states on our developmental agendas—for investment, for development and for environmental protection.

I find it ironic when some members of Parliament who supported the introduction of one vote, one value complain about the commonwealth grants scheme, complain about how Western Australia is getting a raw deal, and complain about how Western Australia generates some 35 per cent of the nation's wealth yet gets only a fraction of that back. I do agree with all these concerns, but also feel that these inequalities are similar to those inflicted on regional Western Australia with the introduction of one vote, one value by the previous state Labor government. One vote, one value is an example of how regional, high-production communities are being robbed of the fair rewards for their labour. Western Australia is not like other states in Australia. Our regional areas produce the greater part of our wealth; yet under one vote, one value we have removed from them the basic right to fair representation for their efforts and their contributions. I support the Liberal-National move towards giving our rural communities a fairer proportion of state revenue and attention, as do the many constituents who have contacted me.

In addition to improving funding for regional communities, I believe that we need to return to them a greater stake in the political process. Therefore, I will be calling for a review of this flawed legislation. We should not ignore the regions based on the size of their population. We should acknowledge their contribution to this great state and to our nation. Likewise, our federal government should not take Western Australia for granted. This remote state, like our remote regions, needs to be valued and respected for the contribution made each and every day.

Mr Speaker, I believe that Western Australia has a glowing future. I look forward to being part of the generation that makes that future.

[Applause.]

MR M.W. SUTHERLAND (Mount Lawley) [7.25 pm]: Mr Speaker, firstly, let me congratulate you on your election as Speaker of this house. It is a great honour to join you in this chamber as the newly elected member for Mount Lawley.

In the first instance, I wish to thank the hundreds of helpers who made it possible for me to stand here today. In particular, I thank my partner, Michelle; her parents, Colin and Marjorie Gilchrist; my sister and brother-in-law, Elizabeth and Roy Haagman; my campaign manager, Malcolm Homes; Hon Donna Faragher, MLC; Tom Wallace; Maureen Meixner; Murray Freiberg; Bill and Judy Green; George Georgiou; Errol Vertannes; Councillors John Tognolini and Sandra Liu; members of the Liberal Party; and, in particular, the Liberal Party campaign team. These are among the many thousands of people who wanted a better state government and ensured a Liberal victory in the seat of Mount Lawley.

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I also wish to thank the members of this house for electing me as Deputy Speaker. It is a further honour to serve in this capacity, and it is my intention to preside in a manner that is fair to all members.

The Mount Lawley electorate is an inner-city seat north of the central business district, and is essentially a solid family area that also has a large concentration of retirement villages and nursing homes. The seat was abolished in the redistribution of 1988, and was brought back as one of the new metropolitan seats in the redistribution prior to the election. The last representative for the seat of Mount Lawley was Hon George Cash, who is now a member in the other place.

The suburb of Mt Lawley, after which the seat is called, was named in honour of Sir Arthur Lawley, the Governor of Western Australia from May 1901 to August 1902. Immediately after having been Governor of Western Australia, Arthur Lawley was appointed Lieutenant Governor of the Transvaal, the former South African Republic. This was shortly after the Boer War ended in 1902—a war in which many Australians served with distinction. I note that there are two former members of this house who fought in the Boer War.

I was born in Johannesburg in the Transvaal in 1954, and lived there until I came to Australia in 1987. I grew up in a family that encouraged hard work, reading and education and an interest in sporting clubs, community groups and politics. My father, William Sutherland, who started work as a bricklayer at 14, met my mother, Alice, while he was serving as a warrant officer in the South African Army in Egypt during the Second World War. My mother was from the Lebanese Christian community, and she spoke a number of languages, including French, Arabic, Italian and Greek. In 1949 my mother moved to South Africa on her own to join my father. This was a very brave move since she spoke very poor English at the time. After my father's death, my mother was able to join my sister and me, and lived in Australia for a number of years.

I had what can be described as a cosmopolitan upbringing, associating and mixing with people of many diverse nationalities, religions and backgrounds. After leaving the local government high school where I was head boy, I did my national service in the South African Army, and then proceeded to complete a Bachelor of Arts at the Witwatersrand University, where I majored in history and international relations. I then commenced teaching in 1977 for a period of some five years. While teaching, I studied as an external student at the University of South Africa and obtained a teacher's diploma and law degree, and was admitted as a solicitor and notary public in South Africa in 1983.

It was primarily my dislike of the apartheid system in South Africa that led me to become involved in politics. I was active in the United Party, the then main parliamentary opposition to the ruling National Party, from the early 1970s. In 1982 I was elected to the Johannesburg City Council as a member of the Progressive Federal Party, which by then had become the main parliamentary opposition party. I served on the Johannesburg City Council until I came to Australia. The Johannesburg City Council was a greater metropolitan council with 47 councillors and some 600 000 residents. It operated like Parliament on political lines and it administered, apart from normal municipal services, public housing, public transport, fire and emergency services, the running of art galleries and museums, the generation of electricity and the supply of water, amongst other things. It also had its own traffic police force of quite a large number. In 1987 the Johannesburg City Council had a budget of over one billion rand. At that time, one rand was nearly equivalent to \$A1.

As a result of incessant political turmoil, unrest and uncertainty in South Africa, I decided to immigrate to Australia and adopt it as my new country. I arrived in 1987 with a suitcase, a tennis racquet and a squash racquet. I landed in Sydney, where I requalified as a solicitor at the University of Sydney, and then decided that Perth was the place that had the most to offer and where I would like to make my home. I settled in Perth in 1988 and have lived here ever since. I first resided in Mt Lawley and soon joined the Mt Lawley Tennis Club, where I remain an active playing member and sponsor. I thank two of my tennis team, Jim Bonzas and Tony Hooper, for coming here tonight. I am a strong supporter of sports clubs and realise their importance to the wellbeing of our society. For the past 19 years I have lived in Noranda, which is a short distance from the northern boundary of my seat, and have practised law in Beaufort Street since 1988.

In 1995 I was elected as a councillor to the newly constituted City of Perth council, which was part of the old, larger City of Perth. I am now the longest serving councillor of the City of Perth. I have been elected Deputy Lord Mayor on three occasions by my fellow councillors, and have served five years in this capacity. As I have publicly stated, I will reconsider my position on the Perth City Council again in the new year. I have served on numerous internal and external committees of the City of Perth and, until recently, was the chairman of the city's Parking Committee, which generates approximately \$45 million in annual revenue. The city partnered with the state government and became a leader in Australia by providing the free and environmentally friendly inner city central area transit bus service for the central business district and adjacent areas. I am proud to have supported this initiative. I have also been a member of the Central Perth Transport Steering Committee, which comprises both government and city representatives. The committee considers various inner city transport and parking

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issues, as well as the running of the CAT bus service, which has now reached its capacity. There is a pressing need to extend the service and acquire more buses. It is gratifying to note that many visitors to Perth remember Perth for the free CAT bus service and mention the fact when I meet them. I have also served on the city's finance committee since becoming a councillor. The council's operating budget is now \$145 million plus. I bring to the Parliament long experience of monitoring public finance and expenditure, including infrastructure spending of considerable value. Until recently I was a member of the Metropolitan Region Planning Committee, which deals with major planning issues in the Perth metropolitan area.

Other speakers have mentioned in their maiden speeches the importance of having strong international relations links. It has been my pleasure, since being on the council, to have been part of the city increasing its links to Taipei, Nanjing and Seocho, a city that is part of metropolitan Seoul, and also to Aberdeen and Perth in Scotland. The city has also become a leading member of the World Energy Cities Partnership, which is a very positive thing for the state of Western Australia. Western Australia will continue to be active in creating and maintaining strong international links that will benefit both business and the community in general. I hope to play my part in this important activity while I am a member of Parliament.

The people of Mt Lawley want performance above politics from their local member. It is my intention to deliver results for them and to respect the trust they have placed in me. During the campaign I emphasised to voters how important it was to vote on my record of public service and my demonstrated commitment to the community, as this experience would be a critical factor in the quality of their representation. Because of my extensive association with the area and my legal, commercial and political knowledge, I have the necessary understanding and experience to properly serve my constituents.

As I have said, the seat of Mount Lawley is part of the inner city of Perth. In order for inner city suburbs to flourish, it is important that they are vibrant and vital places in which to live, work and play. We need to encourage town centre sites in the suburbs, with increased work and entertainment opportunities in close proximity to people's homes. In my seat of Mount Lawley there are two ideal sites—the Dianella Plaza and Dog Swamp Shopping Centres.

Perth will evolve over the next few years into an international city, but the question remains whether we are moving fast enough. Our city centre should be alive and our foreshore pulsing with arts and cultural activities. Vitality is a cultural, social and civic leadership issue. We require programs, events and activities that employ local, creative people, complemented by retail, small entertainment venues and regular and reliable public transport. For this to happen, we need to get rid of a generation of clueless and invisible regulators in state and local government departments who stifle initiative and creativity and do not listen to the community. They make it difficult, if not impossible, for people with ideas to take the city and the state forward. The regulators often create a nanny state that suffocates the very people who are needed to take the city and the state forward. I welcome the government's commitment to sink the railway between the city and Northbridge and its commitment to upgrade the Perth Cultural Centre, which is a very uninviting public space at present. When we speak of community vitality, it is a matter not only of retailers, restaurants, small bars and nightclubs, but also of people knowing their neighbours, feeling safe to use public transport and to walk down their streets at night, and wanting to use community clubs and facilities.

It is apparent from recent inaugural addresses by new members of all political persuasions that they are concerned about public safety and support policies that protect the lifestyle that we cherish. I join my fellow members in expressing similar concerns. An increasing number of citizens are scared of their neighbours and are in a constant state of alarm. There is a trend of escalating violent attacks, including those against police, nurses and other officials. There is the destruction of property, graffiti and disrespect for the law and other people. We bemoan the obesity issue, yet we are too scared to let children walk to school. There have been laments by many community leaders, including the Chief Justice of New South Wales, Justice Spigelman about the coarsening of our culture. A mindset is developing that anything goes, anywhere and at any time, with no parameters for behaviour and language. This is because we have become soft on antisocial behaviour. We are allowing people to escape the consequences of their actions. This problem will not be solved by more obscure laws that focus on trivia and take into consideration every conceivable possibility that adds to bureaucracy and wastes time and resources. The core issue is not the inadequacy of the law but the inadequate enforcement of the law and effective rehabilitation of offenders, while at the same time considering the needs of victims. Seeing justice done and knowing that offenders will face the consequences of their actions greatly assists victims to recover from the detrimental effects of the crimes that have been committed against them. Our youth are increasingly being involved in alcohol and drug-fuelled violent attacks. We need to not only enforce the law, but also encourage our youth to get involved in community activities, thereby preserving and rebuilding the fabric of our society. I am pleased to note that the government has proposed the building of a correctional facility for 18 to 22-year-olds that will help young offenders receive rehabilitation away from career criminals.

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Another important factor is education. A proper education eradicates prejudices, develops a sense of individuality and instils respect for others and an understanding of the complexity of the community. Confidence in state schools needs to be restored. Local schools are one of my top priorities. A number of schools in my constituency are in need of major capital works. Sutherland Dianella Primary School has been allowed to run down to a totally unacceptable level and the facilities cannot cope with the number of children currently enrolled at the school. The government, I am pleased to say, will honour its commitment of \$5 million to upgrade facilities to the required standard at that school. The Liberal Party will also keep its election commitments made to other schools in the area. Again, I remind teachers and parents that all schools within my electorate will now receive the proper attention that they all deserve.

As an ex-teacher, I was alarmed to read an article in *The West Australian* on 23 August 2008 that reported that between 15 and 20 per cent of the population will struggle with reading by the time they reach year 8. All children need to receive an education that prepares them for a world that is increasingly competitive. Dare I say bring back the three Rs! We should be urging students to find satisfaction in achievement instead of making them feel comfortable about their failures. I had a more conventional schooling than what is offered at present, and I have been able to succeed because of the solid foundation of that more traditional education, which taught me literacy and numeracy. Too many euphemisms, such as behavioural management, are used today to disguise bad behaviour and poor discipline. The reality is that too often in schools today discipline is sadly lacking. Without discipline, we have chaos and destruction, and the end result is that learning is significantly compromised. Teachers should not be subjected to bad behaviour and an ever-increasing fear of abuse and assault.

Another matter of great concern to inner-city residents was the proposed closure of the Royal Perth Hospital. The government has made the right decision to preserve the hospital.

[Member's time extended.]

Mr M.W. SUTHERLAND: This announcement, based on practical commonsense, has been welcomed by the local community.

Another matter of concern to all of us in this place is global warming. Whether or not we believe in global warming, we should all give the planet the benefit of the doubt. In any event, we should all in our personal capacities and in our capacities as public representatives encourage sustainability and a focus on conserving water, car use and other pressing environmental issues. This is something that the City of Perth has again taken the lead in by planting 85 000 trees this financial year to offset carbon emissions from cars using the city's car parks. I am proud of my association with the council's environmental efforts over the past number of years. To assist the environment we need to develop an integrated, safe and more frequent public transport system, including the extension of the Central Area Transit bus system, the introduction of river CATs and, where possible, light rail from the suburbs into the central business district. This will help ease traffic congestion in the inner city and assist our community to get around.

Another matter stated by many members in their inaugural speeches is that the Liberal Party supports people who build businesses, create employment and give our youth the skills to meet the demands of a constantly changing global economy. I also support small business and I realise that our future lies with small business. The Beaufort Street precinct in my electorate is becoming a well-renowned restaurant and shopping strip. The small business and artistic sector has made this area thrive and it is vital to maintain the area with good ambience and a diversity of high-quality retail businesses and offices.

While doorknocking during the election campaign, I admired the mixture of modern and historic homes in my electorate. It has always been the Australian dream to own one's own home. Australians are some of the hardest workers in the world and for them not to be able to enter the housing market is unacceptable. This generation is being priced out of the market, and there is no encouragement to work hard and to succeed if at the end of the day people are not able to own their own homes. We should be looking at this problem to see how we can assist and also try wherever possible to release land for redevelopment that is no longer used for its original purpose or is in areas that have become degraded.

When I came to Australia some 21 years ago, I found a nation guided by the idea of a fair go, straight talk and honest hard work. Western Australians do not want, nor do they need, to be carried through life; they do not want cradle-to-grave socialism. People want to make their own decisions and receive the rewards of their actions instead of having their decisions taken away from them by the nanny state. Our electors are not looking for an answer to every problem but rather for fair, honest and sensible representation. People do not want buzzwords, spin and newspeak that clouds reality. Without straight talk and clear answers to their questions, we will fail them. Our citizens want clear and concise information on which to base their decisions. I will take this approach

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in my work as the member for Mount Lawley because it is what I deem to be right and what my constituents want.

In closing, I once again thank the people who have helped me take my seat in this place. I have left until last the thanks that I must give to Dr David Smith and Mr Ben Allen, who have done so much to establish my electorate office. I also thank the many friends and family who have come here tonight to hear my speech and show their support. I hope my speech has not been too long! It is with a great sense of privilege, passion and purpose that I accept the responsibility of representing the electorate of Mount Lawley.

[Applause.]

MRS L.M. HARVEY (Scarborough) [7.47 pm]: It is truly an honour and a privilege to stand in this place as the representative of the citizens of the Scarborough electorate. I begin by congratulating you, Mr Speaker, on your election to the office of Speaker of the Legislative Assembly. I wish you well and look forward to your advice and assistance as I navigate my way through the rules and regulations of this chamber.

I begin my address to the Assembly tonight with thanks to the people of the electorate of Scarborough who have placed significant trust in me to act as their representative in this place. Throughout my 16 years as a resident and business owner in Scarborough, I have had the privilege of interacting with many members of the community on a daily basis through many different avenues. I will endeavour to represent them to the best of my ability. Although this was a new electorate in the last election, it has previously existed in varying forms as the district of Innaloo and also Scarborough. The current district has been formed out of the electoral districts of Churchlands and Carine, and both electorates, I am proud to say, were commendably served in the recent past by committed and dedicated female politicians, Dr Elizabeth Constable and Katie Hodson-Thomas, whose fine examples have set me an inspirational standard. The current electorate covers the suburbs of Scarborough, Innaloo and Doubleview in full, with parts of Trigg, Woodlands, Karrinyup and City Beach. It also includes a major portion of the Osborne Park and Herdsman industrial estates.

Like many others in my electorate, I was relieved to see the new electoral boundaries for my community. The previous divisional boundaries also represented a divided community on many issues. The suburbs of Scarborough, Innaloo and Doubleview have been under significant development pressure over the years as our local government authority, the City of Stirling, rose to the task of meeting its infill quotas to increase our suburban densities. More recently, that attention has turned toward Innaloo and parts of Woodlands that fall into my electorate, with the development of a concept plan through the Stirling alliance team of the Stirling City Centre. The Stirling City Centre proposal is a bold plan for significant increases in residential density and the development of industry and workplaces around public transport hubs. The intention of this plan is to try to encourage people to live where they work so as to reduce our reliance on motor vehicles and also to improve the usage and viability of public transport systems. There are many opportunities and possibilities available in this plan with an acknowledged willingness and readiness of private enterprise to engage immediately with government to facilitate the redevelopment of this Innaloo-Woodlands hub.

There are many controversial aspects to this plan, especially the various options for the dispersal of traffic. Congestion throughout the Innaloo shopping precinct is a major concern and of frustrating annoyance to many residents in the Scarborough electorate. We need a solution to this problem. While the obvious response is for people to utilise public transport and use their cars less, this is quite simply not an option when limited access to train station parking is considered. The bus networks are not developed sufficiently to allow people access to the train stations in order to catch the earlier trains that have spaces available. There are many people in the electorate of Scarborough who have given up attempting to use the environmentally friendly option of public transport to their place of employment because it is simply too hard. We have a job ahead of us to convince commuters that the public transport system can provide them with the safety and convenience required in this modern age.

Previous density increases have not worked well in our suburbs to date. Our local streets are overflowing with parked cars that have been squeezed out of the confines of their property into the areas that have traditionally been kept free for vehicular, pedestrian and cycle access. The conflicts between our people, our children and our motor vehicles are becoming increasingly aggressive and problematic. While further density does not appear a logical solution on the face of it, I assert that vastly increased housing densities in well-placed locations near public transport could reduce our reliance on the motor car and address the problems of both vehicle storage and overuse, provided of course that the public transport system caters for the needs of its users.

Activism in my community is very prevalent and the Scarborough electorate has been blessed with a strong-willed community who participate in often fiery and emotional debate over contentious issues. No issue in my electorate has been more divisive or emotional than the form and structure of the revitalisation of the

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Scarborough Beach tourism and commercial industry. Indeed, the community has been as divided as the electoral boundaries that separated us previously. I share the strong desire of the community to ensure that the beaches will always be available to all Western Australians and that there will always be tourism availability for our regional cousins to also enjoy the area.

We feel a very strong sense of ownership of our beaches—they are our turf. Our beachfront area in Scarborough deserves to be revitalised to a world-class standard with our own Western Australian style. The regeneration has started but needs guidance and strong leadership to ensure that the privately owned areas rise to the challenge of becoming a vibrant and modern seaside town, while also ensuring that our fragile coastal dune systems and public open spaces are preserved, valued and maintained.

The citizens of the Scarborough electorate have expressed time and again that they are ready now for modern amenities and a defined town centre. We all want to feel proud of our beachfront and facilities. The commercial precinct has languished for long enough in a planning haze and the announcement of the approval of amendment 458 today will provide long-awaited certainty to private land owners. It is my belief, and the belief of many others in my community, that when our rundown and derelict buildings are replaced and Scarborough develops a town centre of which we can feel proud, a centre to complement our beautiful amphitheatre, we believe that much of the antisocial activity that has plagued us in the past will become but a distant memory.

I am very excited to be part of a government that makes decisions in a timely fashion. Many people in the Scarborough electorate have placed themselves near to the ocean to enjoy the marine-based lifestyle that has become our culture in Western Australia. The success of our own family recreational fishing business is testament to the importance and enjoyment of this culture. It has been very encouraging to see the shift in focus from the spoils of the catch to the enjoyment of the activity of fishing. The recreational fishing community has been through a monumental change of attitude to the issue of sustainability. Many of our customers are now deeply involved in ensuring that the fisheries they are accessing now will still be available for future generations.

It is exciting to see the growth in interest in aquaculture industries where possibilities exist to reduce pressure on our wild fisheries in order to provide fish for consumers. While the environmental concerns around aquaculture are acknowledged, the reluctance of our governments to embrace aquaculture when we have become so adept at growing most other sources of food is somewhat baffling. Recreational fishing has become part of our outdoors-based lifestyle here in Western Australia and I am confident that with a collaborative effort between all users of our marine resource we will secure the future health of our fisheries.

Coming from a small business background, I am thrilled also to have the busy and vibrant Osborne Park and Herdsman industrial estates within the boundaries of my electorate. While fortunes are rarely easily made in the small business sector, this sector is driven by people who are employed in jobs that they love, working with people that they choose. It is inspiring and invigorating to utilise the industrial and commercial hubs within Osborne Park and see what a spark of possibility can achieve when combined with hard work, dedication and attention to detail.

While verifiable claims are always made that our great state has prospered due to the mining booms and, previously, from wheat cultivation or off the sheep's back, whenever the boom turns to bust or the drought hits, as they inevitably do, there in the background chugging away, keeping our economy steady, stabilising employment and watching the pennies, are the small businesses getting on with the job.

Indeed, there is no finer example of the legacy of small business than the example of my own family business. My husband's grandfather started the original Scarborough Newsagency in 1932 and I am indebted to my husband, Hal Harvey, and his parents, Jack and Daphne Harvey, for the fine reputation they have established in the Scarborough community over many years, such that my association with them bore me in good stead with many of the long-term residents of the community. My husband's family are typical of small business owners—hardworking, industrious and committed to their customers and employees, while striving to provide for a self-sufficient future.

Our duty in government is to continue to foster the entrepreneurial spirit that has developed our state and ensure that the voice of small business is heard, their needs are considered and their creative spirit is given room to flourish. To use the words of Sir Charles Court from his autobiographical memoirs, "The strength of the tree comes from the number of roots that it has." We must reduce bureaucratic interference and needless compliance. Government needs to keep its nose out of the business of small business, thereby encouraging prosperity in their enterprises.

Like others in this house, I am proudly fifth generation Western Australian. Mr Speaker, you may be interested to know that my grandfather's great-grandfather represented constituents in the first Legislative Assembly under responsible government as the member for Moore. Prior to his esteemed career in politics, a career spanning

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33 years over both houses of Parliament, Hon George Randell ran a merchant steamer between Guildford and Perth, allowing trade to develop between the two settlements. It was said of George at his state funeral that his inspiring life was epitomised by his belief that diligence and integrity find their own natural reward and that he never leaned supinely on a paternal government to provide him with an easier path toward the reward of industry. It was said of him when he died that we owe more than to any other single person the provision of our beautiful cemetery at Karrakatta, halfway between the two cities of Fremantle and Perth. George Randell was the founder of Perth High School and did much to establish the Teachers' Training College at Claremont. He was a true Liberal, believing in the real conservation of human achievements and not the drastic forcing of social evolution.

I find it fascinating and frustrating that nearly 100 years after George's retirement from politics in 1910 the battle to prevent the interference of government is still being waged as citizens persevere in trying to establish their own paths to social responsibility through the pursuit of free enterprise. Indeed, when tracking back to the very first sessions of Parliament under responsible government, I was astonished to find that one of the controversial issues of the day was the placement of railways, specifically the impact of the construction of the Yilgarn railway on the state loan account. Other matters under consideration were the low salaries of teachers, the controversial appointment of a manager of the Health Board and the introduction of reduction or remission of sentences for prisoners who had displayed exemplary behaviour during their incarceration. Although there is a certain sense of *deja vu* akin to futility when one sees that the main issues facing our society appear to remain the same, I have been joined this evening by many other proud descendants of Hon George Randell, and I believe that he would be well pleased to know that so many years after he stood up for the property rights of married women and the right of women to vote, one of his own descendants should one day stand in this place to follow in his footsteps.

There are many opportunities present in the communities that fall into the electorate of Scarborough and there is also much work to be done. Although one of our primary schools, Deanmore Primary, is scheduled for a complete rebuild—it was promised by the previous government only after long-term lobbying by a group of dedicated and committed parents—there are other schools in my electorate that need refurbishment or, indeed, a complete rebuild. The teachers and principals are wondering whatever happened to the seven-year refurbishment schemes of old, and question the commitment of governments to state-funded education. This is an awful situation for our education system to be in, when we have fought so hard to ensure that the children of this state have access to a world-class education system. The Scarborough electorate is experiencing regeneration and there is a need to start now on the expansion of high school facilities to cater for the future needs of our children. Parents along the coastal strip are spoiled for choice of denominational educational institutions, but the opportunities for high-quality state-funded education have shrunk over time. We need to ensure that there is a choice for the education of those who are not religiously affiliated, and the choice needs to be one of high-quality state-funded education.

I am very pleased to be part of the first Western Australian government to appoint a Minister for Mental Health. The issue of mental health is very prevalent in the community and of great concern. The statistics are well known but nevertheless shocking. In 2006, 1 398 male and 401 female suicides were reported in Australia. It is believed that the suicide rate in this country is still under-reported by 30 per cent. One in four women and one in eight men will experience some form of depression during their life. There is no magic cure for this growing problem and the problem is not new; in 1891, the state government debated the merits of allocating £30 000 for the provision of a lunatic asylum. Our attitudes to mental health have thankfully shifted from those asylum days; however, there is an urgent need for the provision of services within our community to sufferers of mental illness, and for support services and respite care for their carers, usually their families. We must adopt a similar approach to that of the public health campaigns targeting smoking, and declare that every death from suicide is a preventable death. Having attended the funerals of too many people who have died due to mental illness, I believe that we should form the view that every suicide is a failure of our society to prevent that death.

On the subject of health, I also feel there is much to be done in the area of Aboriginal health and living standards. Our Indigenous health record is nothing short of shameful. The Aboriginal infant mortality rate is three times higher than that of non-Indigenous infants. Aboriginal children are overrepresented in our prison system and suffer a much higher rate of emotional disturbance than other sectors of the community. The constant grief and suffering that some communities endure is very present to me, having recently lost my 16-year-old cousin to a tragic car accident on the Mitchell Freeway, at the eastern end of my electorate. The level of grief, anger, disbelief and horror that our extended family and friends are experiencing is nothing short of desperate. I cannot imagine how our remote and country communities manage to cope with suffering this sort of grief every week of the year, with the intolerable rate of preventable losses of their young people to road trauma and mental illness. I am confident that the Liberal-National government can start to make a difference by empowering

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Aboriginal communities to heal the wounds of the past while also putting in place practical measures that will help the communities to prosper. We must ensure that opportunities are presented in ways that enable our young Aboriginal children to take advantage of them. We must also ensure that the many successful role models from Indigenous communities are highlighted and acknowledged. We must move forward.

In closing, I take this opportunity to put on record my admiration, pride and love for my ever-supportive parents, Jill and Eugene Browne. I feel so blessed and am thankful every day that I was born in this country and into the loving environment that my parents provided for me, my brother and my four sisters. Being part of a big family has been a fantastic experience and, indeed, a great training ground for this debating chamber. Our parents' example of community service and their outstanding work ethic laid a very solid foundation for all of us. It was through my father's employment for more than 40 years as a public servant that my siblings and I were given the opportunity to live in many parts of our great state.

[Member's time extended.]

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: In fact, my father was part of the team that surveyed the townsite of Karratha. My years of schooling in Port Hedland in the early 1970s left me with a fond affection for the northern areas of our state—areas that I have revisited many times as an adult on recreational fishing expeditions. This is why I am especially pleased to be part of a government that has made a serious commitment to improving regional facilities and infrastructure.

I also acknowledge the support and dogged determination of my friend Sid Breeden and his wife, Carole. It is true to say that without Sid's persistence and faith in my abilities, I may not have pursued the path that has led me here. I also extend my thanks to our employees and the many volunteers and supporters who are in the public gallery, and who are too numerous to name individually, although I would like to single out my good friend Liz Behjat and two members of the Stirling Women's Committee, Anne Johnson and Marie Grout. I thank them for their support and for always being available to take up the challenge for whatever was required during the campaign. I especially thank those not naturally inclined to my political persuasions who assisted with the Scarborough campaign. Without their support and the support of the Liberal Party, the Liberal Women's Council, and the Stirling and Curtin divisions, achieving a seat in this place would not have been possible.

Finally, I extend my love and appreciation to my husband, Hal, and our children, Sarah, Elizabeth and Jack. I thank them for embracing the journey with me and enabling me to contribute to the community in this all-consuming way. I look forward with great excitement to the birth of my grandson in three short weeks; I thank Sarah in advance for that! I will honour their confidence and trust in me to uphold the values and beliefs of the Liberal Party while representing our community in this place to the very best of my abilities.

I wish you all well and thank you, Mr Speaker, for the opportunity to address the Legislative Assembly this evening.

[Applause.]

MR J.C. KOBELKE (Balcatta) [8.09 pm]: I congratulate the Speaker on his appointment, along with the Deputy Speaker and the Acting Speakers. I would like to give special commendation to the Speaker, who is not in the chair at the moment. He has the confidence of both sides of this house, and of the people who have come to know him over his time here. He is a person of considerable ability who gets on well with people, and we expect that he will be quite capable in the role of Speaker and retain the confidence of all members of the house. It is therefore quite fitting and important that we have a Speaker of that ability.

There was another reason, I think, why members of the house were so keen to see the member for Moore assume the Speaker's chair. As the member for Greenough, he made quite a habit of committing matters to verse, so I thought it was only appropriate, in recognising that he has taken on this high office, that I actually pen something that I have called "Ode to the Speaker — Not the Poet". It reads as follows —

The wincing of pain echoed around the chamber,
The member for Greenough was on his feet again.
With a knowledge of music but a mangling of verses
His speeches would regularly cause pain.
A way needed to be found to protect us from such abuse,
For his re-election would prove even bleaker.
The attempt by Gary Snook proved to be of no use,
So the only solution was to make him the Speaker.

I am sure the Speaker will take that in good humour.

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This is also my opportunity to thank the many people throughout the Balcatta electorate who again supported me and allowed me to return to this place for my sixth term. Of course, that would not have been possible without supporters, both in the state Labor Party and personal friends, who, over many years, have got up and helped me campaign. I wish to express my debt of gratitude to all those people.

I am also quite inspired by the maiden speeches we have heard from members on both sides. When there is such a large influx of new members into this place, I think it creates a real sense of hope that the democratic institution will be renewed, that there will be opportunities to actually address issues anew, and that the Parliament will gain greater respect amongst the people of this state.

This is also a very special time in Western Australia's history, which many of our speakers have really alluded to and spoken about in different ways. Clearly, the current international financial situation poses a whole range of very real risks, but the underlying strength and opportunity in the Western Australian economy and Western Australian society simply is there for all to see. Therefore, my congratulations to the member for Cottesloe, as the Premier, and to all the members of the current government for winning the election and getting enough seats to actually have the opportunity to act as the key stewards of this state and serve the people of Western Australia. I trust that they will, through their deliberations and actions, try to achieve what is best for Western Australia, and not settle for what is second, third or fourth best, but look to protecting the public interest. I think that although we as a government fell short in a range of areas, the achievements were many and very significant. It is not my intent to go through a whole range of those issues that we dealt with, but as the previous Minister for Water Resources, I want to talk about the problems we faced and how far we have come, and, in doing so, hope that the new government can take up that challenge and continue to exercise real leadership.

Back when Geoff Gallop was Premier, the state Australian Labor Party recognised that climate change was a reality that had to be dealt with. Of course, back in 2001 that was not universally accepted—I think it pretty well is now. We had notable leaders of the Liberal Party criticising the government for overstating the size of the problem of climate change and shortage of water. I think now it has been shown that the Gallop government was correct. That is reflected by statements made by former Prime Minister John Howard, by former Minister for the Environment and Water Resources Malcolm Turnbull, and by people right across Australia with expertise in water. Internationally, people have recognised that Western Australia has been a leader through the implementation of the Indian Ocean Climate Initiative. We actually did have scientific data that showed very clearly that the south west of Western Australia was being hit early and hit hard by the changing weather patterns. It was the Gallop and Carpenter governments that took up that challenge and ensured that we did secure our water supply for the future. But the job is not done. Much more still has to be done to secure that water future for Western Australia.

Some figures I took from the Water Corporation website need to be reiterated, because I unfortunately get the sense that the current government has not really accepted the challenge of delivering security of water. These figures reflect the total inflow to Perth dams—I understand these figure have been standardised because new dams have been built—but the figures on the website indicate that from 1911 to 1974, the average annual inflow into our dams was 338 billion litres of water. Over a 74-year period we averaged 338 billion litres, or gigalitres, of run-off each year. Of course, 1975, people might remember, was the first year in decades that we had water restrictions and a real change in attitude, and many people pulled up their lawns and put in brick paving. That really was a symbol of future problems back in 1975. If we take those 20 years from 1975 to 1994, we find that the annual inflow into our dams had dropped to 177 gigalitres—that is, about half of that previous long-term average run-off.

If we then take the six years from 2001 to 2006, the time when the Gallop and Carpenter governments were tackling this problem, we find that the run-off had gone down to 81.8 billion litres. That is about a quarter of that long-term run-off. If we take this year—these figures are from a couple of weeks ago, but I do not think there will be much more run-off this year because we have really reached the end of winter—we find that those figures totalled 55.8 gigalitres, or 16 per cent of that long-term run-off. This year, the run-off into our dams is approximately one-sixth of the long-term average annual run-off. Those results signify a major change in our rainfall, which has direct implications on water supply for the people of the south west of Western Australia. I remind members that the integrated water supply scheme is not just for metropolitan Perth; it goes down to the great southern and right out to Merredin, Southern Cross, Kalgoorlie, Kambalda and Norseman. A lot of people rely on the water in that integrated water supply scheme.

We are fortunate that we have been able to maintain a supply of water with only water efficiency measures—minor restrictions—when every other capital in Australia has a total ban on the use of sprinklers. Many states do not even allow people to wash their cars with a hose, and in some places they cannot even use a bucket to wash their cars. Yet, in the south west of Western Australia, with an even more dire situation with climate change and reduced rainfall, we, through good management, have not had to go to those lengths of restrictions. We have

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managed it, but the challenge is still there. Is that run-off going to continue to decline, or will it stay about where it is, which certainly would be a hard enough task?

In Western Australia we implemented the policy of security through diversity: looking not to one solution, but to a whole range of things to guarantee that security of water supply. I will not go into detail, but I will just touch on some of them. With the construction of the Kwinana seawater desalination plant, we led Australia—in fact, it was internationally recognised as the Desalination Plant of the Year. Not only were we the first major city in Australia to commit to a large seawater desalination plant, but also with the use of renewable energy in that plant, we are a jump ahead of what has happened anywhere else in the world.

We also led Australia in water trading with the Harvey Water cooperative, which was the first scheme in Australia to bring a large amount of water from an irrigation scheme directly into a metropolitan water supply. I will return to that in a moment.

We also brought on a range of new sources, mainly bores; we increased the rate of water recycling to over 13 per cent—when we came to government it was about three per cent. We also put in place water efficiency measures, which were incredibly effective, producing a saving of the order of 45 billion litres of water a year—the same quantity of water as that produced by the Kwinana seawater desalination plant. That result was achieved through more efficiency measures. The way it was implemented has been seen as an outstanding success internationally. The people in the south west of Western Australia got behind those measures. Acceptance was at a very high level and people recognised that we were all in it together: we had to work together to look after our water supply. That certainly is a great compliment to the leadership of the Water Corporation—Jim Gill and the people who worked with him—and, by working with the government, they were able to implement that measure. The implementation of water efficiency measures led to a huge reduction in demand.

I will give the house an example of a water efficiency measure. The previous government implemented a Waterwise rebate for washing machines, which applied to a four-star and above machine. At the time there were fewer than 20 washing machines on the market that met the criteria. Within a short period well over 100 machines met the criteria. A change like that in Australia is significant, bearing in mind that Western Australia is responsible for only 10 per cent of the Australian whitegoods market. Suppliers of whitegoods do not look to the Western Australian market; they look to the Australian market. Members must also bear in mind that most washing machines are imported. When Western Australia took the lead and said that Waterwise rebates would apply to machines that met a certain level of efficiency, the marketplace moved and the retailers and manufacturers recognised that their washing machines had to meet that standard. It was leadership from Western Australia that caused a change across Australia. It is one of the many examples of how under the Gallop and Carpenter governments Western Australia led Australia.

I will briefly touch on the downside. The current minority Liberal government has not shown the same commitment as the previous government to guaranteeing a secure water future for the people of Western Australia. Members would recall that at the 2005 election the Liberal Party was talking about constructing a canal from the Kimberley. People who knew anything about water laughed at that proposition. I will not go through it chapter and verse. I am sure that members have thought more about it and have realised that it is a total nonsense. Some people take the view that it is nation building and irrespective of what it costs, it is there for the future. That forgets the environment that we are in; that is, we need to look at the amount of carbon that would be emitted into the atmosphere from such a project. Bringing water from the north by canal would not only cost four or five times more than constructing a desalination plant near where the customers are, but also it would use more energy. It makes absolutely no sense. The best way for the people of the south west to use water from the Kimberley is for it to flow down the mighty wild rivers in the north into the Indian Ocean and for a pipe to be constructed from the Indian Ocean to a desalination plant at a point near Perth where the water is needed. It would cost less than constructing a canal and it would provide a more reliable water supply. Water supplied via a 2 000 to 3 000-kilometre pipeline would result in an insecure water supply. Constructing a canal for water supply has absolutely no security at all. We need to put that idea to bed, but I suspect the current government and Premier have said that even though they could not sell it, it is still a good idea. It is a nonsense idea and, as outlined in the report that was prepared on that proposal, it does not stack up.

The challenge to this government has not been taken up. It was the Carpenter government that committed to a second desalination plant in the south west to provide 50 billion litres per year, with the potential to double that. I trust that the current government would be willing to proceed with that proposal without delay. I get the impression that it is and I would commend it if it takes that action. The previous government set it in motion; but the environmental approvals have not been completed. I suspect they are close to completion. The contractors are already lined up. It is a matter of having a willing government to move that project along. The water from the second desalination plant will not become available until 2011. If we continue to have a low run-off into our dams and do not have the rainfall to recharge the aquifers, particularly the aquifers under Gnangara that are of

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vital importance because they provide 60 per cent to 70 per cent of our groundwater, we will have a situation in which we will not be able to guarantee security of supply.

The reason I am very concerned is the populous decision not to use the Logue Brook water. Part of the Harvey water trade was the permanent trade of over five billion litres a year to come from Logue Brook Dam into the metropolitan scheme with the potential to take more in years of good rainfall. The question is: what do we do in the next two years before a new desalination plant can be built? If we do not heed that gap in supply, the reduction in water and more severe restrictions will cost thousands of jobs. Thousands of people are involved in the horticulture industry and their jobs will go if the security of water cannot be maintained. I realise that what should happen to Logue Brook was a hard decision. I went to great lengths to balance the relative merits of using it as drinking water or leaving it for recreation. At the time I was both the Minister for Water Resources and Minister for Sport and Recreation. Points of view from both sides were being put to me very strongly. A proper and thorough process took place. The decision was made because of climate change and the security of water supply. We had to ensure that we filled in the gap from a number of small sources prior to the new desalination plant coming on stream.

[Member's time extended.]

Mr J.C. KOBELKE: The present government has the responsibility to pick up the challenge that the previous government was handling very well and to not respond with easy answers to what are complicated issues. This government must make an effort to ensure a secure water supply.

The member for Murray-Wellington said in his contribution to this debate that he did not know where the Binningup southern desalination plant would go. He also indicated that it would cost too much. If a cheaper source can be found, we would like to know about it, but no-one has been able to do that. We have already gone through a year of getting the environmental data to show that the site for the second desalination plant would not cause significant detriment to the environment. If the site is changed, the delivery of water from a second major desalination plant will be delayed by a year or two. These issues are too important to squib the hard decisions that must be made. The government is either about securing our water future or it is flip-flopping over a range of local issues on which decisions must be made. The government must look to the general public good and not the political good.

I refer now to one other thing. As the then water resources minister I was invited by the Singaporean minister to attend its water conference. As this is the first opportunity I have had to speak in this house since then, I would like to lay on the table my report of that conference, which was a very good conference. It enabled me to get a comparison between Western Australia and Singapore: clearly different situations but there are some parallels that I find interesting. Singapore is recognised as an international leader in the water industry.

[The paper was tabled for the information of members.]

Mr J.C. KOBELKE: While Western Australia has security of water supply through diversity, Singapore has its four tap policy. The four taps are the local catchment water from dams and reservoirs, new water that is basically waste water—recycled sewerage—desalinated seawater and, importantly, the water it buys from Malaysia through a pipeline from Johor. The pipeline is Singapore's major water supply. The other taps currently do not provide a large supply of water, but they are there for security purposes.

I was privileged to be at a dinner at which Lee Kuan Yew, Singapore's first Prime Minister and now Minister Mentor, spoke to 300 or 400 people and then took questions from the floor. He is an amazing man and that brings me back to my theme of strong leadership, which I hope this government will give, although the signs are not there when it comes to water. Lee Kuan Yew exercised very strong leadership and Singapore assumed that leadership in water internationally. Lee Kuan Yew briefly mentioned that when he was a young man the Japanese invaded Singapore and the first thing they did was to blow up the water supply pipeline from the mainland. Without water in a tropical climate, there was no way that the Australian, British and New Zealand soldiers could resist the invading Japanese troops. Lee Kuan Yew said that from the time he was a young man he recognised that water supply was the number one security issue for Singapore. He went on to say that after he became Prime Minister there was a bit of sabre rattling with Malaysia, and the threat was that the Malaysian government would shut off the water coming through the pipeline from the Malay peninsular. Once again, the security of Singapore's water supply was there in Lee Kuan Yew's mind. He said that he had set up a special unit in the Prime Minister's office to work out how to guarantee the security of Singapore's water supply. Although we can see what they have done, we cannot draw parallels or expect that we would do the same in Western Australia, because the Singaporeans were motivated by national security and the need to guarantee their water supply should there be an issue with the water supply from Malaysia. To my understanding, and as I have previously said, most of Singapore's water does come from Malaysia. However, if there is a problem with that

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supply, Singapore has other sources on which it can fall back and it can ramp up the amount of water that it takes from those other sources.

I will now touch on some of the things that have been done in Singapore. I will mention first the Changi Water Reclamation Plant. The Singapore government has put in place a deep sewerage system for one half of the island and has plans to deep sewerage the other half of the island. If I have my figures correct, the deep sewerage pipes are about 60 metres underground. The existing smaller sewerage systems flow into the major sewerage system, which then takes the waste out to the large water treatment plant at Changi. The government intends to further develop that treatment plant and it will then generate fresh potable water that can go back into the water supply or be used to supply industry. Most of the new, recycled water is used in the Singaporean wafer industry: that is, in the creation of wafer computer chips. That is one way the Singaporeans recycle their sewage—through the Changi Water Reclamation Plant. However, Lee Kuan Yew told us at the same meeting—and I find this absolutely astounding—that the Singaporeans have also looked at the island's rainfall and land mass and decided that if they could capture all the rainfall that fell on the island, it would just about meet their water supply needs—this was back when they had a population of two or three million. I think the population of Singapore today is nearly five million. The Singaporeans set out to capture water from the centre of the city. The Singapore River, which goes through the centre of the city, was an open sewer but has since been cleaned up: that is, the piggeries and various other polluting industries, including the garages that tipped oil into the drains, have all been cleaned up or moved out. A barrage has been built at the river mouth to keep the sea water out. Over the next few years the fresh water flowing into the river will be the run-off from the CBD—that is, from the centre of the city. Using membrane technology, that run-off potentially will be potable water. In order to get the people of Singapore to recognise the importance of water and to look after the environment and the run-off, the Singapore government has embarked on a fantastic educational program. It has established the tourism-award winning NEWater Visitor Centre. While I was there, a group of Vietnamese school students were going through the water centre. The centre has very attractive displays with which to get its message across. The Singapore government has allowed people to recreate, in limited ways, on the existing water reservoirs. If street run-off water is a potential drinking source, the government does not see why people cannot go into the existing high-quality water catchment areas.

The whole program is about respecting the local environment, understanding the importance of water, and really engaging with the population. It is designed to promote an understanding of the importance of water and to ensure that the locals know that they cannot tip motor oil down the drain because it could end up in their drinking water. The quid pro quo has been the beautification of the river. When I was in Singapore, the government was calling for tender bids to pump water out of the river mouth near the barrage and back up to the top of the river to have an active river that is running all the time. Furthermore, the government has sought to encourage people to use the water for recreation purposes while always respecting that the water must be kept as pure as possible because it is a potential source of drinking supply. It is a very bold and comprehensive program. I found it absolutely astounding. My thanks must go to Minister Ibrahim and the people who looked after me so well. They certainly have a good story to tell, driven by Lee Kuan Yew's recognition of the importance of a secure water supply for Singapore.

In closing, I think we need to recognise that in Western Australia—with its fantastic climate, huge resources and the skills of our people, and our fantastic resources industry—we have the potential to be a centre of excellence in many areas, including biotechnology and other areas related to the resources industry. That potential for excellence cannot be put in jeopardy because we failed to provide a secure water supply. It is absolutely fundamental. We saw the problems associated with the shortage of gas a few months ago and the impact of that shortage on industry. The state basically kept going. There was a cost, but the people and industries of Western Australia paid the price and were able to keep going. However, if our water supply is shut off for a week or two weeks, the state will not be able to keep going. Water is absolutely fundamental to everything in our society. Once again, I challenge this current government to take up the baton from the last government—a government that was recognised internationally as a leader in water supply matters. This Liberal government must not be sidetracked by minor political issues and forget to secure our water future. We will be okay this summer. However, if this government fails to act and act efficiently before the summer of 2009-10 or 2010-11, then, with continuing low levels of rainfall, we will be in a dire water supply situation for which this government will have to accept full responsibility. The Labor government has handed the baton over in trust after having led both in Australia and internationally on the issue of guaranteeing water supply. The water supply problem has not gone away. This government must give it the highest priority and not simply find that it is too hard to make a decision and therefore push it aside in the hope that somehow the heavens will open, the climate patterns will change, and it will rain again. We cannot work on that basis. All the figures indicate that the situation is one of declining rainfall. The problem is that when the rainfall goes down by one-third, the run-off goes down by two-thirds. This government must act now to secure the state's water future. I trust that we will find that the government, wanting

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to do its best for the people of Western Australia, will take up the challenge. I trust that it will not find that a decision is simply too hard for it to make.

MR P. PAPALIA (Warnbro) [8.37 pm]: Let me preface my Address-in-Reply speech by making two observations: firstly, I am aware of the time and I intend to keep the house only a very short period of time.

Mr D.A. Templeman: Hear, hear! The best decision you have made in a long time!

Mr B.S. Wyatt: Sit down and save us some time!

Mr P. PAPALIA: Not that short! Secondly, I echo the sentiment already noted in some of the new members' inaugural speeches that we live in uncertain times. Only a couple of months ago, I would, probably in a fairly self-righteous tone of voice, share with my friends and family my observation that Western Australia really needed a good strong robust opposition: sadly, I think I have my wish!

However, in the Speaker's absence, I begin by acknowledging and congratulating the member for Moore on his elevation to the position of Speaker. He already is filling the role as though he has been in it forever—or perhaps it just seems like that to me. However, I am sure that he will do a wonderful job, supported by all of us here. I also congratulate the member for Mount Lawley on his elevation to the role of Deputy Speaker and congratulate all of the newly elected members of Parliament. It is great to see all of them here. It has been reassuring to witness the passion and heart contained in their inaugural speeches—I appreciate all of it, although I do not necessarily endorse some of the sentiments. I also take this opportunity to acknowledge those members of Parliament who lost their seats in the recent election. I have only been a member of this place for a short time—I was elected on 3 February 2007. However, then members Shane Hill, Di Guise, Tony McRae, Paul Andrews, Gary Snook, Steve Thomas and Judy Hughes welcomed me to this place, regardless of their political party, and all extended the hand of friendship. I appreciate their contributions to Parliament. I witnessed all of them doing their job as local members, and they did it well. We should all aspire to at least do as well as they did. They made a fine contribution.

Since returning to the house and coming to this side of the chamber, I have had the opportunity to observe the new government for a short period. I must say that in the first week I became a little concerned that the Premier appeared to be focused very much on external appearances. He made a great deal of commentary about what members should wear in this place. I endorse his demands that we dress appropriately. I have no concerns about that. However, he seemed to get an undue amount of media coverage. It started me worrying that perhaps there was a bit too much emphasis on appearance over substance.

Mr J.M. Francis: Like Kevin Rudd.

Mr P. PAPALIA: I have not done so, but I would like to select the member for Jandakot for special acknowledgement. It is fantastic that we have another ex-serviceman in this chamber, and particularly another ex-Navy man. Three down; there are not too many to go. It will not be too long before we are able to form our own faction, or we could possibly be a bigger party than the Nationals and have the balance of power!

Getting back to my comments about appearance over substance, it reminded me of a story that Colin Powell tells in his biography, *A Soldier's Story*. It is a long time since I read it, but I think that was the title. Post his second tour in Vietnam he was serving at the Pentagon, and he was sent to Iran to see how the shah was going. There was some concern about a few rumblings, and the Pentagon wanted to know what was happening. He went there, and the shah's guard put on a magnificent display. The guard put on a parade just for him, and he watched. On completion, he said that he had never seen soldiers who were so well drilled, with such bright, shiny boots and magnificent, gleaming webbing, and impressively starched uniforms. Some 18 months later the shah was overthrown, and those guards were fairly useless in the defence of the regime. The observation that Colin Powell made was that fine appearances do not necessarily make people good soldiers; the way a person dresses does not necessarily make that person a good soldier. Therefore, I am hoping that the soldiers on the other side of the house can both dress well and perform at the appropriate level.

However, I must say that my concerns about appearance over substance might also be reflected in some of my worries about the shadow local government portfolio, for which I have responsibility. I say at the outset that I am not opposed to royalties for regions. I think it is a magnificent thing that the country is getting a good share of the money. At heart, I am a country boy. I grew up in Burekup. However, in those days things were a bit simpler, because when I was in Burekup, I knew that I was in the country. When I looked around, I could see some cows, a hay shed and a tractor, but if I got on the Cooper's bus, which went along the South Western Highway, and travelled for half an hour to Bunbury—it is only 12 miles, but it was a long way in that bus—I knew that I was not in the country any more. I could tell, because Bunbury had things like traffic lights, high schools and a port. I thought that the difference was stark and obvious. Nowadays, I am not so sure, because as I go around consulting

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stakeholders in outer metropolitan local governments—local councils such as Rockingham, Armadale, Gosnells and Wanneroo—all those people can see the country from where they are. If they go out to their southern suburbs, their eastern suburbs or their northern suburbs, they can throw a stone into the country. However, I can guarantee one thing: they are not going to get any of the royalties for regions money for the country, because they are not in the country according to the Nationals.

Mr D.T. Redman: No, you've got that wrong.

Mr P. PAPALIA: No, they are not. Where do the regions end and where do they begin? That is the question.

Mr D.T. Redman: You're confused.

Mr P. PAPALIA: I am confused! The Minister for Agriculture and Food says that I am confused, and I agree with him. I am trying to figure it out. I go to Singleton, at the southern end of my electorate. Apparently, that is the southernmost extremity of the non-country area. When I stand on the last street of Singleton and look across to Madora Bay, I look across a kilometre stretch of ground that is owned by a developer—it is not being developed. At Madora Bay, in the member for Mandurah's seat —

Mr D.A. Templeman: We're having a hoedown there!

Mr P. PAPALIA: At Madora Bay, in the member for Mandurah's seat, people there are having a hoedown, they are in the country.

Mr D.A. Templeman: Of course we are; it's a regional city.

Mr P. PAPALIA: It is magnificent. So much are they in the country that the seat beyond them, the seat of Dawesville—the other part of Mandurah—is in the country also. So much are the people there in the country that they have just received \$600 000 for their surf club from the royalties for regions fund—part of the largesse being delivered by the leader of the Nationals. It was announced on his website just the other day.

Mr D.T. Redman: It's a great idea.

Mr P. PAPALIA: It is only the first tranche—the total is \$26 million or something like that. It is nothing spectacular. There is a lot more where that came from. However, there is \$600 000 for the member for Dawesville's surf club. I understand that. The poor, depressed economy of Dawesville deserves part of the money that has been set aside for the regions that have for so long been exempt from largesse from government. Therefore, I can understand that. However, I am a little concerned, because I read down the list to see where the money was going, and at the moment it is —

Mr D.T. Redman interjected.

Mr P. PAPALIA: No, I am fully supportive of royalties for regions, but I can guarantee the minister that I will be observing, and I will be asking not just the Minister for Local Government, but also the other ministers responsible for these incredibly generous funds, where the money will go and how it will be delivered. I noted the other day that the Prime Minister announced that \$300 million —

Several members interjected.

Mr P. PAPALIA: No, he was referring to the Prime Minister earlier. The member can aspire to it. The Prime Minister announced that \$300 million would go to local governments around the nation. Our share, as the minister informed us today, is about \$29 million. That will be spread across all local governments in Western Australia, not confined to just those lucky local governments that happen to be in the regions or outside the city.

Mr D.T. Redman: Those lucky local governments? Why are they lucky?

Mr P. PAPALIA: Because they are represented by the Minister for Agriculture and Food. Our share will be \$29 million. Andrew Robb, the shadow spokesperson at the federal level, greeted the announcement with an observation that I agree with. It was a good observation. He said that he did not think that it was good policy to just throw that money out the door. He thought that this was an opportunity to leverage the supply of money to local governments against the demand for improvement in the way they manage their finances and their assets and in the way they plan strategically—all those things outlined in the Western Australian Local Government Association's sustainability study, which has been going on since 2004, with the support of both parties in this place. That study has identified that local governments need some guidance. Some local governments are not capable currently of achieving appropriate levels of fiscal management. Those of us who have read that study know that it suggests that some basic things are needed, such as four-year strategic plans and asset registers. I have been told, as I go around outer metropolitan local governments—which I might add are all very well managed—that at least 50 local governments in Western Australia do not even have an assets register. How will

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those local governments determine how much it will cost them in coming years for the maintenance of those assets, especially as the state government will throw money at local governments to produce and add to those assets? I have some concerns.

Another member was ahead of me in using the term that I am about to use. There have been a lot of references in the United States to being able to put lipstick on a pig but finding that it is still actually a pig. That reminded me of the regional partnership scheme that the Nationals entered into at the federal level, which was somewhat akin to what we are getting in this state, except probably nowhere near as expansive when ratios of population are considered. That scheme soon became known as the regional pork scheme, because of its proclivity to somehow end up dispensing money to projects that were required only in marginal Liberal or National seats. I am afraid that the Leader of the National Party is holding the \$70 million country local government scheme. Bill Mitchell is out there waving the lipstick and there is a whole lot of squealing and grunting going on—more than one would hear on the set of *Deliverance*—but in the end it is still a pig.

Mr D.T. Redman: Do you support that program?

Mr P. PAPALIA: I support it being managed effectively, efficiently and appropriately, but I have not yet been convinced that that will be the case. During the last sitting week I asked the Minister for Local Government to tell me anything he could about that scheme, but he was incapable of doing so. I have concerns. I think members would agree that it is right that I should have concerns.

Mr D.T. Redman: It is under the Minister for Regional Development. You need to ask him.

Mr P. PAPALIA: I thought it was the country local government scheme. I could have asked the Minister for Regional Development but I thought it would be more appropriate to ask the Minister for Local Government. Now that the Leader of the National Party has arrived in the chamber, I will leave that subject, not out of fear but because I have reached the end of my observations.

Mr B.J. Grylls: Do you think local governments are capable of dealing with a major injection of funds to support infrastructure development in their communities?

Mr P. PAPALIA: I think that the state government will have to work on providing appropriate frameworks and support. Some local governments are nowhere near ready for that.

Mr B.J. Grylls: Which ones?

Mr P. PAPALIA: The minister has a ministry to identify exactly which ones. I am in the process of going around and meeting stakeholders. As the minister knows, I have been getting around a bit. However, there is a long way to go because we have so many local governments. We have discussed this issue before. There is a much expanded role for local governments to play, particularly in trying to tackle issues associated with Indigenous disadvantage, especially in the regions. I have read the observations of the Systemic Sustainability Study. That study does not name the councils, because that would not have been politic of the leadership of the Western Australian Local Government Association.

Mr B.J. Grylls: Did you support the federal government program to kick-start the economy?

Mr P. PAPALIA: The minister missed my comment that I agree with Andrew Robb that it should have been used as leverage to get the desired result with local governments. I feel that we missed an opportunity there. When we consider the money to be spent in regional Western Australia—\$29 million under the federal scheme, at least \$70 million from the country local government fund and \$2.8 billion over four years in excess of the forward estimates—it is massive leverage. It would be a tragedy if we were to miss the opportunity to use that leverage to get the outcomes that we all know are required. I cannot and will not name specific local governments that I feel need to get that assistance, if for no other reason than that I have not yet had the opportunity to meet and assess them all.

[Member's time extended.]

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr P.B. Watson): Member, this is the longest short speech I have heard in eight years!

Mr P. PAPALIA: I will not go on for much longer. I note that the Minister for Corrective Services is here, and I congratulate him on his appointment.

A member interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER: The minister is not sitting in his correct seat.

Mr P. PAPALIA: You should leave him alone, Mr Acting Speaker. I got the sense that in the first sitting week we were all feeling our way in our new roles. It appeared to me as though the Treasurer and perhaps the Premier

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thought that, having just lost the election, Labor members might roll up in the foetal position in the corner and just give in. I must tell another little story. When I did the Special Air Service Regiment patrol course, spending six weeks in the jungle in north Queensland, one of the first things I was told —

Mr B.S. Wyatt: He likes to drop that in.

Mr P. PAPALIA: I told members that I would! One of the first things I was taught was that the word “mission” is not actually a word but an acronym, which stands for “members integrity severely scrutinised if objective not obtained”. That imparts a lot about the culture behind the SAS and other special forces, and no doubt the submarine forces. I am sure they operate in the same fashion. For all, the mission is imperative. Even though Labor lost the election, its members represent 28 seats in this place. All members on this side of the house have a mission to hold all members on the other side of the house to account. It is not just a mission: we are honour bound to perform that role. We will never shirk that responsibility. I know that I have been a bit more rowdy than people are used to in the past couple of sitting weeks, and I intend to rein that in a little. I will always avoid being personal in my criticism of the government. However, I will at all times attempt to hold the government to account. I am sorry that the Minister for Local Government is not in the chamber, but I am sure that he will hear about what I am going to say. When I make observations about or question the behaviour or actions of ministers, it is nothing personal and it never will be. However, it is necessary for me to do that, and I will conduct my role to the best of my ability. That may mean that some ministers will experience some discomfort. I do not take any pleasure from that, but I will guarantee that I will perform my role to the best of my ability.

Speaking of those ministers over whom it is my role to keep a close watch, I must say that the response of the Minister for Corrective Services over the weekend to the situation at Bandyup Women’s Prison was entirely appropriate. As the minister knows, I was at Bandyup on the Tuesday prior to the event. I was very fortunate to spend several hours on-site and to be given a full tour and a good briefing. I met the leadership team of the prison. I was approached by the reporter who wrote the article that appeared in last weekend’s edition of *The Sunday Times*. When she informed me that her source, her insider in the corrective services world, was literally an insider who had just got out, I told her that I would have to treat the report with a great deal of scepticism, particularly as I had just visited the prison, had met the team and had gained the impression that they were a thoroughly professional and dedicated group of individuals and that the prison was well managed. My experience of these matters is limited—I have been to only four prisons so far—but I understand that only some years ago, Bandyup Women’s Prison was in a far more fluid state and was far less strictly managed. My impression of the management team was that it was doing a fine job. I also noted in the Minister for Corrective Services’ radio interview—I tried to get on air to correct him —

Mr B.J. Grylls: It’s hard in opposition, isn’t it?

Mr P. PAPALIA: It is—already!

However, I think in amongst all the other comments, the minister might have said that Bandyup Women’s Prison was suffering from great overcrowding, but I think he would also be aware that the Labor government has built 40 additional places that will be opened soon. No doubt the minister will be opening those places in the next month or so. At that time, as I understand it, the capacity at Bandyup will rise to 186, and when I was there on Tuesday the number of inmates was 180. Yes, some inmates are doubled up now, but soon they will not be and for the first time in a long, long time every prisoner in Bandyup will have their own—not cells necessarily—rooms. That is good news.

I will make another observation that is simply a general comment. I saw that the Minister for Corrective Services gave an interview to *The Australian* —

Mr R.F. Johnson: I know what that says!

Mr P. PAPALIA: Sorry; do not give me a microphone, Mr Whip!

I noticed the member for Bateman gave an interview to *The Australian* on 17 October shortly after assuming his role as Attorney General and Minister for Corrective Services. I was concerned about one quote from the minister in the article; namely, that he did not see Indigenous justice issues as being at the top of his list of priorities and that he would not focus on recommended reforms to tackle high rates of Aboriginal incarceration.

That was very early on his role and my estimation of the member prior to being a minister and since he has become a minister is that he is an intelligent and capable man, and I am sure that his observations at that time may not necessarily reflect his views now. The Inspector of Custodial Services’ report released in July this year identified that there is a disturbingly large disproportionate representation of Indigenous people in our prisons. Indigenous people, in fact, represent at least 40 per cent and often more of our total prison population despite the fact that the state’s Indigenous population is only 3.2 per cent. In light of that report, any and every effort to tackle Indigenous disproportionate representation in prisons is essential. I urge the minister to put his shoulder to

the wheel and develop any option he possibly can, and I will support him if he does because, apart from anything else, if we want to be purely economically cold-hearted about it, we could say that the only way we will reduce the cost of the prison system, the cost to society of crime and the number of people in our prisons is to tackle the biggest chunk of people who reside in our prisons and who are disproportionately represented. I urge the minister to take every opportunity to look at anything innovative and at anything that we were doing, and we were doing many things. I know it is the government's role to kick us while we are down and give us a hard time, but I also know that the minister will be aware that many programs are quite worthwhile and there are opportunities. I understand the minister has already got onto it—before I managed to get out there in the media and tell everyone that it is a good idea—and is talking to Brendan Hammond and his associates about the Australian Employment Covenant. I commend that; I will do anything I can to support the minister. As I introduce myself to peak employment bodies, I ask them whether dealing with inmates as potential future employees would be worthwhile and whether they would be interested. To a man, the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Western Australia, the Chamber of Minerals and Energy of Western Australia and the Australian Petroleum Production and Exploration Association have all said that it is a good idea. As members know, some employers in the resource industry, such as BHP Billiton and Rio Tinto, are already doing it at Roebourne.

Mr C.C. Porter: I think that the key to those programs that you've identified as section 95 passes is that they allow the offenders, particularly Indigenous offenders, to go out and have training.

Mr P. PAPALIA: It meshes nicely, would the minister not agree, with our prison officer employment scheme that has been rolled out? They do not have one at Albany, though—they said that to me the other day—so if the minister can rectify that, that would be great. Again, I will support the minister in any way I can, particularly with trying to tackle that disproportionate representation.

In the last few moments that I have to torture the Whip, I will turn to my electorate of Warnbro. I was the last member for Peel, unless the seat is reinstated, and I am the first member for Warnbro in the Legislative Assembly. I am very proud of that fact. It is a wonderful electorate; the people are fantastic and they are very tolerant. They chose to re-elect me 18 months after they elected me the first time and I appreciate that very much. Seriously, I am very proud to represent the people of the electorate and I thank them for giving me their trust once again. I also thank all those people who assisted me in the by-election for Peel, which was the entire Labor Party in Western Australia. Campaigning is different in a by-election, as the minister understands, in which one is the centre of attention and everyone provides all manner of assistance—it is overwhelming! It is overwhelming how many people throw themselves into the campaign—people the candidate has never met before; people who are willing to do a lot even though they do not know the candidate. However, in a general election it is equally overwhelming. A very much smaller number of people come out, but they are just as dedicated and are very much appreciated. I place on record my thanks to all those people, particularly my campaign manager, Margaret Duff, and her long-suffering husband, Max.

I have kept it short and I conclude now, finishing two minutes early in many respects, and I am sure the members will all appreciate that.

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

House adjourned at 9.07 pm
