

WESTERN AUSTRALIAN JOBS BILL 2017

Matter of Public Interest

THE SPEAKER (Mr P.B. Watson) informed the Assembly that he was in receipt within the prescribed time of a letter from the Leader of the Opposition seeking to debate a matter of public interest.

[In compliance with standing orders, at least five members rose in their places.]

DR M.D. NAHAN (Riverton — Leader of the Opposition) [2:59 pm]: I move —

That this house notes that the flawed Western Australian Jobs Bill is another political stunt and only pays lip-service to growing local jobs.

The Premier has come to be known as little more than a political stunt. We saw probably the worst example of political, administrative and legislative leadership ever in this house when the Premier brought in his freeze on the Salaries and Allowances Tribunal last week. It was chaotic and incompetent and demeaned not only the standing of the government, but also this house. The Premier was not able to say during the second reading debate what the amendments in the bill would be and then read them out in part when we got to the third reading. The Premier asked us, as an act of urgency, to pass a bill that he knew was flawed. It was profoundly incompetent. The bill deals with a very serious issue; it will override, for four years, the Salaries and Allowances Tribunal and give the Premier control over the wages of public servants, MPs and the judiciary. It was incompetent. This is another such bill.

Creating jobs in Western Australia is a very important issue. The Premier won government on the basis of setting a target of creating 50 000 jobs. It was the issue of the campaign. There has been a recovery in the jobs market over the last six, seven or eight months, largely due to the improvement in the mining sector, but it still does not compensate for the loss of jobs and decrease in household incomes in Western Australia. Indeed, there is a large amount of job uncertainty. Incomes have come down, household incomes are low and people are struggling to get full-time employment—they are significantly underemployed. It is the big issue out there. It is the issue on which the Premier won government. However, I could not come up with a single example of the Premier bringing forward concrete and clearly enunciated policies to create jobs.

I will go through some of the major areas. One area over which the government has some control is the public service. Clearly, that has not been the case. He has added 300 education assistants and others to the education system. He has increased the number of those positions over the next three years, despite Western Australia having the highest percentage of education assistants per students in need of any state. In some cases, it was 50 per cent above the level in the other states. Was there a need? He did not identify the need, but I put to members that he put on those positions because the powerful United Voice union forced him to do so. As I understand it, 3 100 jobs will go across the public sector.

Both international and local tourism are in the doldrums. The Premier has been in government for only six or seven months, but can members name one thing that the government has done to enhance tourism? The government announced that it would spend a lot more money on destination marketing, but that is about it.

In defence, the Minister for Defence Issues talks large, but he cannot even meet the federal defence minister. He struggles to have a conversation with him because he is still stuck in opposition mode. What has he done? Has there been any concrete commitments to enhance defence investment in Western Australia? There have been empty, vacuous words, but no effort.

Mining is the biggest driver of our economy for job creation, both directly and particularly indirectly. The shadow Minister for Mines and Petroleum will go through that in detail. We clearly have the worst mines minister ever; he has systematically gone out and garrotted and limited the growth potential of jobs in the mining sector.

With the construction sector, we hear members opposite talk a lot about Metronet and investment, but the reality is that all the government has done is redirect money from the Perth Freight Link to other investments. I do not know how it has done that, but it has done it. The Perth Freight Link was ready to go. There were hundreds of jobs ready on the ground last year, and thousands were going to be employed this year. They got killed. The government's first act was to stop the Perth Freight Link. It destroyed thousands of jobs that were ready to go. It then redirected money to other things, but it is going to take years in some cases to redirect funds from the Perth Freight Link, which was underway, to other projects for which the government does not have a business plan, contract or tender to go to.

Mr D.J. Kelly: Move on!

Dr M.D. NAHAN: The member for Bassendean says that I should move on. We are debating Western Australian jobs. When I highlight that jobs have been destroyed, he says that I should move on; they do not count. Yes, those people are not members of his union, but they are people and they are Western Australians. We should give

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everybody equal treatment, not just union members. The reality is that the government redirected the money and destroyed jobs that were already underway. Labor was elected to create jobs.

Housing is one of our largest industries. If the government wanted to really stimulate job creation, it would look at that industry very seriously. It is struggling. It is coming down from the highs of over 30 000 housing starts for two years in a row, to down below 20 000. There is huge excess capacity in the industry in terms of jobs, but there is dull demand for house growth. Before the election, we put in place the boost for the first home buyer grant. The Labor government pulled it away as one of its first moves. Even the Treasurer admitted that Treasury had not done much work on it. The boost to the first home buyers grant for the last six months of this year would have added jobs. Pulling it out destroys job.

Mr M. McGowan: Do you actually believe that?

Dr M.D. NAHAN: Yes; I know so. The point is that the Premier was overwhelmingly elected on the issue of creating jobs. He said that he would be a job creator. Can members name one thing he has done? Can they name where he has done it in seven months? I can name quite a few times when he has destroyed jobs, but I cannot find any examples of where he has done the opposite. That is what he was supposedly elected on. A whole raft of work under royalties for regions was focused on expanding the agricultural sector in terms of water and other things, but the Premier has either put those projects in abeyance, frozen them or otherwise; he has caused uncertainty. There is no instance that I can find, other than the United Voice people and education assistants, where he has actually created jobs.

Mr D.J. Kelly: You hate them, don't you.

Dr M.D. NAHAN: I do not hate them. I weight them just like everybody else. The problem with Labor is that it weights people in the unions above everybody else.

One of the worst moves Labor made during the election, besides promising 50 000 jobs, was its promise to curtail immigration to Western Australia. That was the policy: to stop people from coming here so that locals could take the jobs. It was a policy to limit competition. I will go through it. Simplistically, that sounds serious. One of our major industries that Labor spouted it was going to promote was international education. By definition, that requires people to come here from overseas. It requires people to build apartments and other things for those people. What did Labor do? That was the Premier's first move. He said on his first day that he would change Perth from a regional centre to a capital city. That meant that potential immigrants would get fewer points for coming to Perth, and particularly students. Secondly, he reduced the number of categories for immigration from 178 to 18. Do members know what that has done? It has put a brake on international student education. In some cases, there has been a 20 to 30 per cent reduction. The Premier is actually destroying jobs for both the people who service that large industry and also the universities that provide that education. We talked to the minister about it. He had no idea that immigration had any effect on people wanting to study in Perth. He had no idea about the industry—none. We look through that and what has he done? He has destroyed jobs. Now we have this bill that is vacuous in the extreme, just like the Salaries and Allowances Tribunal bill. We will go through this later, but it is sloppy and unnecessary now and, indeed, as we pointed out and he refused to admit, he is saying that a job in Queensland is a local job; WA and Queensland are the same thing. He is trying to hide WA —

Mr M. McGowan: "He pointed out, but he refused to admit."

Dr M.D. NAHAN: No, the Premier pointed out nothing. The Premier just has empty rhetoric.

Mr M. McGowan: "He pointed out, but he refused to admit."

Dr M.D. NAHAN: No, the Premier did not. It is just empty rhetoric from the Premier.

Mr M. McGowan: "He pointed out, but he refused to admit."

Dr M.D. NAHAN: No, the Premier pointed out nothing. He uttered words that are nonsense. We are not going to fall for that. The bill is called the Western Australian Jobs Bill. The bill states that local content is defined as jobs and people from all the states and New Zealand; that is the truth, and there is a reason for that. I put it to members that in seven months the Premier is a complete failure on his major task—that is, creating jobs. He has actually destroyed them; he is a menace.

MR S.K. L'ESTRANGE (Churchlands) [3.11 pm]: The Premier of Western Australia is nothing more than a snake oil salesman to the people of WA. He has come into this place for six months, promising the world to the people of Western Australia, who we know, with the economic downturn over the last three years, have been doing it very, very tough. He knows that and all he has done in opposition and now in government is continue to promote spin over substance—nothing more. He is a vacuous Premier who promises the world to the people of Western Australia and then immediately sets about putting in place policies that do damage to the people he is supposed to be protecting and helping. That is what we are seeing with this government. We have seen it consistently

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today and we continue to see it with this ridiculous jobs bill that the government will bring before this place today. I remind members that in the WA Labor 2015 platform, under which the Labor Party went to the election, the case was prosecuted time and again to the people of Western Australia to try to win that election, and it worked. The Labor Party won the election. Let us look at how the Labor government is going so far with this spin linked to jobs growth and how it is looking after the people of WA. Chapter 4 is entitled “Economics, Industry and Regional Development” and the first section has the heading “Economic Growth: Benefits for the Whole Community”. Paragraph 2 states —

WA Labor is therefore committed to an economic policy that seeks to achieve:

...

c) Increasing real wages and job security;

How does the Premier think the WA Police feel about that right now? How are they going with that real wages policy of the Premier? I will tell the Premier that they know that he has deceived them; they know that. They know that the Premier said to them that they would get a 1.5 per cent pay rise. The Premier immediately came into this place and said that the police would not get that and that it would not happen because the government needed to have good fiscal management. That is the first group in the community that the Premier let down right there. Let us have a look at what else is in the platform. Paragraph 2(e) states —

A competitive taxation regime that encourages investment and employment ...

How is the Premier going on that one—a competitive taxation regime? The Premier was out there prosecuting the case to whack the goldminers, the drillers and explorers and the regional communities that supply those companies and small businesses in the regions. The Premier told them, “You do not matter to us anymore. You are not part of the Premier McGowan Western Australian economy that I am interested in. I can ignore you; I can tax you.” That will affect jobs in that community. That is what we saw happen straightaway out there—ridiculous. Now we have this pending whack that will affect small and medium enterprises with this payroll tax hike. The Premier will pitch to the people of Western Australia that the tax will hit the top end of town. I can tell members that he knows full well that he will hit the top end of town and they will pass the costs down the supply chain, which will affect small and medium enterprises throughout metropolitan Perth and regional Western Australia. The Premier knows that, but, again, does he care? Of course he does not care. He does not care; it is all spin over substance, and he is getting away with it right now and he knows it. He is getting away with it. That is why he sits in here with a smirk on his face. That is why he goes out to the media smirking and throwing negative commentary around about the Leader of the Opposition and the opposition, but mark my words: in time the people of Western Australia will get bored of hearing this negative commentary and they will get bored of listening to the Premier come up with his spin over substance and the tide will turn. When the tide turns at the next election it will very quickly wipe out six members who are sitting on margins of three per cent or less in very tight marginal seats, and it may well start to feed into the next six members who are on margins of less than six per cent. That will be on the Premier’s head, Labor members of Parliament, because that is the strategy that he is using. He is abusing the trust of the people of Western Australia by saying that it is about jobs when he has absolutely no priority for jobs in Western Australia. All he has is spin, and he is getting away with it right now. But when the tide turns, that spin will run out—mark my words.

Of course, the Premier also has a track record of deceiving the people of Western Australia, because he is the Premier who went the election saying that “there would be no increases in taxes and there would be no new taxes—full stop”. He took that commitment to the election and he lied to the people of Western Australia by immediately reversing that commitment; he reversed that commitment straightaway.

Withdrawal of Remark

The SPEAKER: Member, can you withdraw the remark that he lied, please.

Mr S.K. L'ESTRANGE: I withdraw.

Debate Resumed

Mr S.K. L'ESTRANGE: The Premier immediately changed his stance on that commitment to the people of Western Australia. The stance he took was the opposite of what he committed to the people of Western Australia. They know it and they are watching closely for his next move.

The context in which he has brought in this jobs bill is an abuse of the people who are doing it tough. The people of Western Australia are doing it tough. We know, because it has been reported in the media, that more Western Australians are joining the dole queue at Centrelink. In fact, there has been an increase of one-third in the number of people signing up for the dole in the last three years. People are very, very concerned about job security and they are out there looking for jobs now. The Premier is spinning to the people of Western Australia that he has

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a plan for jobs, that he will supply them with jobs and that he has a local content policy that will solve the jobs problem for the people of Western Australia, but there is one big problem with this local jobs bill he has introduced into Parliament; that is, he is spinning local content as being jobs in WA—companies and businesses in WA providing those jobs. He is spinning that to the people of Western Australia through this bill, but it is not going to happen. Why is it not going to happen? It is not going to happen because the briefing note supplied to us on the Premier's jobs bill states —

Local industry is defined as suppliers of goods produced, or services provided, in Western Australia, another Australian State or Territory or New Zealand. This is necessary for the Bill to be consistent with both section 92 of the *Australian Constitution* and the *Australia and New Zealand Government Procurement Agreement*.

The Premier knows that. He wrote it into his bill, yet he is out there telling WA that he is about jobs growth and protecting jobs for the people of WA when he does not care; he absolutely does not care. This bill is nothing more than spin. It is consistent with the spin that he was using in the lead-up to the election, and it is consistent with the spin and backflip on his policies post-election that we are seeing more and more of in this place. The “Australian and New Zealand Government Procurement Agreement” is an interesting read and I will read a couple of important sections of this agreement. It states —

The objective of the ANZ Government Procurement Agreement is to create and maintain a single ANZ government procurement market in order to maximise opportunities for competitive ANZ suppliers and reduce costs of doing business for both government and industry.

It goes on to state —

- ensuring the opportunity exists for ANZ suppliers to compete on an equal and transparent basis for government contracts in the Commonwealth of Australia Government, Australian States and Territories, and New Zealand Government;
- ensuring the absence of inter-state and trans-Tasman application of preference schemes and other forms of discrimination in government procurement, based on the place of origin of goods and services;

In law it states that the Premier's bill, which he is telling the people of WA will give them jobs, is false, and he knows it. He knows it is false because his advisers advised us that it was false in the material they provided us. Once again, members, this is an abuse of the people of Western Australia—an absolute spin. Again, it falls into line with all the spin of this government, just like its debt reduction account that it went to the election saying it would use to reduce debt. That debt reduction account was again linked to something that could never happen. The Labor Party knew that it would never happen. That debt reduction account relied upon 50 per cent of iron ore royalties being paid into it when iron ore got to \$85 a tonne and GST went to 65c. That was not going to happen as it was written in the budget. It is not there. That was false; it could not happen.

Post-election, the Labor Party changed that strategy. It said that it would now have a debt repayment account to pay off debt. How would that account be filled with money to pay off debt? Apparently, it was pretty simple: the government would wait for “unanticipated or windfall revenue”. Basically, we have a Premier who is waiting to win Lotto to pay debt. That is his plan. The government is waiting to win Lotto to pay debt and it will do so in a jobs bill, which, by the way, under law, cannot do what the Premier is telling the people of Western Australia it will do.

The reason for this MPI today is very, very simple: it is to alert the public of Western Australia once again to the fact that this Premier is full of spin, has no substance and is only interested in one job in Western Australia, and that is his own. He will stand in this place and will put on a performance for his backbench to tenuously hold onto his chair as leader. He will try his best to hold onto it. What is he doing out there in the community where it really matters? He is telling the public things that he cannot deliver. He is spinning yarns, which is an abuse of privilege, and he must stop.

MRS L.M. HARVEY (Scarborough — Deputy Leader of the Opposition) [3.21 pm]: I am really disappointed that, as usual, the opposition is being treated with utter contempt by the Premier and his colleagues. This is a really serious issue in Western Australia. We are very proud of our record with the new Perth Stadium. We are proud of making the decision to build that stadium. Western Australians were behind us on that. We secured 90 per cent local content for that stadium project without the need for legislation. We are prosecuting that this legislation is yet another stunt by this Premier. When we look at the definitions within the Western Australian Jobs Bill 2017, it is very, very clear that any firm in Western Australia, any other state of Australia, or New Zealand would be eligible for contracts under this legislation.

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What we are interested in and what we are trying to highlight today is what has occurred since this government has been in power since March 2017. We have found out that a number of contracts have been awarded to companies from overseas and other states, particularly to do with the stadium. One of those firms that has missed out is a Western Australian company called Lloyd Events, which runs events. It is an exclusively Western Australian company and has an outstanding reputation. Its clients include Patersons Stadium, the West Coast Eagles, the Fremantle Dockers, the Western Force and the International Super Series Hockey 9s. It is also responsible for Live at the Quarry and the Cuban Club, which are outstanding events. This 100 per cent Western Australian company is not good enough for this government. It is not good enough that Lloyd Events has joined up with Healthway and sponsors the Ord Valley Muster and the HBF Run for a Reason, which are good West Aussie causes. It is not good enough to have a contract in our brand-new stadium as a wholly owned Western Australian-based company. That contract has gone to another state—another territory. That is what this ridiculously named Western Australian Jobs Bill will allow in the future, so what is the point?

Then we can take a look at HiscoNFE, which has been supplying catering equipment and cutlery to Patersons Stadium since 1985. It is a purely Western Australian company with a proud Western Australian history of providing goods and services to not only Patersons Stadium, but also many other Western Australian firms that value their relationship with Western Australian companies unlike this government, which comes into this place with another stupid stunt, pretending that it wants to create Western Australian jobs. What has it done? It has awarded the cutlery contract to a very reputable firm that was established in France in 1880. It is the European leader in the distribution of small equipment to professionals in hospitality and catering services. That is the business that will supply the cutlery to the new stadium. It is not a Western Australian company. These guys are doing okay; they are supplying to 12 countries and they have eight subsidiaries. They already have 500 employees, but not one in Western Australia yet. They are all overseas. They have 60 000 customers across Europe, and they just got one more—the new Perth Stadium. Good luck to that business. Its 400 partner suppliers across Europe will no doubt benefit as a result of this French-based European company—a leader in their field in Europe—securing the contract for Perth Stadium. Well done! Notwithstanding Hisco's long partnership with Paterson Stadium and its great reputation in Western Australia and its other Western Australian clients, "Sorry, West Aussie, you're not good enough. We want France. We want Europe supplying to the new Perth Stadium."

Western Power scandalously entered into a contract for advertising. That contract is now paying a South African company to do the advertising. I am sorry, but I find it unfathomable that no Western Australian or even Australian or New Zealand company fits the criteria of this jobs bill before the house and was awarded that contract. Apparently, not one company in Western Australia is capable of delivering the animation product required for this advertising program. There is a website that shows all the Australian and New Zealand companies that could deliver animation services. They are absolutely desperate for work but apparently not one of them has the capacity to show the Western Australian public via animation how to cut trees away from overhead powerlines. There is no Western Australian animator who can do that, apparently; only someone in South Africa can do that. That is what this government has done since it came to power. What a complete farce! It has brought a bill before the house—another stunt piece of legislation—just like the dangerous sex offender legislation and the public sector reform legislation. Luckily, this bill was not declared urgent like the other ones and left to languish in the other place. It is very cute.

Indigenous housing was delivered in the Kimberley by Ri-con. Ri-con is a great business with a great history of providing Indigenous employment in Queensland, so it got the contract. What did it do? It set up an office in Broome so it looks like it is a local business. What about all those Aboriginal industries based in the Kimberley putting their roots down—the locals trying to build local jobs with local contracts? They have been shafted because the guy in Queensland apparently does a better job. He set up an office in Broome. Good luck to him. He said that he would provide Indigenous employment by providing houses to the Pilbara and the Kimberley. That is fantastic, but there are Western Australian companies that could do that. This Premier said that he was going to prioritise them and give them the job and he did not. The jobs have gone to Queensland. Then the Premier brought legislation to this place that says the status quo will prevail. Queensland can still get that job and South Australia can still get that job, like it has been doing since March. They have no record on this. I still cannot believe that a company that has 500 employees in Europe has the contract to provide cutlery to Perth Stadium.

With all the rhetoric and bluff and bluster of this Premier and the promises that he made to the community, we are up to broken promise number—what is it, members? Is it eight or 10? I do not know how many broken promises we are up to now, but we are keeping a tally. We will make sure that the community of Western Australia knows that the Premier said anything to get elected and he does not walk the walk.

MR M. MCGOWAN (Rockingham — Premier) [3.30 pm]: One of the great things about the election result is that confidence is back in Western Australia.

Several members interjected.

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The SPEAKER: Members!

Mr M. McGOWAN: Rather than —

Mrs L.M. Harvey interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Scarborough, you just stood and spoke and no-one interjected. How about returning the courtesy?

Mr M. McGOWAN: Courtesy often is not returned in this place. The great thing about the election result is that confidence is back in Western Australia. Over the past few years, and particularly the last four years, in Western Australia we had a dysfunctional and ramshackle government and everyone knows it; the opposition knows it. The infighting, the fighting between the National Party and the Liberal Party, the two separate budgets that were being run within government and the failure to control expenditure growth in Western Australia were anathema to confidence in our state. Everyone across the community knows it. Go out and talk to businesses. They are thrilled that there has been a change of government. They are thrilled that there are ministers who listen. They are thrilled that there are ministers whom they can talk to, who are not so arrogant as to dismiss them, who listen to the propositions and who are keen to make decisions. That is the style of government in Western Australia today, which is very different from the style of government we had before.

I heard the presentation by the opposition. It listed a range of areas of public administration and job creation in Western Australia that got no attention whatsoever. The Leader of the Opposition talked about defence. He raised defence jobs. I think it is the first time the Liberal Party has even talked about it in 10 years. The last person to talk about it was back in Richard Court's time. We had not heard anything about that in the course of the last government. We now have a defence advocate and a minister who is an ex-naval officer and ship's captain. We have a minister who, as we speak, is in Hawaii seeking —

Several members interjected.

Mr M. McGOWAN: I will tell members what he is doing in Hawaii. He has gone over there to seek US ship visits to Western Australia. That is one of our election commitments. He has gone to Hawaii to meet with the naval officers in charge of the United States Seventh Fleet to talk about ship visits to Western Australia. That is what a good government does. Opposition members go out there and —

Mr P.A. Katsambanis: What about nuclear submarines?

The SPEAKER: Member, I heard you the first time and no-one reacted, so do not do it again.

Mr M. McGOWAN: It is not something the member even understands.

Mr P.A. Katsambanis: Clearly you do not.

Mr M. McGOWAN: You think? You think I do not understand that?

Mr P.A. Katsambanis: Yes.

Mr M. McGOWAN: Honestly! Then the opposition listed tourism. Again, the Minister for Tourism has ensured that our budget has a significant boost for marketing and events in Western Australia. We are working on an overarching brand for Western Australia that we hope to launch in the next few months. We have not had one before; other states do. I heard members opposite talk about other issues. I heard the issue of housing mentioned. The Minister for Transport has been successful in securing a massive boost from the commonwealth for road building and rail construction in Western Australia, and we expect more in the future. The Liberal–National government said that it would not happen. I remember it saying before the election that it would not happen. Guess what—it was totally and utterly wrong and everyone in Western Australia knows it. Everyone nationally knows it and everyone—these are federal ministers I am referring to and even higher—is a little perturbed about the opposition's commentary about these sorts of things and its attitude towards the federal government and these sorts of things. They wonder why the opposition is not out there standing up for Western Australia. We are out there standing up for Western Australia, seeking national support for important projects in our state, yet the Liberal Party is out there denigrating it all the time. Why does the Liberal Party hate Ellenbrook so much? What has Ellenbrook ever done to the Liberal Party? It gave them Frank Alban. That was some contribution!

Several members interjected.

Mr M. McGOWAN: I said that the Liberal Party gave them Frank Alban and its members say that I am in the gutter. I do not get it. Are they not proud of Frank? For some reason, the Liberal Party seems to hate Ellenbrook. We are out there advocating for support for Ellenbrook and Morley and it is out there saying no. What sort of opposition is it? What sort of party is it that it has this distaste for people in the north-eastern suburbs of Perth? The opposition leader said that we were hurting Western Australian jobs by stopping foreigners taking them.

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Dr M.D. Nahan: That is what you said.

Mr M. McGOWAN: That is what you said, my friend. My friend, you do not have an orderly sentence structure, so that is the sort of thing you say. I think if you look in *Hansard*, you will discover that that is what you said.

My view—maybe it is a little too commonsense for the Leader of the Opposition—is that at a time of high unemployment, we should be looking to provide jobs to Western Australian electricians and brickmakers and plumbers and a whole range of occupations such as engineers, tilers and the like. The Liberal–National government had those occupations on the skilled migration list, a fast-tracking mechanism for people with those occupations to come to Perth. I thought that when tens of thousands of local people with those skills are unemployed, we should try to prioritise local people. I suspect that virtually every person in every country in the world would agree with that philosophy. The only people who do not agree with it is the Liberal Party of Western Australia. The opposition leader said that we are hurting local jobs by not giving them to foreign workers. I cannot understand that sentence.

Dr M.D. Nahan: You just watch.

Mr M. McGOWAN: I do not understand why or how he could say that. I suspect he does not know why he said it, because he often says things that are really quite incomprehensible.

Dr M.D. Nahan interjected.

The SPEAKER: Leader of the Opposition, I call you to order for the third time. I have warned you plenty of times. That is your last warning.

Mr M. McGOWAN: We changed the skilled migration list. We deleted from the list all those sorts of occupations in which a large number of Western Australians are out of work, in the same way that they have been deleted in Sydney and Melbourne and other jurisdictions around Australia. We adopted the natural approach for when there is a large number of people out of work in those areas and we put Western Australian jobs first. That is our approach. The opposition has a different approach to these things, but that is our approach.

The opposition talked about foreign students. In a couple of short weeks, I will be leading a delegation of around 40 education and tourism providers to China, seeking tourism and foreign students into Western Australia. It is the first time this has been done. On Friday, I addressed the large delegation from universities, TAFE colleges, schools, private providers, tourism providers and the like. It was a huge room full of people going to China to open doors and get opportunities because the Western Australian government is activist about these things. That is what I am doing in a couple of weeks. The opposition says that we are doing nothing about foreign students. What is that? That is activism.

Dr M.D. Nahan: A trip to China.

Mr M. McGOWAN: A trip to China—right. For some reason the opposition leader seems to think the Premier of Western Australia should not lead a business delegation to China. If I were the Leader of the Opposition, I would be saying that that is the right thing to do. When the former Premier went to China, I thought that was the right thing to do. Obviously, in the opposition's mindset, the opposition leader seems to think that that is the wrong thing to do. Again, I cannot explain that or the Leader of the Opposition's attitude. I will give the opposition leader a tip, as I was an opposition leader for five years: sometimes we need to be positive. Then the Leader of the Opposition might find that he will reap —

An opposition member interjected.

Mr M. McGOWAN: Pardon? I do not think Hansard got that one.

Mr D.C. Nalder: Can I respond?

The SPEAKER: You can, because this time the Premier has asked you to.

Mr M. McGOWAN: It is really quite bizarre, Mr Speaker. In question time, I referred to a range of things, including our local railcar manufacturing strategy that is contrary to the former government's railcar manufacturing strategy and the bridge over the Swan River that we are building in Western Australia that the former government sent to Malaysia.

Mr D.C. Nalder: No, we didn't.

Mr M. McGOWAN: Where did it send it to?

Mr D.C. Nalder: It was subcontracted to South Australia, and they subcontracted just the arches over there.

Mr M. McGOWAN: As I said, I recall that I must have asked the question —

Ms R. Saffioti: Just the arches?

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Mr M. McGOWAN: No; that is not right.

Mr D.C. Nalder: It is.

Mr M. McGOWAN: Just the arches, is that what the member is saying?

Mr D.C. Nalder: Yes.

Mr M. McGOWAN: The member for Bateman did not have much idea what was going on, because it was all going to Malaysia, my friend. We are building it here in Western Australia. We saw it on the weekend. It will be a magnificent construction by a great Western Australian company—Civmec. The opposition seems to have a hatred of the government's Western Australian Jobs Bill.

Mr W.R. Marmion interjected.

Mr M. McGOWAN: If the opposition wants to vote against Western Australian jobs, that is its prerogative. The bill complies with the federal Constitution.

Mr W.R. Marmion: Who said we're going to vote against it?

Mr M. McGOWAN: Is the opposition going to vote against it?

Mr S.K. L'Estrange: Tell us what it's going to achieve?

Mr M. McGOWAN: The opposition is attacking the bill in this MPI. Is the opposition voting against it or not?

Mr S.K. L'Estrange: What's it going to achieve?

Mr M. McGOWAN: It provides more opportunities for Western Australian companies to win contracts from the Western Australian government. It writes participation plans into contracts. It applies to government trading enterprises. It gives legislative authority, and it requires the Premier to report to Parliament. It requires all those things that have not occurred before. It has been done in Victoria and Queensland. It is a practice that has actually resulted in higher levels of local content over east. We want to see more local content in government work. I cannot guarantee that every job and every contract will go to a Western Australian company, but I can guarantee that under this approach they will have much better chance. That is what I can promise. If the opposition thinks that the government is ignoring section 92 of the Commonwealth Constitution, it needs to get a decent lawyer in its ranks, because it currently does not have one.

The bill will do a range of things, which I have just outlined, but it will significantly improve the ability of local businesses to receive contracts from the Western Australian government. Businesses are calling out for this; the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Western Australia has endorsed it, and I urge the Liberal Party to support it.

MS R. SAFFIOTI (West Swan — Minister for Transport) [3.42 pm]: I rise to speak against this matter of public interest, which again highlights that the opposition is in a spiral of absolute negativity. It has opposed the redirection of infrastructure funding to road and rail projects across the state. It opposes any further federal government funding of state infrastructure. Now it is opposing the Western Australian Jobs Bill. This is what the opposition is doing. It is opposing a bill that supports WA jobs. The opposition has asked what the bill will do. That highlights the problems that occurred under the former government. We heard the interjection of the member for Bateman, who said that the deck of the bridge was being made here. It was not. I want to make it clear that in all the discussions about the bridge, there was an issue with transparency. The member for Bateman just said that there was a contract to another company, who subcontracted and then subcontracted again. There was a lack of clarity and transparency. The former government should have known what was happening. There are questions about exactly how much it knew or the questions it asked. Transparency and clarity is created by requiring participation plans in the procurement process to identify the source of the work being undertaken. That is a key part of the process. Sometimes ministers do not get clarity on where work is being done. Participation plans are integral to the process and they provide clarity and transparency. I was down where they are constructing the bridge on Sunday and I must say it is a significant and elaborate structure. Western Australians are working hard to produce that bridge. We have given them a significant task, but I am confident in that company's ability to deliver the bridge in a good time frame.

The former government was willing to receive a substandard bridge, late. We were not willing to accept that. In April this year, the Leader of the Opposition said words to the effect of, "The fact of the matter is the decking that he claims he's going to get done locally is already being done locally. Don't fiddle with those contracts. Don't delay the project." In April this year the Leader of the Opposition was arguing against bringing those jobs back to WA. That is what he was doing. He did not understand the contract the former government had entered into.

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Speaker; Dr Mike Nahan; Mr Sean L'Estrange; Mrs Liza Harvey; Mr Mark McGowan; Ms Rita Saffioti; Mr Donald Punch; Ms Jessica Shaw

Another key issue the opposition wants—I do not know why it wants to raise this—is rail manufacturing. We have a clear policy. The former government had a target of two per cent in WA; our target is 50 per cent. That is our clear policy. The opposition is going on about 100 per cent being manufactured in Queensland. The opposition obviously has not done its research because the answer it gave when it was in government did not state that. I saw the opposition drafting its question during question time. I tried that a lot in opposition and my advice is that sometimes it catches you out. The opposition should do its research, because it got it totally wrong, and we will expose that in the next couple of days.

What about the idea that we should be getting more local manufacturers to build railcars? I visited Victoria and saw what can be done.

Mr Z.R.F. Kirkup interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Dawesville, I call you to order for the first time.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: This government is going to continue to create real jobs in WA.

I will go through some of the opposition's attacks. The Leader of the Opposition has argued against every job-creating project this government has committed to. The Leader of the Opposition does not support and wants to cancel Metronet. He wants to cancel a massive job-creating project. The Leader of the Opposition has argued that \$1.2 billion should be ripped out of WA. The Leader of the Opposition is arguing against more funding for Western Australian infrastructure. Everything he does is about killing jobs in this state and everything he has said is about ruining confidence. I have been to many industry dinners and functions in the past few months —

Mr S.K. L'Estrange: What about just doing some work!

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: I will get to the member for Churchlands in a minute. At all the events I have attended I have seen that confidence is up. The feedback from industry is that confidence is up. The only thing that is having an impact on confidence in WA is the Leader of the Opposition and the Liberal Party.

Does anyone remember the member for Churchlands' time as a minister? I have gone through some of his major reforms and I think the biggest thing he did was create the hashtag #shredthered. The only thing he did as minister was create spin and media statements about cutting red tape. He did nothing. All he did was go around talking about cutting red tape. He did not create a job; he did nothing. Remember Repeal Week? When it came to power, the former government's big job-creating policy was to bring legislation to the Parliament that repealed obscure legislation that no-one had ever heard of. That was the former government's job creating plan for WA. It did nothing as a government. It created uncertainty and confusion in the economy, and it continues to do so. Today's performance is another case in point.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Members, you will have your opportunity to speak.

Dr M.D. Nahan: Gateway.

The SPEAKER: Leader of the Opposition, do you want to go home early?

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: The Leader of the Opposition is fighting for his job every day. The member for Churchlands stands up every day as if he is in a job interview or in a job application process. That is what is happening here.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Bateman!

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: Members opposite should look at themselves. They are all over the place. The Leader of the Opposition comes across as a fool every night on television. No-one has any confidence in him. His own party is leaving him day by day. The federal government does not even talk to the state Liberal Party. Why would it? It is undermining confidence and destroying jobs in WA everywhere it can. Given any opportunity, it wants to be negative and talk down the WA economy.

MR D.T. PUNCH (Bunbury) [3.50 pm]: One of the great things about being a regional member is that I can feel the confidence returning to those in the small and medium business sector as a consequence of policies like the Western Australian Jobs Bill 2017 that they have read and can see in action. They go searching for the policies of the members opposite, as I did —

Mr S.K. L'Estrange: They are looking for jobs.

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Speaker; Dr Mike Nahan; Mr Sean L'Estrange; Mrs Liza Harvey; Mr Mark McGowan; Ms Rita Saffioti; Mr Donald Punch; Ms Jessica Shaw

The SPEAKER: Member for Churchlands, you keep interjecting all the time. No-one interjected when you spoke. Have the same courtesy for everyone else.

Mr D.T. PUNCH: I had a look for local jobs or local participation policies on the Liberal Party website. What did I find? I found nothing. I went to Dr Google and what did I find from the convention? I found plenty of commentary about WAexit but not a thing about local jobs. I went to the Nationals website and not a policy is in sight; it is a policy-free zone. But I found 20 motions from the convention—a lot of motions about a lot of things but not a thing about jobs or about business participation. It is no wonder that the members opposite are having trouble understanding what participation means in the well-planned and well-structured bill before this house, which complies with our state obligations as well as what we intend to achieve locally. In the south west we have 6 450 small to medium-sized enterprises. I can tell that the members opposite are really interested in this topic! I visited one of these industries with the Minister for Regional Development; Agriculture and Food. Hot Weld Fabrication is a metal fabrication business started out by a person —

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Members, I want to hear what the member is saying. Your comments are not really funny.

Mr D.T. PUNCH: He is a young entrepreneur who is very innovative in the metal fabrication business. It started out as a microbusiness and has now grown to a sizeable medium enterprise. What was it building? It was building a pedestrian bridge—a metal, well fabricated, artistic bridge that will be a centrepiece in Bunbury. It is not just any bridge. It is bridge that will be a central feature. With the same minister I went to a Bunbury business lunch. At the lunch the minister recounted a story about opening a new Doppler radar tower. It was a very good project that came out of the previous government. As she was climbing the 90-odd steps to get to the top, she turned to the person who was going up with her and asked them where it was built. She was astounded to hear that this metal fabricated tower had been built in South Australia. Here we have two projects, both of which were funded under the previous government, but with wildly different outcomes for what local capability was used. It just goes to show that in the work of the previous government, the issue of local content and local jobs was absolutely left to chance. Where companies might get access to information and how they might find the lead tenderer was left to chance. They had to struggle to get a sense of direction on participation. This bill is about local participation. It is about giving local businesses and local contractors a line of sight on work coming out of government and will require—within a legislated framework, not a policy framework—any head tenderer to provide an industry participation plan that will detail the opportunities for local providers, local training and apprenticeships. The plan will provide a framework for the government and agencies to consider when considering the whole bid. That is the difference; it is about participation. We might well find in Bunbury that a Perth company might win a bid, but as part of that bid I will expect to see the opportunities for industry participation at the local level.

This bill will provide a line of sight to local capability and local capacity. It will require the identification of training and apprenticeships. Importantly, it will allow local contractors and local providers to look at opportunities for clustering; that is, how they can build an alliance to go after larger contracts and maximise the potential for the region or the state, depending on the scale of the contract. I am very supportive of this bill and I speak against this matter of public interest. I was particularly surprised to find that the members of the opposition would talk about paying lip service to such an important issue when I could not find any detailed examination of this issue in their own policies.

MS J.J. SHAW (Swan Hills) [3.55 pm]: I rise to oppose this motion. Two words spring to mind—wreckers and hypocrites! What a pack of wreckers and hypocrites! The previous government left the state of Western Australia with record debt and record deficit. It has blocked a gold tax in the upper house. It is blowing holes in the budget and is expecting mums and dads and small businesses to pick up the slack. It now opposes the Western Australian Jobs Bill 2017, which actively targets delivering Western Australian jobs. The members of the opposition are wreckers and they are hypocrites. Is it spite?

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Members!

Ms J.J. SHAW: Is the opposition trying somehow to punish the people of Western Australia for giving it such a clear message at the state election? Is it incompetence? We all know that the Leader of the Opposition has the job that no-one wants. Maybe one person sitting on the front bench wants that job, which is pretty clear. He is a wrecker and he is a hypocrite.

Withdrawal of Remark

Speaker; Dr Mike Nahan; Mr Sean L'Estrange; Mrs Liza Harvey; Mr Mark McGowan; Ms Rita Saffioti; Mr Donald Punch; Ms Jessica Shaw

Mr C.J. BARNETT: The member just referred to the Leader of the Opposition as a hypocrite. That is clearly unparliamentary.

The SPEAKER: Did you call the Leader of the Opposition a hypocrite?

Ms J.J. SHAW: I withdraw that statement.

Debate Resumed

Ms J.J. SHAW: His behaviour is consistent with that of a hypocrite. There is an element of breathtaking hypocrisy, shall we say, in the statements of those opposite. We have put in front of this house a bill that will target growth and is designed to generate Western Australian jobs. It will target strategic projects that are really important for this place. We are struggling under the weight of years of economic mismanagement, debt blowouts and an ongoing constrained investment environment. We need action and this government is taking it. Members opposite are not just wrecking it in government, as they did before, now they are doing everything in their power to wreck it in opposition. It is unbelievable and consistent with hypocrisy.

Mr I.C. Blayney: With 13 votes? How does that work?

The SPEAKER: Member for Geraldton!

Ms J.J. SHAW: This bill has the objective of regaining economic momentum and providing local businesses with opportunities to gain from \$23.5 billion per annum of expenditure. These projects will unlock infrastructure bottlenecks and will be particularly beneficial for electorates like mine—Ellenbrook, which you guys have failed for such a long time. We will use government procurement processes to drive growth.

Mr J.E. McGrath interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for South Perth, are you on steroids?

Ms J.J. SHAW: The multiplier effect of employing thousands more people in the Western Australian economy will be significant. We will add to the capability of small and medium enterprises to participate in government projects, develop their commercial sophistication and increase their competitiveness on the big projects, which members opposite never managed to enable small business to do.

Mr J.E. McGrath interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for South Perth!

Ms J.J. SHAW: We did not just cook this up from nowhere. A number of jurisdictions have very successfully implemented local content requirements, particularly Victoria. I was very interested to hear the Minister for Transport talk about Victoria's rail industry local participation plan. Victoria legislated for local content, starting with its contracts for 40 per cent, 50 per cent and now 60 per cent of local content requirements in its rail rolling stock. Victoria's rail industry now employs 10 000 people in Victoria including welders, boilermakers and carpenters. These are the sorts of jobs that we need to encourage here and that opposition members are actively working against. They are wreckers who are acting in a manner that is consistent with hypocrisy.

Government members: Hear, hear!

Ms J.J. SHAW: We have committed \$400 million to build railcars for Metronet with a 50 per cent local content requirement. We are trying to encourage the development of a local manufacturing industry. When we consider that to our north we have the largest freight rail network in the country, which we hope will start growing, would it not be great if we could supply the iron ore rolling stock from the workshops of Western Australia into the Pilbara? That would be a great idea.

Mr C.J. Barnett interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Cottesloe, I call you to order for the first time.

Ms J.J. SHAW: How about instead of wrecking, the opposition starts backing Western Australia? How about it starts supporting major strategic projects such as the Ellenbrook railway line? How about it does that?

Division

Question put and a division taken, the Acting Speaker (Ms S.E. Winton) casting her vote with the noes, with the following result —

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Speaker; Dr Mike Nahan; Mr Sean L'Estrange; Mrs Liza Harvey; Mr Mark McGowan; Ms Rita Saffioti; Mr Donald Punch; Ms Jessica Shaw

Ayes (18)

Mr C.J. Barnett
Mr I.C. Blayney
Mr V.A. Catania
Ms M.J. Davies
Mrs L.M. Harvey

Mr P. Katsambanis
Mr Z.R.F. Kirkup
Mr A. Krsticevic
Mr S.K. L'Estrange
Mr R.S. Love

Mr W.R. Marmion
Mr J.E. McGrath
Dr M.D. Nahan
Mr D.C. Nalder
Mr K. O'Donnell

Mr D.T. Redman
Mr P.J. Rundle
Ms L. Mettam (*Teller*)

Noes (37)

Dr A.D. Buti
Mr J.N. Carey
Mrs R.M.J. Clarke
Ms J. Farrer
Mr M.J. Folkard
Ms J.M. Freeman
Ms E. Hamilton
Mr T.J. Healy
Mr M. Hughes
Mr W.J. Johnston

Mr D.J. Kelly
Mr F.M. Logan
Mr M. McGowan
Ms S.F. McGurk
Mr K.J.J. Michel
Mr S.A. Millman
Mr Y. Mubarakai
Mr M.P. Murray
Mrs L.M. O'Malley
Mr S.J. Price

Mr D.T. Punch
Mr J.R. Quigley
Ms M.M. Quirk
Mrs M.H. Roberts
Ms C.M. Rowe
Ms R. Saffioti
Ms A. Sanderson
Ms J.J. Shaw
Mrs J.M.C. Stojkovski
Mr C.J. Tallentire

Mr D.A. Templeman
Mr P.C. Tinley
Mr B. Urban
Mr R.R. Whitby
Ms S.E. Winton
Mr B.S. Wyatt
Mr D.R. Michael (*Teller*)

Question thus negatived.