

Mr Mark McGowan; Ms Rita Saffioti; Mr Joe Francis; Speaker; Mr Albert Jacob; Mr Brendon Grylls; Mr Rob Johnson; Mr Bill Marmion; Mr Sean L'Estrange; Mr Ben Wyatt

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**BARNETT GOVERNMENT — PREMIER'S PERFORMANCE**

*Matter of Public Interest*

**THE SPEAKER (Mr M.W. Sutherland)** 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.]

**MR M. McGOWAN (Rockingham — Leader of the Opposition)** [2.54 pm]: I move —

That this house condemns the Premier for his erratic, illogical and irrational decision-making as claimed by the members for Darling Range and Alfred Cove.

As is evident in this motion, two senior members of the government are saying this. It has not been said by someone on the street, by people at a Labor Party branch meeting, by a group of the Greens or even by the Nationals, although they might well say that behind closed doors; members of the Liberal Party are saying this about their Premier. By any measure, the events of the last few days have been extraordinary and they have been embarrassing for the state of Western Australia.

**Mr A. Krsticevic** interjected.

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

**Mr M. McGOWAN:** They have been extraordinary and they have been embarrassing for Western Australia. They have been embarrassing for the Premier. They have held our government up to ridicule at a time when we need confidence in Western Australia and at a time when our economy is in trouble. At a time when there are so many issues, this government collapses itself into a fighting mass of disputing members of Parliament. I want to take members through what has happened. It has been a case of minister against minister, Liberal against Liberal and National against Liberal.

Several members interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Members—the member for Wanneroo especially—I want to hear the Leader of the Opposition in silence. There are going to be a few people having an early tea on both sides.

**Mr M. McGOWAN:** It has been Liberal against Liberal, minister against minister, Liberal against National, National against Liberal and National against National, all in the last few weeks. The Premier describes this as tedious.

**Mr B.J. Grylls** interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Member for Pilbara, I call you to order.

**Mr M. McGOWAN:** The Premier makes out like this is a big joke. There has been a crisis of confidence in the government of Western Australia by members and ministers of the Liberal Party. As we have seen today, it shows that the Premier governs as a bully. You govern as a bully. You intimidate your opponents, both external and internal.

**Mr C.J. Barnett:** You want to go down that path?

**Mr M. McGOWAN:** That is what you do. There he goes, and there it is; that is the way he governs. We did not have a lot of time for the way the two former ministers, the member for Alfred Cove and the member for Darling Range, handled their portfolios, to be fair, but at least as cabinet ministers they stood up and said that they were not happy with what was going on. We have to reward them for their courage. I have heard them being called all sorts of things around the place. Yesterday I heard Peter van Onselen call them idiots. But I know in my heart of hearts that they had the courage to stand up and say what they thought, and not many people do. They stood up and said what they thought about the way the Premier has been governing. We have been watching the member for Darling Range, in particular, for years in this place nodding when we make points about finances or health or broken promises or any of those issues. He wears his heart on his sleeve. These two former ministers have thrown bare and thrown open for public examination the style of government that has been going on in Western Australia now for a long period.

This government has been in power for too long. The Premier is leading a tired, old and arrogant government. The Premier can never admit to a mistake. He never admits to anything being wrong. He sits in this place going through the motions every day as though he was infallible. It is a tired, old and arrogant government. I think at least 15 members of the Liberal Party, as we saw today—one-third of the party room—know it. If the member for Hillarys was still a Liberal, and Hon Nigel Pratt—sorry, Hon Nigel Hallett —

Several members interjected.

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**The SPEAKER:** Members!

**Mr M. McGOWAN:** Had they been there, of course there would have been another two votes, and if the National Party had been thrown in the Premier would have been gone. We have seen a tired, useless wreck of a government, with the disunited dysfunctional nature of this government thrown bare in the last few days.

Several members interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** That is enough.

**Mr M. McGOWAN:** It has always had a lid put on it because of the Premier's personality. He bullies and cajoles; he intimidates. He has kept the lid on it for so long by, to be frank, the way that he, and apparently his office, treats people. A lid has been kept on it for so long and eventually the pressure cooker has burst. In the last couple of days we have seen what has gone on for eight long years in Western Australia—that style of governing. The way the Premier treats people and the way decisions have been made has, frankly, been unacceptable. It is now laid bare and people can see it. But, Premier, you reap what you sow—the way the Premier treated those ministers and other ministers. Let us have a look at them; let us have a look at how many former government ministers there are sitting in this Parliament whom the Premier kicked out, dismissed and got rid of from his cabinet.

Several members interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Members; that is enough.

**Mr M. McGOWAN:** Let us have a look at them all: the member for Bunbury, the member for Murray–Wellington, the member for Dawesville, the member for Eyre, Hon Ken Baston, Hon Robin McSweeney, Hon Helen Morton and Hon Simon O'Brien. They are now joined by the member for Darling Range and the member for Alfred Cove. We can chuck on the top of that —

**Mr P.T. Miles** interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Member for Wanneroo, I call you to order now for the third time.

**Mr M. McGOWAN:** We can throw on top of that the member for Hillarys. The Premier has so many former ministers on his backbench whom he has treated badly, dismissed without reason and thrown on the scrap heap. Is it any wonder that they have rebelled?

**Mrs L.M. Harvey** interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Deputy Premier, I call you to order for the first time.

**Mrs L.M. Harvey** interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** If you want to be called for the second time, continue.

**Mr M. McGOWAN:** Honestly, the government thinks it is a joke. Government members have embarrassed and disgraced Western Australia over the course of the last three days and they think it is a joke. You reap what you sow. Ministers have been cast aside without reason. Often—we hear them say it—they have no idea what they have done wrong, because in the morning the Premier says what a great job they are doing and then he sacks them by text message in the afternoon. That is what has occurred in this government over its time in office. People are being treated in that manner because of the bullying nature of the Premier and the style in which he has governed. As I said, that is all laid bare today; we have seen it all. I am going to go into what former ministers have had to say about this style of government in Western Australia, but before I do I just want to say this: you reap what you sow. The people of Western Australia have now seen the worst debt on record; the worst deficit on record; the loss of the AAA credit rating; the worst credit rating in the country; the worst ambulance ramping on record; the worst waitlist in our hospitals on record; massive cuts to our schools; unprecedented increases in crime, according to police ministers; the worst congestion crisis anyone can remember; numerous broken promises; and the worst meth crisis in the country. That is this government's record.

Several members interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** That is enough.

**Mr M. McGOWAN:** That is the government's record. In particular, there is the record of the things that the people thought they were electing the government to do, such as managing the finances properly. The government has failed in that. It makes excuse after excuse, but that is the record of the Liberal Party in Western Australia and that is the record of this Premier. I want to quote someone who is an authority on these issues—that is, the member for Alfred Cove. He had the following to say yesterday, not just in a throwaway

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remark, not under pressure in a press conference, but in a deliberately constructed column written for *The West Australian*. He wrote the following —

We need a new direction. We need to show the community that we can restore confidence and lead the State through this period of uncertainty.

The task is made harder by the extraordinary level of State debt that will be part of the Premier's legacy.

That is a direct quote from this article. There are no excuses about how it is everyone else's fault and no excuses about how it is the fault of the commonwealth or the GST deal that the Liberals entered into—there are none of those excuses. He just said it was the Premier's legacy. Over the course of the last eight years, those government members who have been in cabinet over all that time whilst warning after warning has been given about these issues sat there and did nothing. They did not step up and they did not step out. Two people have stepped up and they have stepped out—the member for Darling Range and the member for Alfred Cove—because they cannot believe the style of government that is going on. I want to quote further from the article by the member for Alfred Cove. It states —

The community is clearly rattled by the pace and impact of the post-mining boom downturn. Many have lost their jobs; many more are worried their jobs could be next.

But the Premier is not listening. Not to me, not to his Cabinet colleagues, not to his party room and certainly not to the community. As a result, the community stopped listening to him.

The member for Alfred Cove then went on to write this in respect to a range of projects —

All that has been put at risk because of the Premier's increasingly erratic decision-making.

The member for Darling Range had this to say in relation to the Premier —

“Our Government won two elections based on good policies and effective leadership, but has now lost its way and offers neither of those things.

In *The Sunday Times* the member for Alfred Cove was quoted as saying the following about the Premier. He said —

“He ... has lost my support,” ... “To me some of the decision making has become erratic and illogical and I believe this is not just damaging the Liberal's chances at the next election, but the state's economic future.”

That is the state's economic future. A senior minister, a former senior businessman, went out there and with aforethought—not on the spur of the moment—said these things about the management of the state. The government pretends all the events of the last couple of days are some sort of joke. No doubt the Premier will stand up and yell and scream about events from 10 years ago and what have you, but we are talking about the state's future. We are talking about the Premier's management of the state. This is not personal; I am quoting the Premier's colleagues. I am not even saying any of this. Although I agree with the Premier's colleagues, I am quoting them.

**Mr C.J. Barnett:** We might quote you soon.

**Mr M. McGOWAN:** The Premier probably will, because he probably will not address the issues that have been raised by these two now former ministers. They are serious matters and they have caused the government of our great state to implode over the last few days, with argument, disruption and hatreds laid bare. How does that send confidence to the broader community? How does that send confidence to the investment community? How does that say to the people of Western Australia that we have a government that knows what it is doing when this has gone on over the last few days? As I said, it has been a combination of years. We have seen minister after minister removed from cabinet, not reappointed after an election or given their marching orders without reason. Is it any wonder that when the Premier governs with that dictatorial style, he ends up in the situation he is now in? Is it any wonder? It is staring us all in the face. In some ways it is amazing that it has not happened before now. The Premier is clearly difficult to deal with.

**Mr J.H.D. Day:** Says who?

Several members interjected.

**Mr M. McGOWAN:** Thank you for that question. The member for Darling Range, the member for Alfred Cove, the member for Hillarys, the member for Murray–Wellington, Hon Helen Morton and Hon Simon O'Brien—you name it; they all say it. Even if the Premier's personality is such that he is difficult to deal with, why is it

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important? He is not a clerk in a bank; he is not a mid-range public servant. Billions of dollars' worth of decision-making is on the line. The member for Alfred Cove was saying that there are billions of dollars on the line that he wants to meet and talk to the Premier about, but he cannot get in to see him. That is also what the member for Darling Range said. An enormous local government disaster has occurred, which the Premier created, but the member for Darling Range did not have the opportunity to get direction from the Premier. Either they are telling the truth or the Premier is telling the truth. All three cannot be right and that is where we are at now. A whole bunch of people are saying things about the Premier's leadership while he is saying the opposite. The public will have to decide who is telling the truth: his colleagues, who deal with the Premier, or the Premier. That is the decision that needs to be made. That is why it is important. If we are to have proper cabinet government, we need a cabinet that can govern, a Premier who listens, and a part of the government—the National Party—that follows cabinet joint decision-making. But none of those things are occurring in this state today. That is why it is important. It is not a joke. The Premier cannot pass this off as nothing. He cannot say that in a week's time this will not matter. This is important and the way the Premier has governed the state and the way he has treated people is a serious issue for the future of Western Australia. I want to close by quoting the remarks of the member for Alfred Cove who said in the conclusion of his article —

We cannot deliver the change in direction the State needs unless there is a change in leadership.

And there it is—probably the most prescient thing he has ever said. That is the only way we will have a decent future going forward.

**MS R. SAFFIOTI (West Swan)** [3.12 pm]: No portfolio demonstrates the erratic, illogical and irrational approach to government more than the transport portfolio under the Barnett government. Its history tells us there have been a lot of transport ministers but one constant—the Premier. As a result, we have seen broken promises and millions of dollars wasted on projects that were election commitments and that never got off the ground.

**Mr C.J. Barnett** interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** That is enough!

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** If we go through it again, we can see the absolutely erratic behaviour when we are talking about billions of dollars' worth of expenditure. The latest is the Perth Freight Link. The fact that the Premier said on radio that cabinet did not make a decision to build the tunnel is an absolute mistruth and a lie.

*Withdrawal of Remark*

**Mr J.M. FRANCIS:** Point of order, Mr Speaker.

**The SPEAKER:** Sit down. Member for West Swan, I want you to withdraw that.

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** I withdraw.

**The SPEAKER:** Thank you.

*Debate Resumed*

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** It is a mistruth because cabinet made a decision and it was in the budget. Big spending items get in the budget because cabinet ticks it off. I refer to the state budget speech on which the Treasurer stood in this place and said, "I am also pleased to confirm the Perth Freight Link tunnel construction." A fact sheet was released about the Perth Freight Link and to say that cabinet did not make a decision is an absolute mistruth. Let us go through this. Cabinet made a decision on stages 1 and 2 of the Perth Freight Link. The key part of this and what the former Minister for Transport alluded to is that because the government made that decision, the contract around Roe 8 had to be changed because the tunnel would begin from a different point. Therefore, the nature of the original Roe 8 had to change. I suspect that the former Minister for Transport was shocked when on 26 August he made the point to the Premier about stages 1 and stage 2 and the Premier said, "We're not doing stage 2." My goodness; we have a contract that Main Roads is trying to push ahead with, which is now wrong and it has to be adjusted because it will not reach Stock Road.

**Mr C.J. Barnett:** Oh dear; oh dear!

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** That is a fundamental problem. It means a complete waste of \$23 million to progress —

I am hearing the Premier's echo next door. Whatever he says is echoing next door. The Premier and his echo—because there is no originality next door.

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** Over \$20 million will be wasted.

**Mrs G.J. Godfrey** interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** That is enough! Member for Belmont! Carry on.

**Extract from Hansard**

[ASSEMBLY — Tuesday, 20 September 2016]

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**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** Over \$20 million will be wasted. That is what the former minister said.

Look at taxi reform. Uber has been operating for two years. The Premier said that Uber was okay. The former Minister for Transport sort of woke up to Uber later on, but that was in the situation whereby the Premier said that Uber was okay. The government brought in legislation for assistance to taxi plate owners in May. The government said that the reforms would happen on 4 July. The legislation should have been debated in this house then. I have been asking where the legislation was. I would have thought the transitional assistance would be ready by the time the taxi industry was deregulated, but the legislation never appeared. Weeks went by and I thought: surely the government is bringing in this taxi reform legislation, but it never appeared. Now we know that the former Minister for Transport was trying to meet with the Premier to discuss the legislative priority. However, this government governs by the Premier's office dictating to the leader of government business on a daily basis what he believes the legislation priorities should be. That is how it happens. As a result, we have seen no proper legislative priority process, but have seen a complete breakdown of key legislation such as the taxi reform legislation.

There is the public transport plan. The Premier said to the Minister for Transport, "Go ahead, have a play and create a public transport plan." That is all it was. The Treasurer was undermining it from day one; he never supported it. The former Minister for Transport was set up. The Premier said, "Go out and create a public transport plan." No-one in government ever had any idea that the government would commit to it.

I refer to other transport plans and promises such as the Ellenbrook rail line. Remember the Ellenbrook rail line? The Premier committed to it in 2008. Then he said that it was not a commitment. Who did he leave out to dry? It was the member for Swan Hills. The Premier said that the member for Swan Hills had committed to it but the Premier had no idea about it, when it was included in the Liberal Party election costings. It had been authorised by the Liberal Party and the Premier had committed to it on TV. He left them out to dry and then he said, no-one —

Several members interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** That is enough.

Several members interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** That is enough. I want to hear the member for West Swan.

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** Then the Premier went on to say that we did not commit to it. Then he said, "We did commit to it but no-one voted for it because it was about the vibe. The community did not worry about commitment; it was just the vibe of the election and that is why they voted for us." Now the Ellenbrook rail line is not planned to be built for 50 years.

The government committed also to the Metro Area Express light rail and then spent \$26 million on planning it, and then it completely fell apart. No portfolio better demonstrates the erratic, illogical and irrational approach to government than the transport portfolio. I have been watching the body language of members opposite. Many on that side are not happy.

Several members interjected.

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** I would say that members on our side are happier about today's decision than many members on that side. We are very happy that they have stuck with the Premier. We could not be happier with their choice today.

Several members interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Members!

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** It appears that they were brought over by changing the Brisbane Line. That is all they did. They did not cut off all members off, just a few of them. That is how the Premier bought them off today. As I said, it is completely irrational.

The Treasurer is an interesting person. I watched the press conference with all those people gathered around the Premier, and the Treasurer was at the back talking to somebody else.

Several members interjected.

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** Actually not—echo?

The Treasurer was at the back talking to somebody else. He was reluctant to be there because he knows that that was a bad decision. We have seen an erratic, illogical and irrational approach and that is what the public is fed up with.

**MR A.P. JACOB (Ocean Reef — Minister for Environment)** [3.20 pm]: Thank you, Mr Speaker.

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Several members interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** That is enough!

**Mr A.P. JACOB:** I do not normally get that level of excitement when I get the chance to stand.

**Mr P.C. Tinley:** Who'd you vote for?

**The SPEAKER:** That is enough.

**Mr A.P. JACOB:** I supported the Premier 100 per cent and I will outline some of the reasons why. Thanks for the interjection.

**Dr A.D. Buti** interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** That is enough!

**Mr A.P. JACOB:** I am sure he will get a chance to as well if the member stops interjecting on me for a second.

Several members interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Members! Member for Armadale, I call you to order for the first time. Member for Willagee, I call you for the second time, I think.

**Mr A.P. JACOB:** Every government, every cabinet and every Premier have challenges from time to time. Government is not easy. Government in a growing state with the myriad issues we face is simply not easy, and it is an incredibly cheap skill to simply sit in the chamber and point out the challenges. That is all we have heard for almost 30 minutes, and, frankly, that is the vast majority of what parliamentary time is. If members opposite harbour any aspirations whatsoever to sit on this side of the house at some point, I am still waiting. We are less than six months out from the election and the challenge is articulating a way through those challenges. The challenges are well known. The challenges in transport, health and education are well known. The task of delivering outcomes is one that eludes many governments, but it has not eluded this one. If we put this government's track record in any single policy area up against that of previous governments, even what they aspired to, not what they ever delivered, they will come up well and truly short. In particular, transport is a big issue in my electorate, and we are delivering the Mitchell Freeway extension right now. On education—which is the Leader of the Opposition's Achilles heel, and members opposite will have to address at some point—I do not think Liberal–National government members have ever been as welcome to rock up at their local state school as they are now. The Department of Education and the people who work in the department and parents know which government has delivered, and their memories are certainly long enough to remember how it was leading into 2008. If we move into health, very interestingly, it is probably the easiest portfolio in which to pick areas where things could conceivably be better. There will always be areas in which we could conceivably improve, particularly in health.

**Ms M.M. Quirk** interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Guess what? Member for Girrawheen, you are on three and you are now on three and a half. If you shout out again, you will be having an early afternoon.

**Mr A.P. JACOB:** In my lifetime, I suspect that no government will ever match the track record of this government in delivering an entire rebuild of the state's healthcare system and investing to the level that we have.

**Mr D.J. Kelly:** What about state debt?

**Mr A.P. JACOB:** They bleat about debt. That debt is in schools and hospitals that this state desperately needed. That debt is keeping the lights on. If I warm to my favourite topic at the moment, members opposite still absurdly claim that they have some kind of hold on the environment. They are bereft of any credibility whatsoever on the environment, not only because they never achieved anything near what this government has achieved, but also because of their absurd vote against the Biodiversity Conservation Bill. They would rather that the maximum penalty for Rebels bikie gang members illegally harvesting sandalwood sit at \$200.

Several members interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Member for Kwinana, I have called you three and a half times and you are now on four. If you do it again, you are out!

**Mr A.P. JACOB:** If I talk to my environment portfolio, I can talk about the great opportunity that I have had since March 2013 to be part of the Kimberley science and conservation strategy, which is a \$103 million investment in the most needed biodiverse region of this state. I can talk about the parks for people program and the new lookout at Torndirrup National Park. I can talk about all those achievements and the Biodiversity Conservation Bill and I know that none of those would have gotten up if not for this Premier. I know my portfolio. Not a single one of those initiatives would have gotten up if I had not had the support, the

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vision and the drive of this Premier. In fact, the vast majority of those initiatives were election commitments that this Premier laid down going into the last election, and he has worked alongside us to deliver them. That is leadership. Leadership is challenging, but leadership delivers outcomes. When we look at outcomes, the Liberal–National government stands head and shoulders above any other government in recent years, I suspect—certainly those governments that preceded us.

Members opposite were salivating at the thought of replacing the current Premier. It does not matter what their rhetoric is; they know that he is their biggest threat and that he has the vision, the foresight and the experience to take this election forward and to win the holy grail of a third term. They know where their threat lies, and that is why this motion is before us. I am afraid that we have disappointed them today.

**MR B.J. GRYLLS (Pilbara — Leader of the National Party)** [3.26 pm]: There is no —

Several members interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** I can just feel the excitement here. Calm down. Good news for you, member for Kwinana; I have called you only once, not three times.

**Mr B.J. GRYLLS:** There is no greater fear in politics than the fear of losing a third election and to have to spend 12 years in opposition. There is no greater fear than 12 years in opposition! A bunch of people on the opposite side of the chamber can only look backwards. They do not have a plan and have not, in nine years of opposition, advanced one idea to take the state forward. Now, after reading the opinion poll in *The West Australian* on the weekend, they are going, “Ooh! Ooh! Ooh!” It has been a bruising month for the National and Liberal Parties—probably our worst in government. However, after the worst month in the Liberal–National government’s history, the opposition can only muster three and a half out of 10 Western Australians who will say that they think they should be in government. There is a reason for that: the opposition’s small target strategy has become very small. The opposition has become so small that it has disappeared! The opposition has actually disappeared off the political radar because it does not have anything to say. Members opposite can criticise the Leader of the National Party and the Premier and talk about the members for Alfred Cove and Darling Range, but they cannot advance their plan. Today, members opposite have made it very clear that the criteria to be re-elected in the March election is state debt and AAA credit rating.

**Mr D.J. Kelly** interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Member for Bassendean!

**Mr B.J. GRYLLS:** State debt and the AAA credit rating are the criteria by which the opposition wishes to be judged. Given the Leader of the Opposition seeks to be the Premier in March, he has to make clear what he is going to do to return the state’s AAA credit rating, given that—if I can just get the Leader of the Opposition to put this in *Hansard* again—he has categorically ruled out any new revenue source from the resource sector. Has the Leader of the Opposition categorically ruled out any new revenue from —

Several members interjected.

**Mr B.J. GRYLLS:** Has the Leader of the Opposition categorically ruled that out? He has told the media that he has ruled it out, but he will not tell the Parliament. If the opposition’s strategy is to be so small that its leader cannot say anything, it cannot have a plan. That is why only three in 10 Western Australians think that he should be the Premier. The Leader of the Opposition knows a little about what the Premier may have gone through in the past couple of days, because for the members behind him who thought that Stephen Smith would make a better option than the leader, and whom he still retains on his frontbench helping him formulate his non-existent plan for the future, that is clearly an acceptable strategy. Those members who thought that Stephen Smith could do a better job than the Leader of the Opposition picked up *The West Australian* on Saturday and said “Gee I think we’re on to something.” I would not be surprised if Stephen Smith got a couple of calls over the weekend saying, “Hang on a second, this is not looking good.”

If the Leader of the Opposition wishes to put forward a plan for the people of Western Australia to vote for, he will have to address state debt and the AAA credit rating, by his own conversation. He has ruled out any new revenue source, and he has ruled out asset recycling, which means that he does not have a public transport policy. He does not have an investment in a public transport policy to take to the next election, because he has ruled out asset recycling. He has ruled out a new revenue source and, from what I read in the paper this morning, most of his supporters think the new revenue source from the mining sector may be something worth discussing. His supporters think a revenue source from the resource sector may be worth discussing, because the difference between the Nationals and the Liberals in government is that we have put forward ideas. We have put forward plans, and we are debating those. The public is debating those ideas, and giving feedback on those ideas. The reason the Leader of the Opposition is not in that debate is that he does not talk about anything. All he can talk about is the Liberals and the Nationals.

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Members opposite, I know about it. I was elected in 2001, and I sat in opposition for four years. We lost in 2005. I sat in opposition leading up to 2008. It was a very demoralising time leading up to the 2008 election, thinking that there was a possibility that we would not win. It was a very demoralising time, and members opposite will have to provide the Leader of the Opposition with some level of policy backing to be able to go forward. The only injection into the policy debate about debt and the AAA credit rating has come from the shadow Treasurer, and that was about the privatisation of hospitals. To his credit, he did not hide behind the seat. He is the only one who was not hiding behind the seat. However, it has dropped off the page, because quite clearly the shadow Treasurer does not have support for his privatisation plan from the other members of the caucus. His challenge is that at some point over the next six months he will have to stop being a small target. At that point, he is in deep trouble, because when he stops being a small target his 35 out of 100 will drop into the low 30s. When you drop into the low 30s you do not win, and when you do not win, you spend another four years in opposition. For those thinking about the small target strategy, and how it was going to be so successful, that is 2021, and they are still sitting over there. They should be very nervous about that.

The Liberals and the Nationals have had a bruising month. We are now at the end of that bruising month. The Liberals and the Nationals will work together to come up with a very clear and coherent strategy around state debt and the AAA credit rating, and at that point the Labor Party in Western Australia, for the March 2017 election, will be unelectable.

**MR J.M. FRANCIS (Jandakot — Minister for Emergency Services)** [3.35 pm]: I will start by saying that it is always fascinating to get a leadership lecture on the machinations and challenges of politics from the most Machiavellian person ever to lead the Labor Party.

**Mr M.P. Murray** interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Member for Collie–Preston! Minister, through the Chair.

**Mr F.M. Logan** interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Member for Cockburn, I call you to order for the second time.

**Mr J.M. FRANCIS:** It is always great to get a lesson on leadership machinations in politics from the most Machiavellian person ever to lead the Labor Party—the member for Rockingham. We do not have to go back too far into history, and look at the way he became leader of the Labor Party, to see what his *modus operandi* was.

**Mr A.P. Jacob** interjected.

**Mr J.M. FRANCIS:** Absolutely, Minister for Environment. I remember very well when Eric Ripper sat in that chair, and the member for Rockingham got nine votes against the newly elected, not-yet-sworn-in member for Kwinana for the deputy leadership of the Labor Party. The member for Rockingham was relegated to become manager of opposition business. But he sat there and undermined and undermined. He went to the member for Victoria park and said, “If you run against Eric Ripper, I will back you.” The member for Victoria Park went out and challenged Eric Ripper. It mortally damaged him. He pulled the rug out from underneath the member for Victoria Park and left him standing there, having to promise never to challenge for the leadership again. The member for Victoria Park was stuck out there, never to challenge again. Meanwhile, the member for Rockingham rises like some modern day General Sherman, saying, “I’ve been drafted into the leadership; there’s no-one else left to do it.”

We all know how the member for Rockingham works, and it will not be long before the people of Western Australia start to see through the Teflon man—Captain Teflon over there. He thinks he is slick, and he thinks he is clever, but people will start to see through it. He talked about the issue of the Premier changing out cabinet ministers, and here is the fundamental difference between our side of Parliament and the other side—between the Liberal Party and the National Party in agreement, and the Labor Party. If a Liberal Premier chooses to change out a cabinet minister in order to put the interests of the state first, to get a better team, or for whatever reason he chooses to do it, it is his choice. If the Leader of the Opposition chooses to change out a shadow minister or a minister if, God help us, they ever become the government, he cannot do it without the support of the member for Bassendean and the member for Cannington. He cannot sack a single shadow minister without the support of the union movement that controls the preselections of the very members who put him in that job. That is the one big difference between our side and the opposition. We do not have to answer to the union movement. We do not have to answer to anyone. Our party’s principles are not for sale. The opposition is beholden to all of them—every single one of them.

If members opposite do not believe me, they should look at the fact that the Leader of the Opposition has made far too many promises that he cannot keep. There are far more Labor spokesmen on portfolios than there have ever been positions in a cabinet. If the Labor Party wins, someone is going to miss out. I see the member for

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Armadale smiling at me over there. He is one of the greatest travesties, as an example. He is not the shadow Attorney General, but he should be. He is one of the smartest legal brains on that side of the house, and he is not the shadow Attorney General. Why? Because he has not sold out to a union, and all credit to him.

Several members interjected.

**Mr J.M. FRANCIS:** That is right. Do not even talk about Stephen Smith.

**Mr B.J. Grylls** interjected.

**Mr J.M. FRANCIS:** The Leader of the National Party is right. I bet Stephen Smith's phone has been ringing off the hook in the last couple of days.

Several members interjected.

**Mr J.M. FRANCIS:** That is right; Alannah is not even there, and she is another one to add to the list. If the member for West Swan thinks she will ever become a minister in front of Alannah MacTiernan, if the Labor Party wins government, she is dreaming.

The bottom line is that this government works very well. The relationship between my office, which I can speak very honestly about, and the Premier's office is very open and transparent. I went into this job with a very simple rule that I learnt from being a submarine officer in the Navy—never be the highest ranking person to know about a problem, and never ring the Premier with a problem without some options for a solution. This Premier takes my phone calls 24 hours a day, if required. I have rung him after midnight, and I have rung him at five o'clock in the morning. I have rung him with a situation report about something that might be happening in one of my portfolios. If he does not answer the phone, he calls me back damned quickly. There is nothing wrong with the relationship between ministers' offices and the Premier's office. It just does not happen. Members opposite can make up whatever they want, but I can speak from personal experience —

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

**The SPEAKER:** Member for Albany!

**Mr J.M. FRANCIS:** I can speak from personal experience. If I need to speak to the boss about something, I can. I pick up the phone and I call him. If I cannot get hold of him, I get hold of his chief of staff. It is not that difficult. But he always calls back, because he gives a damn. The great big difference in all of this is that the Leader of the Opposition can never make a decision. He will be hamstrung by the union movement; he will be at their beck and call. He will be taking instructions. Look at that—the member for Bassendean cannot help himself! He is over there giving him instructions right now. The Leader of the Opposition cannot make a decision and cannot make an announcement. If members want an example —

**Mr D.J. Kelly** interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Member for Bassendean, I call you to order for the third time.

**Mr J.M. FRANCIS:** His office cannot even spell "embarrassed"; it is pretty embarrassing, Leader of the Opposition.

**Mr P. Papalia** interjected.

**Mr J.M. FRANCIS:** Yes, and I am the bloke who needs a lecture from you about asbestosis, mate! Rightio—sure.

**Mr P. Papalia** interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Member for Warnbro!

**Mr J.M. FRANCIS:** If we want other examples of divisions within the Labor Party, how it cannot make a decision on anything, we do not need to go further than the absent member for Collie–Preston and the absent shadow Minister for Environment and their position on GM crops. What about the member for Victoria Park and his position, compared with the rest of the Labor Party on, say, uranium mining? It is hopelessly divided on these issues, but the big difference is that we can have an adult, mature conversation about the issues that matter. We can have an adult, mature conversation with our colleagues in government, the National Party. We can have an adult and mature conversation about the big issues that are confronting this state and the reforms that need to happen, but the Labor Party will never be able to; it is not in its DNA. It cannot help itself.

Obviously, we will not support this motion. It is just a pointless exercise by a desperate opposition that is so keen to see itself relegated to that side of the chamber until 2021.

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**MR R.F. JOHNSON (Hillarys)** [3.42 pm]: I thought the Deputy Premier would have stood up and defended her Premier or that the Premier would have stood up and actually —

Several members interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Do not worry about that, member for Hillarys!

**Mr R.F. JOHNSON:** I do worry about them very much, Mr Speaker.

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

**Mr R.F. JOHNSON:** Why don't you be quiet, you silly little man? All right! I have been talking to people from your area.

Several members interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Thank you! That is enough friendly banter, member for Dawesville!

**Mr R.F. JOHNSON:** Yes. Throw him out.

Several members interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** That is enough!

Several members interjected.

**Mr R.F. JOHNSON:** Are you going to throw her out? She is going again.

What a great day to be an Independent! We have the Liberal Party imploding; we have a toxic situation between the Liberal Party and the National Party; and we have a government that is dysfunctional at the moment. Why? It is because we have a dysfunctional Premier. I actually admire, quite deeply, the member for Darling Range. I have always had a high respect for him because —

**Mr J. Norberger** interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Member for Joondalup!

**Mr J. Norberger** interjected.

**Mr R.F. JOHNSON:** Is that brown on your nose, member? It looks like it; it smells like it.

**The SPEAKER:** Member for Joondalup, I call you to order for the first time and the second time.

**Mr R.F. JOHNSON:** I cannot believe that the government has a member in the upper house calling some of her colleagues in this house “rats” and “cockroaches”. I find that disgraceful.

**Mrs L.M. Harvey** interjected.

**Mr R.F. JOHNSON:** She might have been talking about you, more likely, but she was not; she was talking about other members here. Talk about me, by all means; I do not have a problem.

I read with great interest the *STM* magazine in *The Sunday Times*. The only thing I took exception to was the picture of this fellow on the cover; it frightened my granddaughter and it was too much of a close-up. It frightened the life out of her! I read the article with great interest, because it was a bit like *Alice in Wonderland*, and I like that fairy story. The part I found most interesting was the quote in the middle of the article —

“If ... the ship's going down, then I'm not the sort of person who will jump. I'll go down with it.

Let me say, Premier: your ship has been taking water for the last eight years, and it is submerged. It is going down and the band are playing *The Last Waltz*.

Several members interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Thank you; I am getting the wall of noise.

**Mr R.F. JOHNSON:** I have a lot of respect for the member for Darling Range and, indeed, the member for Alfred Cove. They are a great loss to cabinet, in my view, because they both have tremendous expertise that is needed to try to address the horrific debt that this Premier has put us in. The member for Darling Range is a humble baker, but he has run a business and he knows that you cannot spend more than you get in; otherwise, you will go bankrupt. I have always thought very highly of the member for Darling Range; he knows that. We have a top person in the member for Alfred Cove, who has been a leading executive in various businesses, including ANZ and Australia Post. What a tragic loss to cabinet—to lose these two people who can actually do something. The Treasurer has never run a business in his life. The Premier has never, ever run a business in his life. He is an academic. That is great. It is all theory. There is virtually nobody over there who has run a successful business.

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**Mrs L.M. Harvey:** I have.

**Mr R.F. JOHNSON:** Did you start it? No, you did not.

Several members interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Thank you! Deputy Premier! Carry on through the Chair, member for Hillarys.

Several members interjected.

**Mr R.F. JOHNSON:** She is getting a bit upset now. If I were a betting man, I would get onto Sportsbet because it has odds-on now that this Premier will not lead the government into the next election. The favourite now is the Deputy Premier. So if you are a gambling person, get onto Sportsbet and double your money everybody. I do not bet.

**Mrs L.M. Harvey** interjected.

**Mr R.F. JOHNSON:** Why don't you be quiet?

I actually admire to some extent the loyalty of those members who are prepared to go down with the ship, prepared to go down with this captain, because that is where they are going. I do not believe for one minute that he will lead the party into the next election; I really do not.

As for his staff, let me tell members: they are the most foul-mouthed females I have ever come across. That is how they treat people. His chief media spin officer's job is to make him look good, and he gave her an \$84 000-a-year rise. The first thing he did after the 2013 election was to give her an \$84 000-a-year rise because he wanted to get the bad news over with first. He gave his other person, Narelle Cant, a similar sort of rise. That is disgraceful. He wants our police officers and everyone else to get 1.5 per cent or consumer price index—whatever—but he gives his chief people in his office a rise. He has the biggest ministerial office I have ever seen. I will be saying a lot more during debate on the Loan Bill because I have a lot more information in relation to ministerial offices and how many staff are employed. It is far more than were employed in the first four years of government, and all these people are on the gravy train. I say to them: well done for going down with him.

Several members interjected.

*Point of Order*

**Mr R.F. JOHNSON:** The Premier has just made a threat about me and my records, as though I have done something criminally wrong. I say put up or shut up.

**The SPEAKER:** Thank you. Okay. Minister for State Development.

*Debate Resumed*

Several members interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Member for Albany, I have been very tolerant with you. I do not want to hear from you.

**MR W.R. MARMION (Nedlands — Minister for State Development)** [3.49 pm]: What a waste of a motion.

**Ms J.M. Freeman** interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Member for Mirrabooka, this is not question time. I call you to order for the first time.

**Mr W.R. MARMION:** What a waste of a motion—that this house condemns the Premier for his erratic, illogical and irrational decision-making. If that is what we have been doing, we have overseen an amazing transformation of Western Australia and the regions, and we have not even started trying. If this is the way we have been doing it, how does it compare with what Labor was doing when it was in government? We looked at the eight years that Labor was in government, and in fairness, it built one thing. We went to the election in 2008 with a very clever campaign: Name three things that the Labor Party did in eight years of government? In fairness, people could think of one thing. They could think of the train line to Mandurah. One thing—I will give them that.

Several members interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** That is enough!

**Mr W.R. MARMION:** However, Mr Speaker, if the Liberal Party were in power, it would have built the train line as well.

Several members interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** That is enough!

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**Mr W.R. MARMION:** The only thing that people could think of that the Labor Party had done in eight years of government was to build a railway line to Mandurah —

Several members interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Thank you; that is the wall of noise now. This is getting out of hand.

**Ms J.M. Freeman** interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** That is enough, member for Mirrabooka!

**Mr W.R. MARMION:** I shall return to the motion.

**Mr F.M. Logan** interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** That is enough, member for Cockburn!

**Mr W.R. MARMION:** I have been fortunate in my career to work directly with some very fine Western Australians. I have worked for Don Aitken, a former Commissioner of Main Roads. He was the Commissioner of Main Roads for some 22 years. He was an amazing leader, through Liberal and Labor governments, for 22 years. I have worked directly for Ken Michael, a former Commissioner of Main Roads.

**Mrs M.H. Roberts** interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** That is enough, member for Midland!

**Mr W.R. MARMION:** I have worked for Jim Gill, who has a terrific reputation in the public service of Western Australia, and I have worked directly for Richard Court. I now have the privilege of working directly for Colin Barnett—eight years as the Premier of Western Australia.

**Mr W.J. Johnston** interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** That is enough, member for Cannington!

**Mr W.R. MARMION:** How many people can be Premier of a state for eight years? We are so far ahead of all the other states. We are lucky to have a Premier such as Colin Barnett —

Several members interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** That is enough!

**Mr W.R. MARMION:** — with pages and pages of things we have done over the last eight years.

Several members interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Members for Midland and Maylands!

**Mr W.R. MARMION:** I will just reflect on my portfolio of the environment. I do not want to take any thunder from the current Minister for Environment; however, when I was Minister for Environment —

Several members interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** That is enough!

**Mr W.R. MARMION:** Fitzgerald River National Park is one of the icons of conservation in the whole world. It is a biological hotspot, and we carefully built some facilities at either end. That was supported by the Premier. We retained the status of that biological hotspot. I refer to the Kimberley marine parks. Sometimes there are a couple of tricky things a minister has to get across the line, and I will give one example from the Kimberley—Montgomery Reef. Without the support of the Premier of Western Australia, Hon Colin Barnett, Montgomery Reef may not have been in the marine park. People might be allowed to fish on it. I was adamant when I was Minister for Environment that Montgomery Reef would be included in the marine park and, with the support of the Premier, I got that across the line.

Looking at the time I will move very quickly on to one last portfolio: mining. There are amazing achievements in my portfolio of mining. I mention the mining rehabilitation fund first—a leading policy achievement worldwide. I do not believe any state or any country has a mining rehabilitation fund. We have one, which has been implemented by our government.

**Mr F.M. Logan** interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Member for Cockburn!

**Mr W.R. MARMION:** I do note, looking at the time, that I want to mention one project —

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**Mr D.J. Kelly** interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Member for Bassendean!

**Mr W.R. MARMION:** — that the opposition worked on when it was in power, which is Perth Arena. If we want to talk about erratic, illogical and irrational decision-making —

**Mrs M.H. Roberts** interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** That is enough, member for Midland. Enough!

**Mr W.R. MARMION:** That takes the cake. I ought to know, because I was engaged to do the business plan.

Several members interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Member for Cockburn, I suggest you have a little relax here.

**Mr W.R. MARMION:** The Perth Arena —

**Mr F.M. Logan** interjected.

**Mr W.R. MARMION:** He might try to interject, but the member for Cockburn might want to listen to this.

**Mr F.M. Logan** interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** That is enough!

**Mr W.R. MARMION:** There was no schematic design when I was engaged to do the Perth Arena, but there was an estimated figure of \$170 million. Every now and then the government changed it: \$170 million; \$195 million; \$232 million.

Several members interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Thank you. There is time if anybody wants to respond.

**Mr W.R. MARMION:** The person holding the pen and doing the business case takes instructions from the Department of Housing, which is the boss. I was doing the business case and I got a phone call: “Take out the car park.” Why? It was because the former Minister for Transport, Alannah MacTiernan, did not like car parks. The former Minister for Housing and Works did like car parks; however, I was told to take the car park out. So what did I do?

Several members interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Members!

**Mr W.R. MARMION:** Yes. Because I had a bit of experience in government, I rang Treasury.

Several members interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** That is enough!

**Mr W.R. MARMION:** I rang up my Treasury colleague and said that I had just been told to take out the car park.

**Ms R. Saffioti** interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Member for West Swan!

**Mr W.R. MARMION:** They said, “How about you leave it in? Leave the two options in.” So I left in both options.

**Mr F.M. Logan** interjected.

**Mr W.R. MARMION:** I actually wrote two cabinet submissions —

Several members interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** That is enough!

**Mr W.R. MARMION:** — for the member for Cockburn, so I ought to know! I know all about the car park, because when I put in the business case to start with, I counted 640 spaces.

**Mr P. Papalia** interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Member for Warnbro!

**Mr W.R. MARMION:** When it went to cabinet, I was asked to drop it to —

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**Mr B.S. Wyatt:** This is interesting, keep going!

**Mr W.R. MARMION:** It is interesting!

I was asked to drop it to about 280, so that the corporates could have a parking spot. I managed to get that across the line. It went to cabinet and I got a phone call after cabinet: "Increase it from 640 to 680." I could talk for one hour on the Perth Arena, but I have to say that it is an example of erratic decision-making. The Auditor General did not get to the bottom of it in his report, which is diabolical. Far more diabolical than the Ord River —

Several members interjected.

**Mr W.R. MARMION:** This is a good news story for Western Australia. It is a terrific project.

Several members interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Thank you! Hansard has to record the proceedings.

**Mr W.R. MARMION:** The Liberal–National government has delivered so much to Western Australia under the leadership of the Premier Colin Barnett.

**MR S.K. L'ESTRANGE (Churchlands — Minister for Mines and Petroleum)** [3.57 pm]: When we talk about erratic decision-making, let us just reflect for a very short moment on members opposite, because I tell members right now, there are 26-year old professional Western Australians out there today who have finished school. They did a three-year degree; some of them did honours. Some of them have gone out and joined a profession. Some of them have PhDs or are halfway through a PhD while they are doing a profession, and in all of that time, the opposition has had eight years to make a decision about whether to increase retail trading hours from starting at 11.00 am on a Sunday to starting at 9.00 am, and it still cannot make up its mind. The opposition still cannot make up its mind about whether the people of Western Australia want an extra two hours of retail trading hours on a Sunday. I will tell members why opposition members cannot make up their minds. Because in their own Labor Party platform—let me quickly say to members—they say they will not make any changes without being convinced of the need for such change. They talk about the level of employment in the retail sector and the viability of small retailers, small retail business owners and their families. They talk about religious, cultural, sporting, volunteer activities and current retail employees. Do members know what? I think the member for Gosnells will ask the Carnaby's black-cockatoos what they think about retail trading hours before the opposition makes a decision, because we are dealing with an opposition that is erratic. We are dealing with an opposition that cannot make a decision. In fact, it cannot even make a decision over its leader.

Earlier in the year members opposite said, "Hey, let's get Smith in! Let's get Stephen Smith along; he'll do the job for us. He'll help us. He'll help us in the polls—hang on. Let's get Alannah. Alannah is the saviour of the world! Alannah will save us." But then they cannot work out what to do with her. When we talk about irrational decision-making, we have only to look at one place in this chamber and that is directly at the Leader of the Opposition, because he has no idea what to do; he has no idea how to make a decision. He is erratic as erratic could be. I tell members—the opposition would be better off with the member for Gosnells and the Carnaby's cockatoos, because it cannot make a decision.

**MR B.S. WYATT (Victoria Park)** [4.00 pm]: Mr Speaker —

Several members interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** That is enough!

Several members interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Thank you for doing my job for me! I did not have to ask for order with that one.

**Mr B.S. WYATT:** I also rise to speak in support of the motion. It has been an extraordinary performance. I would have liked to get the *Hansard* of Bill Marmion and just lay it on the table and say, "That's all we've got to say"! But I want to make a couple of reflections, because it was probably question time that highlighted best for me the erratic nature of how the government has handled the finances of this state. The member for West Swan is right about transport. However, I disagree with her. It is the finances. That is where the erratic nature of the government has been so apparent. The Premier went on radio and said a tunnel has not been approved by cabinet. This was just last week. However, in the budget speech of the Treasurer this year—just so that members know—the Premier said —

I am also pleased to confirm the Perth Freight Link tunnel construction.

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Is it any wonder that the finances of the state are so diabolical? The Leader of the House interjected. It is self-evident when we introduce legislation that that is our intent. We think it would have been self-evident when the Treasurer introduced his budget that that is what the government intended to do. The Treasurer in own speech outlined the tunnel. But apparently it has not been to cabinet. Is it any wonder that the finances of the state are so diabolical? There have been seven changes of Treasurer. If we go back seven from Eric Ripper, we get back to Charles Court. That is the impact they have had. There have been seven changes of Treasurer. So, there has not actually been a coherent financial plan.

**Mr C.J. Barnett:** How many have the Labor Party had in the last few years?

**Mr B.S. WYATT:** In the last few years? There have not been any.

I have enjoyed the last few days. The highlight for me over the last few days—without a shadow of a doubt—was “Easy Rider” from Morley, on the motorbike, when he commented on the Premier. Does the Premier know that the member for Morley has written a book for him? The book by Ian Britza is called *The Absalom Spirit*. It is a book that is written to advise the Premier. I want to quote from page xxi —

In that pages that follow, you will learn the origin of disloyalty, its danger signs, and how to expel it before it infects you or your ministry team. You will learn not only how to handle damage control if disloyalty strikes, but also how to prevent dissension from ever infiltrating your team.

The Premier needs to perhaps adopt a bit of *The Absalom Spirit*!

**Mr B.J. Grylls** interjected.

**Mr B.S. WYATT:** What was that? I missed it.

**Mr B.J. Grylls:** Did you read that before your challenge?

**Mr B.S. WYATT:** No. Perhaps I should have! Do you know what, member for Alfred Cove? I have to give the member for Alfred Cove a bit of advice, because it is hard to dislodge the wily old operators. But what we know today from the banker, the baker and the Ponzi scheme maker is that there are a lot of people on this side who do not want the member for Alfred Cove to be Premier. That is the reality. It is not just a small group of government members. It is a significant number. It is the same percentage as those who voted for the empty chair against Tony Abbott—who voted for the spill. Members opposite should think about that, because that ended well for Tony Abbott. I do like the contribution —

Several members interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Look, just give the member a chance now, thank you.

**Mr B.S. WYATT:** Thank you. That is the typical bullying tactics of the government, Mr Speaker.

The member for Jandakot, in an absolute flurry of loyalty, despite the fact that that very Tony Abbott sacked him for leaking against Liberal members back in the day, said, “Colin Barnett’s my man”—for at least four more weeks! The government cannot manage the finances in the way it has done and hold itself up as a coherent government, because, as the Premier knows, it has always been thus.

I want to conclude my remarks by again quoting the letter from John Langouant—I know the Premier loves me going back to the letter from John Langouant—because that is where it all began. Members opposite all knew what they were getting when they elected the member for Cottesloe to be their leader and Premier. The Premier said in his response today that it does not matter whether it is in the budget; it has not gone to cabinet. Dr John Langouant had something to say about that back in 1998, no less. This is what John Langouant—who, for those who do not know, was the then Under Treasurer—said when he wrote to the then Treasurer and Premier, Richard Court, in frustration —

- Individual Ministers proposing, and Cabinet endorsing, expenditure proposals with no regard to the state of the overall budget and with no examination or consideration of existing budgetary capacity within a portfolio.

Does that sound familiar? It does, does it not? Mr Langouant concludes his letter with the words —

In summary, the budgetary forecasts since and inclusive of 1994/95 have not been adhered to. The end result is a budget which is now displaying significant structural weakness. If this structural weakness is not dealt with, the Government ... will be required to further increase taxation or resort to borrowings or both within the next two years.

**Extract from Hansard**

[ASSEMBLY — Tuesday, 20 September 2016]

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Mr Mark McGowan; Ms Rita Saffioti; Mr Joe Francis; Speaker; Mr Albert Jacob; Mr Brendon Grylls; Mr Rob Johnson; Mr Bill Marmion; Mr Sean L'Estrange; Mr Ben Wyatt

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That has been the story of the Barnett government. That was identified back in 1998 by the then Under Treasurer, John Langoulant, when the now Premier was the then Minister for Education—spending without restraint, spending outside the budget process, and ignoring the fiscal parameters of the budget. Is it any wonder that the government now finds itself in this position, with record debt and record deficit? The government's only plan seems to be a plan from the Leader of the National Party that, according to the Deputy Leader of the Liberal Party, is not in the DNA of the Liberal Party.

Question put and a division taken with the following result —

*Division*

Ayes (21)

Ms L.L. Baker  
Dr A.D. Buti  
Mr R.H. Cook  
Ms J.M. Freeman  
Mr R.F. Johnson  
Mr W.J. Johnston

Mr D.J. Kelly  
Mr F.M. Logan  
Mr M. McGowan  
Ms S.F. McGurk  
Mr M.P. Murray  
Mr P. Papalia

Mr J.R. Quigley  
Ms M.M. Quirk  
Mrs M.H. Roberts  
Ms R. Saffioti  
Mr C.J. Tallentire  
Mr P.C. Tinley

Mr P.B. Watson  
Mr B.S. Wyatt  
Mr D.A. Templeman (*Teller*)

Noes (35)

Mr P. Abetz  
Mr F.A. Alban  
Mr C.J. Barnett  
Mr I.C. Blayney  
Mr I.M. Britza  
Mr G.M. Castrilli  
Mr V.A. Catania  
Mr M.J. Cowper  
Ms M.J. Davies

Mr J.H.D. Day  
Ms W.M. Duncan  
Ms E. Evangel  
Mrs G.J. Godfrey  
Mr B.J. Grylls  
Dr K.D. Hames  
Mrs L.M. Harvey  
Mr C.D. Hatton  
Mr A.P. Jacob

Dr G.G. Jacobs  
Mr S.K. L'Estrange  
Mr R.S. Love  
Mr W.R. Marmion  
Mr J.E. McGrath  
Ms L. Mettam  
Mr P.T. Miles  
Ms A.R. Mitchell  
Mr N.W. Morton

Dr M.D. Nahan  
Mr D.C. Nalder  
Mr J. Norberger  
Mr D.T. Redman  
Mr A.J. Simpson  
Mr M.H. Taylor  
Mr T.K. Waldron  
Mr A. Krsticevic (*Teller*)

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Pair

Ms J. Farrer

Mr J.M. Francis

Question thus negatived.