

## MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

### *Statement*

**HON PETER COLLIER (North Metropolitan — Leader of the Opposition)** [5.20 pm]: I would like to make a few comments concerning the conclusion of the thirty-ninth Parliament. I thank Hon Stephen Dawson for his comments and acknowledgement, particularly of those members who have left the thirty-ninth Parliament over the last 12 months. There has been quite a transition period. I acknowledge and thank those members. I specifically thank those who are leaving this chamber today, some of whom are perhaps away on urgent parliamentary business—Hon Barry House, Hon Liz Behjat, Hon Alyssa Hayden, Hon Robyn McSweeney, Hon Brian Ellis, Hon Mark Lewis, Hon Phil Edman, Hon Helen Morton, Hon Elise Irwin, Hon Dave Grills, Hon Laine McDonald, Hon Bill Leadbetter, Hon Lynn MacLaren and Hon Nigel Hallett. I agree with Hon Stephen Dawson; the thirty-ninth Parliament has been good. I have to say that I enjoyed the beginning more than I did the end.

When we came in, it was quite evident right at the start that I was going to have what I regard as a very productive and healthy relationship with the then Leader of the Opposition. I think that worked. As a Parliament, we were able to get through our legislative agenda fairly seamlessly, albeit with a couple of very late nights on two occasions. Members might remember when the now government tried to stare us down but we rose to the occasion. Having said that, congratulations to the Australian Labor Party on its victory going into the fortieth Parliament. We get very, very few opportunities in life and this is one, so make the most of it. One of the other opportunities we get in life is to become an elected member of Parliament. It is a magnificent privilege; it really is. There is only one better and that is to become a member of the house that matters—the Legislative Council. Certainly, the valedictory speeches made over the past couple of days will attest to this; people make a conscious decision to move to the Legislative Council for obvious reasons. Everyone works very hard to get here for a host of reasons, but exclusively, they are altruistic. They try very hard to get here and make the most of their opportunity when they are here. Unfortunately, when they leave, most do not go of their own accord; they do not try to get out of here. I think there is only one person on the whole list, in reality, who has made that conscious choice and that is our esteemed President.

Having said that, today ends the career of about one-third of the current sitting members. Around 12 of the 36 members are finishing their parliamentary careers, for the time being in some instances, but it is a poignant moment for them. Transition points in anyone's life are very significant. We can all attest to that from when we move from primary to secondary school, into some form of employment, to marriage, to have children or to whatever it might be; the transition point of change is a very poignant time in our lives. I would like to think that particularly those leaving us will always reflect positively on the Legislative Council, in particular the job of work you have done. Do not underestimate it. I thank you most sincerely on behalf of the Liberal Party. I thank you most sincerely for the work you have done and for the thousands of questions you have asked over the four, eight, 12 or 30 years, in some instances, to hold respective governments to account. It is very important. I thank you for the member statements you have made to highlight local and broader ideological issues, your contributions to debate on legislation and scrutiny in committee work, and your contributions to motions on notice. Mind you, we got a bit sick of condemning and congratulating each other by the end of the last Parliament! We will change that through consensus. I thank you for your tireless work on committees. I was unfortunate enough to have one term in opposition. I know what it is like and I know that the committees work very, very hard. To those of you who are leaving us, thank you once again for the work you have done in all those areas.

In addition, thank you so much for your contributions to your electorates. Never, ever underestimate those little significant pieces of work that you do. In the Legislative Council, of course, our job is much harder than those rank amateurs in the other place! In some instances—in the North Metropolitan Region, for example—we have to look after some 14 electorates. It is the same in the regions where we have to deal with hundreds of thousands of square kilometres of responsibility. Thank you for representing your community groups, your sporting groups, your aged-care facilities and your schools—all those areas that we have all worked in. You have done that tirelessly, so thank you so much on their behalf. It also extends to those individuals who come to the electorate offices of those who are leaving us. Never underestimate the job of work that you do. It may be a minor issue on a piece of paper, but it is a massive issue in their minds, and just your listening is very significant and very much appreciated on their part, so thank you, thank you, thank you. To all the departing members, can I say thank you for your work: well done. In that transition point, when you reflect, you can reflect positively on everything you have done and contributed—not just to the Parliament and not just to your electorates, but also to the people of Western Australia.

I now turn very briefly to the black-hand gang of Liberal members. We are a tight group; we have had our moments, like all political parties. A political party is, by its very essence, tribal, but we have always got through it. From our perspective in the upper house, we have worn the same criticism that members opposite probably also have—that is, that we are elitist, we are a House of Lords, we only like the tea and bikkies et cetera. But I always

go back and say, “No, we fix up your mistakes, every time. If a piece of legislation didn’t require 20 or 30 amendments to go back there and pass through that place in five minutes, why did you send it to us in the first place? We fix up your mistakes!”

The opposition will be a much smaller group after today, but I say to those members of the black-hand gang who are leaving us today: we are going to miss you guys; we really are. We have been a very, very tight group. We get on very well, for all intents and purposes, outside the chamber and in the chamber. Our annual dinners are always a great collective opportunity for us to dwell on where we have gone wrong and right and to enjoy the camaraderie. The dinner we had a couple of weeks ago stands as testament to that. From my perspective, as your leader for the last four years, it has been a privilege, and I thank once again those members of the black-hand gang who are leaving for the job of work you have done. Thanks for what you have contributed to the Parliament, to your electorates, to the state of Western Australia and to the Liberal Party. Thank you most sincerely.

Just to conclude, there is one person I would like to pay special tribute to and that is, of course, our esteemed President. As some members may know—I have mentioned it on a number of occasions—the President was my year 9 social studies teacher at Eastern Goldfields Senior High School. The fact that I taught social studies in high schools for 23 years probably has something to do with that, Mr President, so thank you for that. I have very fond memories of you as a teacher, and those memories of you as a teacher transfer through to your role as President. You have held the position of President with such dignity; you should be proud of the job of work you have done. Over 30 years, we look to your tireless representation of the people of the south west; your role as Chair of Committees; your role as shadow minister in various portfolios; but primarily, in my eyes, your role as President has taken you to a higher level. That is something that has been fulfilled with dignity, grace and professionalism. I think I can speak for everyone in this house when I say that you have held that office with such esteem that you are going to be a hard act to follow; you really are. Thank you most sincerely for the job of work you have done, and I wish you well in your retirement. You will be a big gap in the black-hand gang, but you will always be with us. Once you have been a member of the black-hand gang, you will always be with us.

I would also like to reiterate what Hon Stephen Dawson said. I was not aware that Lorraine Coogan was retiring, so I thank her on behalf of the Liberal Party, and we will have the opportunity over the next month to thank her personally. Lorraine is a consummate professional and I know you appreciate the job of work she has done as well, Mr President.

To conclude, the words are very, very few, but as Leader of the Liberal Party and Leader of the Opposition in the Legislative Council, I say to departing members of the Legislative Council: for all that you are and all that you have done, a heartfelt thankyou.

*Statement*

**HON LYNN MacLAREN (South Metropolitan)** [5.29 pm]: Members will be aware that I have had an opportunity to give a valedictory speech in which I began my thankyou. On behalf of the Greens—today, I am lucky enough to be the leader of the Greens in this place because Robin and I swap on a daily basis!—I want to wish you all well in that capacity. As members know, I will be leaving the chamber, so they will have to learn how to cope without me. In my departure, I get the wonderful opportunity to thank everybody and there were some people I left off—it is hard to believe—in my one-hour valedictory speech. Some of them are really important to us and I know members will join me in thanking them. They are the parliamentary staff who support us. I thank Laurie Mansell in Hansard. Hon Robin Chapple went into detail about that today. Hansard really do an exceptional job. I also thank Rob Hunter, the executive manager of the Parliamentary Services Department; Hugh McCaffrey, the building services manager; and Tony Paterson, the security manager—he has certainly beefed up security since we have been here. Many people have commented on how security has changed. That is definitely, in part, due to Tony, but of course at the beginning of the thirty-ninth Parliament we still had Ken Craig, who was just an awesome leader of the security staff. I want to express my appreciation to them for always being kind and gentle and not too rough and tumble. I found my time in Parliament difficult at times, which I mentioned yesterday. Sometimes, it has been the kindness of the Parliament House staff that has carried me through the day and I know that members might share that experience with me. I also want to thank in particular Brett Barrett, who now runs the kitchen. I joke that one of my potential future careers could be a sommelier.

**Hon Liz Behjat** interjected.

**Hon LYNN MacLAREN:** We are practising a bit; he is helping me with that. The other option, of course, is stand-up comedy; thank you, Liz! In the dining room, Enno Schijf, who also helps when we want to have parties in the corridor or wherever, has done an excellent job and I appreciated his work over this time. Also and in particular, I thank Mark Gabrielli; Roger Mouttet—I have never used these last names; Anthony James, who is also helping me with my sommelier skills; David Griffiths; Colleen See; Anna Murphy; Maria Ogden; Lee Humphrey; Jill Yim; Deborah Kapoor, of course; Stephen Shepherd; Caterina Zoccoli; Madeleine Lewis; and Paddy Loney, who joined us more recently, I think just this past year. They do a terrific job. They keep it real, they keep it human and they

keep us from being too out there politically. It is wonderful to have them around and I encourage members to ask them how their kids are when they see them in the hallway. They really keep us real.

On this occasion of the ending of the thirty-ninth Parliament, I gave my second valedictory speech. Similarly to Hon Laine McDonald, I had about 42 days—a great 42 days—in 2005 and I was previously able to give my inaugural and valedictory speeches in that time. This is my second valedictory speech. I do not know whether I will go for the trifecta at some future point, but it is there for me. I was amazed and honoured—I was impressed—that Hon Ken Travers and Hon Ljiljana Ravlich chose their moments to depart. I remember sitting here thinking: Wow, it is such a cool move to be able to exit stage right on their own terms. It was very impressive and if they read this at some future stage, I want to tell them how delightful it was to work with them and how impressed I was that they chose their times to go. I want to thank the now Leader of the Opposition, who used to be the Leader of the Government. I also thank the Whip. Hon Phil Edman and I sparred a bit in the Standing Committee on Environment and Public Affairs in the previous term. We do not agree on everything but I think we have a common view on sharks. It is sad that he is not here today to say farewell, but he is one of the outgoing members. I want to thank him for his role as Whip. He did a good job, as did Hon Samantha Rowe on the opposition side. To the leader of the current government, Hon Sue Ellery, and her deputy, Hon Stephen Dawson, thank you for your acknowledgements. Those members went through a long list of acknowledgements, to which I say ditto. Thank you very much for doing that. I lament that I will not be in this place to see Hon Stephen Dawson rise to his full capacity as a minister and deputy leader. I think he will be an outstanding leader in this chamber.

To Hon Adele Farina, Hon Sally Talbot and Hon Kate Doust, who I somehow left out of my valedictory speech yesterday: it has been a pleasure to work with you and thank you very much for your contributions to this chamber that will only continue into the next Parliament.

To Mr President, Hon Barry House, who originally, I think, had some concerns about my accent: I hope that you are now used to it; if not, it does not matter! I really do look forward to one day sharing a glass of red with you down in your electorate in Margaret River. As I mentioned yesterday, the way you held the chamber and have led us as President has made a difference to me and has been outstanding. I thank you for that.

To all those people who served as deputies and acting chairs and kept us within the standing orders: that was really important, and I appreciate it. Thank you very much.

I thank all outgoing members and wish you all well. I hope we see each other in the future and that we are able to continue making sure that the public of Western Australia is acutely aware of how significant the Legislative Council is, and how important it is that people are represented by articulate and contemporary members who can not only bring their voices into the Parliament, but also change the way we do things to better represent their interests. Sometimes they forget, so the fact that we use Twitter and Facebook to communicate the work we do out in those general contemporary forums is very important because the decisions made in here affect people's daily lives.

I thank you very much for serving shoulder to shoulder with us, and I look forward to watching an expanded team of Greens give you more opportunities to engage with the Greens side of politics. To the thirty-ninth Parliament, farewell, and bring on the fortieth!

*Statement*

**HON COL HOLT (South West)** [5.37 pm]: I rise on behalf of the Western Australian Nationals to say goodbye to the thirty-ninth Parliament.

Firstly, I congratulate the new government. I wish you well. I think Hon Stephen Dawson has had a bit of a taste of the workload today: wait until you guys bring in some legislation and shuffle that through! I wish you well. I totally agree with you, Mr President: we live in the best corner of the best state in the best country in the world, and we represent the best state in the best country in the world. I think that common bond has tied everyone in the thirty-ninth Parliament together, and ensured that in representing Western Australia we make Western Australia a better place. We serve the people of Western Australia to improve their lives and meet their needs. I think that is a common bond we can all rejoice in.

I think the thirty-ninth Parliament was very effective and had an effective government. I believe we did a lot for the state, and from a Nationals' viewpoint I believe we made a great contribution to regional Western Australia. Undoubtedly, there will be debates about the effectiveness of that from across the chamber during the fortieth Parliament, but I am absolutely sure that we made a very positive contribution. As Hon Stephen Dawson said, we might have different ideas about how we do it and the policies we bring in to make this a better place, but we have in common ensuring that this state continues to prosper and grow.

I add my thanks to all parliamentary staff, including the Legislative Council staff and Hansard. It is always a pleasure to come to work in this place. I consider you guys work colleagues and friends, and good people to have a beer and a yarn with. To the Leader of the Opposition, previously the Leader of the House, I think we shared a great working relationship, Pete. I would like to thank you and your team for having a partnership with the

Nationals that I believe has delivered a great deal in the thirty-ninth Parliament. I look forward to continuing that work with those members who are remaining.

To those in government who may not be working in the executive of government but were elected to the fortieth Parliament, I wish you all well. To departing members, not all of us get to choose when we leave, but I think you should rejoice in the fact that you made a strong contribution to the thirty-ninth Parliament. That is something that will never be taken away from you. Your name will be on the board next to Sir John Forrest and John Septimus Roe from here to eternity, and you should rejoice in that fact.

At the risk of singling out some people, I would like to thank Hon Brian Ellis and Hon Lynn MacLaren for their work on committees with me. We had a great time on the Standing Committee on Environment and Public Affairs in the thirty-eighth Parliament.

I would also like to acknowledge Hon Helen Morton, whom I served with in cabinet. I thought you were an incredibly hardworking cabinet minister who had the right approach and who always had at heart the people you represented and had responsibility for as minister. I was disappointed to see you lose that ministry because I thought you did a fantastic job. A friend of mine and someone you know, Geoff Diver, sends his regards and truly believes that you helped him in those times after his daughter lost her life at her own hand. He would like to pass on his good wishes to you and thank you for your efforts in the thirty-ninth Parliament, but especially as a minister.

I would like to touch on Hon Dave Grills. The boy from Lockridge and the copper from the goldfields is a pure reflection of the society we represent. That is the strength of our Parliament and our parliamentary system. We should be a reflection of our society. Dave, we could never question your passion for regional Western Australia, your passion for youth justice, youth development and youth support, or your overall gesture of fairness. As a policeman, and often a community policeman, you had to balance the needs of community safety with the best outcome for the people you dealt with all the time. I believe that you brought that to this place in many of the speeches you made. I think the thirty-ninth Parliament is richer for your contribution and your presence. Mate, I wish you well and I am sure that we will run into each other somewhere, maybe Leonora pub or Kookynie pub, and we will have a beer.

Mr President, congratulations on 30 years' service. You have been the cornerstone of this institution for eight years. Without doubt, you should be absolutely proud of the contribution you have made as President in the time that I have been here. I think everyone has looked up to you for the way that business should be conducted in this house. You have led by example and have ensured that it is held in the highest regard and with the highest esteem, and you are held in that way. I wish you well, Sir, in your endeavours. I will see you tomorrow at the opening of the train in Busso and, no doubt, in many places around the south west as I travel around and meet you as part of the community work that you will take on. People will not let you get away with it anyway; you know that. They will come knocking on your door and ask you to contribute, and you will absolutely contribute in every way that you can.

In closing, I would like to wish all those members departing today all the very best. There is a world outside this chamber. Embrace it and continue to contribute to our great state. When I turned 50, I said to a few of my mates, "We've got about 20 years, gang. So how about we dig in and try to contribute as much as we can to the state and the communities we're involved with." I say the same to you. Besides being outside this place, contribute as much as you can to the state of Western Australia and to your family, your communities and your regions, and we will all be a better place for it. Thank you and good luck.

*Statement*

**HON RICK MAZZA (Agricultural)** [5.44 pm]: I echo the sentiments of the previous speakers regarding the thirty-ninth Parliament. As a new member four years ago and coming into this place on the platform as a Shooters and Fishers Party member, it was a daunting prospect indeed. I did not quite know what to expect and I am sure that plenty of members here did not quite know what to expect either. I distinctly remember bumping into the President a couple of months later in a corridor, where we had a little chat. He said, "We didn't quite know what to expect. We thought we were going to have a gun-toting redneck!" Maybe you did, Mr President, I am not quite sure. The experience I have had in this Parliament has been a very positive one. I know there have been many different views politically and quite often there is a lot of frustration across the chamber, but underneath that I think everybody has a degree of respect for each other in this place. Certainly a lot of goodwill and fellowship has been developed over time. I have certainly enjoyed the thirty-ninth Parliament.

I would also like to thank the parliamentary staff who have assisted me over four years, and many members here also who have assisted me. I would like to thank those members who were on the Standing Committee on Estimates and Financial Operations. I had a very brief stint as chairman of that committee, which in itself is quite daunting, but with the support of those committee members and committee staff it was something that we got through.

I would particularly like to thank Hon Helen Morton for her brief time on that committee towards the end, and her support also.

To those members who are leaving: Hon Phil Edman, Hon Brian Ellis, Hon Alyssa Hayden, Hon Mark Lewis, Hon Liz Behjat, Hon Robyn McSweeney, Hon Helen Morton, Hon Dave Grills, Hon Lynn MacLaren and Hon Nigel Hallett, who I will get to in a minute, I wish you all the best. To those members who have been here for a very brief time, Hon Elise Irwin, Hon Laine McDonald and Hon Bill Leadbetter, I am sure Parliament will see you back at some time and I also wish you all the best. It has been expressed here that there is life outside of Parliament. I am sure that many of you will find your place out there and hopefully we will see you around the place at some point.

Going back to committees, I mention the Standing Committee on Public Administration. I was co-opted on to that under the steady chairmanship of Hon Liz Behjat, which was a great experience. I thank you for that, Liz. The Select Committee into the Operations of the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Western Australia (Inc) was quite an emotional committee and, at times, members bumped heads. Under that, I think there was a degree of respect about differing views and eventually a report was tabled.

To you, Mr President, I really appreciate your guidance, particularly as a chair of committees as I had to see you a few times to get some direction. Your direction and advice was always sound. I wish you all the best after nearly 30 years in Parliament to go and play farmer. I hope that your tractor is a big green one with air conditioning and stereo and all that sort of thing so that you have a comfortable job as a farmer!

I would now like to say a few words about Hon Nigel Hallett, who was a member of the Shooters, Fishers and Farmers Party for a number of months. Unfortunately he was unsuccessful at the last election and has not been able to be here this week, which is a real shame because I know a lot of members would like to have wished him farewell. Nigel entered Parliament in May 2005 as a Liberal member until he changed to the Shooters, Fishers and Farmers Party last year. He never served high office in Parliament or in government; rather, he served better causes as a member representing his constituents in the South West Region. One constant that stood out when travelling around the state during the election campaign was the number of people who knew Nigel Hallett—it was just amazing. Everywhere we went, people knew Nigel Hallett and had a lot of respect and a high regard for him; probably more than a lot of people realise. Nigel comes from a background that so many of us share, with his parents being migrants to this state. His father was a soldier settler, which is how he became a farmer in the Bridgetown area. It is a background to be proud of. Nigel is a very practical person because of it.

In Nigel's inaugural speech he spoke of well-maintained roads and equal access to public services in the country. Even in 2005 he identified payroll tax as an abhorrent tax imposed in a manner that strangles the incentive for businesses to grow their workforce. He also spoke of excessive stamp duties on vehicles and on housing, as well as the potential for Chinese markets for Western Australian agricultural produce. Nigel very often would facilitate groups within the farming and agricultural sector to try to get trade deals together. That is something that he did well. I think it is fair to say that Nigel was a far-sighted politician and recognised the factors that would have an influence on the Western Australian economy.

In recent times, Nigel has championed a rural fire service, not for political reasons but to put an end to the threat of bushfire and the tragic loss of human life and property. Nigel has also been unflagging in his support for an extension of Doppler radar into our wheatbelt farming areas because he understands that without this information, farmers will be forever at the mercy of unpredictable weather. It has been my pleasure to have Nigel Hallett as a colleague for the time that I did, and I wish him all the very best outside this place.

With that, members, as I have said, I wish you all the best. We will see you around the place, and it will be interesting to see what the fortieth Parliament holds.

*Statement*

**THE PRESIDENT (Hon Barry House):** Members, I rise for the last time to make a few comments to wind up the thirty-ninth Parliament in the Legislative Council. I hope I can do it with a bit more composure than I did earlier today, because I was surprised at how difficult I found it. We are all used in our electorates to getting up and making impromptu speeches, but I took myself by surprise at the difficulty I had getting through some of the things I wanted to say. But here we go, just as a finale.

I guess I never quite got used to the idea of people calling me Mr President, but now that you will not have to do that anymore, I will probably miss it! I know I will miss the Legislative Council and the people I have worked with in this thirty-ninth Parliament and the Parliament before it. Now is the time for the people who are leaving to move on in our lives, and for the people who are staying to consolidate in terms of what the Legislative Council means and does.

By way of farewell, I want to particularise some of the people in the Legislative Council, because that is what we are about right now. Earlier, I mentioned people just in a broad context. To the chamber staff, Nigel, Paul, Grant, John, Suzanne, Peter, Lisa, Chris, Hayley, Renae and Brian, and also Rebecca Burton—I hope I have not forgotten anybody—you have been the glue that holds this Legislative Council together in terms of support and service to the members. You have been wonderful people to work with, without exception. I really, really thank every one of you, on behalf of all of us, and wish you well.

The other people we see frequently in this chamber are Hansard. So, Hansard reporter, will you take to Laurie and everybody in the Hansard department our sincere appreciation for the magnificent work that Hansard does. It is appreciated right through the Parliament. I also want to thank all the people in the Parliamentary Services Department who support us in a range of functions, from catering to security, information technology services, the library, the education unit, and the grounds; it goes on and on.

Let us not forget the Legislative Council committee staff, because I know it is a particular focus of the Clerk to bring the chamber operations together more closely with the committee operations. I guess that is a theme that I was talking about earlier today—that in order for the Parliament as an institution to function better, those two areas need to be brought together. The Legislative Council committee staff provide wonderful support to one of our primary and most important functions—scrutiny and accountability through committees. That is a vital role that we have as a Parliament.

For us who are leaving, it probably will not hit us until next Tuesday or Wednesday when we do not have to front up to Parliament; we will sit around and wonder what the world has come to. But for all the members who are leaving us on Sunday night, I thank you for your companionship, your friendship and your professionalism as Legislative Councillors, and I wish every one of you well. For those who are staying and continuing on into the fortieth Parliament, I also wish you well. I congratulate the government for changing sides in the chamber and commiserate with the opposition for changing sides in the chamber, but that is the nature of the beast. Democracy is a brutal game sometimes and it throws up sometimes unexpected results and, for some individuals, some unwelcome results. The composition of the next Parliament will be different and it will take on its own life; it will have and develop its own characteristics. I urge all of you to embrace that and work with it.

But my final message—you have heard me say it before—is that for the people who are staying, please remember that you are parliamentarians as well as politicians. That relates to the institution that we serve. With that, it is farewell. I am very pleased to buy you all a beverage and invite you to refreshments in the Legislative Council lounge. Thanks very much to everybody involved in the thirty-ninth Parliament in the Legislative Council and all the very best. I now adjourn the house. I have even forgotten the words! The house is now adjourned.

*House adjourned at 5.56 pm*

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