

**COLLINS-CLASS SUBMARINE MAINTENANCE PROGRAM
POLICE — LAURIE MORLEY — EX GRATIA PAYMENT**

Statement

HON COLIN HOLT (South West) [5.26 pm]: I found an interesting article in today's newspaper that I want to share with members of the house. It is on page 3 and the headline reads "State's sick of navy gazing on subs deal". I want to highlight this because I want to lead into something else. It states in part —

The State Government will renew a national campaign today to convince the country that WA should win a multibillion-dollar submarine maintenance contract.

The advertising blitz will run across all media platforms to pressure the Federal Government to finally announce whether the full-cycle docking work will be shifted from South Australia to WA.

There are a few quotes from the Minister for Defence Issues, Paul Papalia. It continues —

... the Federal Government was almost a year past its self-imposed deadline for a decision and had not provided any updates on the timeline.

He rejected the assertion the Labor State Government's advertising campaign was timed to hurt the Liberals ahead of the State election in March.

"It's a WA Government demanding a decision from the Federal Government who should have made the decision already," he said.

"What works, as we've seen with the GST debate, is public awareness—public pressure encourages governments to make the right decision."

I will repeat that: "public pressure encourages governments to make the right decision". A few pages later in the newspaper, on page 15, there is a full-page advertisement headed "Canberra, it's time to make a decision and put the national interest first." I have no problem with that. The advert has a little checklist —

We have highly skilled tradespeople ready to go.

Tick —

We have experienced businesses.

Tick —

We have world-class infrastructure.

Tick —

Now all we need is a decision.

I raise this because I have asked a number of questions without notice about two issues during question time this week. One issue is the Busselton jetty market-led proposal, which is stuck in the quagmire of government, with no decision being made. I have tried to get to the bottom of who is responsible, what the time line is and when the proponent can expect a decision, yet no decision has been forthcoming. It is hidden in the terms of reference and the processes of the steering committee, even though the government said that it would let the proponent know within 99 days what is happening, or at least give an indication of some time lines. I tried to get to the bottom of that question today with the Minister for Regional Development, who gave me no answer. The government has gone outside its own time line. The federal government has not answered for a year and the state government gets all shirty with it and decides it had better take out an advertising campaign. The Busselton jetty people put in a proposal. They want to hear something, but they cannot get to the bottom of it. Maybe they need to take out a full-page ad, but of course they do not have the means to do that.

The second issue I raised this week was about retired police officer Laurie Morley, who put in an application for an ex gratia payment. In 2015, ex-police officer Laurie Morley was seriously assaulted in Harvey. He has now been discharged from the Western Australia Police Force. He does not qualify for medically retired compensation. The information that came out just a few days ago to address that is that it is not retrospective. His application for an ex gratia payment has been sitting with the Commissioner of Police or someone else for 18 months. I received information this week that his application is now with the State Solicitor's Office. To get his point across, should Laurie Morley take out a full-page ad that shows the 43 bruises he got on his back from the assault with a hammer? Remember what the state Minister for Defence Issues said —

"What works, as we've seen with the GST debate, is public awareness—public pressure encourages governments to make the right decision."

Laurie Morley does not have the means to put an ad in the paper, like the one I am holding up, to raise the public's awareness of the issues he faces and to force the government to say that it is time to make a decision on his ex gratia

payment. I think it is a disgrace. He does not have the ability to do that. Maybe Seven West Media would like to do some pro bono advertising for Mr Laurie Morley to get an answer to his ex gratia payment application that has been sitting within government for 18 months!

I would encourage the minister who represents the Minister for Police in this place, whom I regard as a great minister, to take up the cause. The answer that he gave yesterday on behalf of the Minister for Police left Laurie Morley with nowhere to go. While the state government thinks it is okay for it to miss deadlines and there are people waiting for this government to make a decision, it has asked the federal government to come clean!