

PREMIER AND MEMBER FOR SWAN HILLS — ELECTION COMMITMENTS

Matter of Public Interest

THE SPEAKER (Mr G.A. Woodhams): Members, today I received within the prescribed time a letter from the Leader of the Opposition in the following terms —

I wish to raise the following as a matter of public interest today.

“That this House condemns the Premier and the Member for Swan Hills for their dishonesty on their election commitments.”

The matter appears to me to be in order. At least five members are required to stand in support of the motion.

[At least five members rose in their places.]

MR E.S. RIPPER (Belmont — Leader of the Opposition) [2.46 pm]: I move —

That this house condemns the Premier and the member for Swan Hills for their dishonesty on their election commitments.

Mr Speaker, I do not move a motion using the word “dishonesty” lightly. However, I do regard honesty in this place as critical, I do regard honesty as critical for accountability, I do regard honesty as critical for democracy and I do regard honesty as critical for the workings of this Parliament. Since the member for Swan Hills is so very active in interjecting, I hope he will rise to his feet and defend what he said in the election campaign in 2008. He has to join this debate; he has to participate; and not just by interjection.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: I have given the call to the Leader of the Opposition. I have not given the call to anybody else to my left or to anybody else to my right. The only person I want to hear from is the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr E.S. RIPPER: After three budgets, it is time to measure this government, because I have noticed a pattern in the Premier’s behaviour. He says whatever is required to prosper in the media on a particular day, regardless of what he said before, regardless of the accuracy of the comment and regardless of what he will say in the future. Worse still, the Premier has engaged in a double dishonesty. He makes a promise, he breaks the promise and then he denies that he has made the promise.

Let us go firstly to electricity prices; we know they have increased 57 per cent as a result of this government’s decisions. We also know that the financial plan is for those prices to increase 107 per cent by the end of this set of forward estimates. Let us look at what the Liberals said in the election campaign. This is an excerpt from the text of radio advertisements that the Liberal Party ran —

Strange but I haven’t seen Alan Carpenter running ads talking about how the price of electricity will increase by 72%, 72%. My power bill will almost double. How does he expect us to pay for that?

Later, the ad goes on —

Labor just doesn’t know how to manage this state, we can’t afford another 4 years of Carpenter and Ripper. I’ll vote Liberal for a better government and a better State.

There is no doubt that members on the other side of the chamber will say that there was no direct promise there, but there was a very strong implication that Labor would put up electricity prices and the Liberals would not. If government backbenchers are not concerned about that, perhaps they will be more concerned about what I found in *The Sunday Times* of 31 August 2008. The Premier was answering readers’ questions. One question states —

Hi, Mr Barnett. I would like to know what will you do to help struggling families who are finding it hard to make ends meet for the future, such as tax cuts, housing affordability, etc, etc?

Part of his answer states —

... families in this state face a 70 per cent increase in their electricity bills. That will hurt families in WA. I will fix up the problem in Western Power. It will avoid a 70 per cent increase in electricity prices and that’s what people are facing right now.”

That was the Premier’s direct response to a question about cost-of-living pressures during the last election campaign. What we have had is dishonesty from the Premier on a fundamental issue whereby he has not delivered what he promised during the election campaign he would deliver.

Let me now turn to the issue of the Ellenbrook railway line. Labor announced a commitment to build the Ellenbrook railway line by 2015. On television on that very night, the then shadow Minister for Transport, Hon Simon O’Brien, was a bit dismissive of that promise. The next day, the then Leader of the Opposition, the now

Mr Eric Ripper; Mr Mark McGowan; Mr Rob Johnson; Speaker; Mr Troy Buswell; Mr Bill Johnston; Mr Peter Tinley; Mr Colin Barnett; Mr Frank Alban; Ms Rita Saffioti; Mr John Day; Mrs Michelle Roberts

Premier, matched that promise. I watched him on television and thought he looked very uncomfortable. I have known him for a long time and I did not think he was telling the truth when I saw him on television. Nevertheless, on Channel Seven on 1 September 2008 he said that 2015 is a long time away and that, yes, the Liberal Party would build the spur line through Ellenbrook. According to my notes, he went on to say —

And can I say —

This is remarkable —

and remind people that the south metropolitan line was actually started by a Liberal government.

Give me a break! In the public transport document, the Liberal Party made this promise about the Ellenbrook railway line —

A Liberal Government will provide \$53 million over the next four years toward the construction of a new rail line to Ellenbrook, to meet needs in the fast growing North Eastern Growth Corridor.

The Liberal Party election costings document contains the following statement on the Ellenbrook railway —

This project will provide funding toward the construction of a new rail line to Ellenbrook, to meet needs in the fast growing North Eastern Growth Corridor.

It goes on in italics—perhaps we should have been wary of anything in italics in Liberal Party documents—to state —

Liberals will provide \$53 million over the next four years.

We then come to this budget. There is no funding in this budget for the Ellenbrook railway line. There is no \$53 million. The member for Vasse's costings promised \$53 million over four years, and it is just not in the budget. To add insult to injury, we then had another piece of dishonesty from the Premier. I have read out what he said during the election campaign. How can anyone reconcile what he said during the election campaign with the following statement reported in today's *The West Australian* —

“My recollection is very clear. At the last election the Labor Party promised to build an Ellenbrook rail line,” ...

“I said we would consider that as a second-term project if we won a second term in Government.”

He did not say that at all; he said something completely different. I have read out what he said. I have read out what he said on the television, I have read out what is in the policy document, and I have read out what is in the costings document. Any member can compare those statements and see that that man who now occupies the position of Premier was dishonest during the election campaign and was dishonest yesterday when he described the promise he said that he had made. He was so dishonest that he should be selling fuel additives for Firepower. That is the level of his dishonesty.

On the issue of Royal Perth Hospital, I turn to the costings document. The promise states —

A Liberal government will retain and transform RPH into a 400-bed trauma facility including a central-city emergency department.

It then states —

Liberals will provide \$20 million over the next four years.

The Liberals have put the \$20 million into the budget papers, but they have not done anything towards addressing the words in that promise to “transform RPH into a 400-bed trauma facility including a central-city emergency department”. The Liberals have said that that will cost \$600 million. They have a defence. They have said that it is a second-term promise. It was not explicit in the election campaign, but they have said that it is a second-term promise. This financial plan goes more than two years into the next parliamentary term. If they are dinkum about the commitment on the Royal Perth Hospital plan, the allocation has to be in this set of forward estimates. This set of forward estimates goes more than two years into the next parliamentary term and there is no allocation. I say to the government: put up or shut up on Royal Perth Hospital. It is just not putting its money where its election commitments are.

Let me conclude by saying that we cannot trust the Premier. In particular, we cannot trust him on finances, we cannot trust his promises in an election campaign, and we cannot trust his announcements in government. He has a record of dishonesty on key critical commitments that were extremely significant during the election campaign and since. My view is that the house has no alternative but to condemn the Premier for his dishonesty during the election campaign and since, and to condemn the member for Swan Hills for his dishonesty during the election campaign. The behaviour of both these people is not befitting membership of this place.

Mr Eric Ripper; Mr Mark McGowan; Mr Rob Johnson; Speaker; Mr Troy Buswell; Mr Bill Johnston; Mr Peter Tinley; Mr Colin Barnett; Mr Frank Alban; Ms Rita Saffioti; Mr John Day; Mrs Michelle Roberts

MR M. McGOWAN (Rockingham) [2.57 pm]: I want to take the opportunity of once again dealing with the Premier's palace. It is interesting that the Premier was very reluctant to table the document during question time, and, having gone through it, I can see why.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Thank you, members!

Mr T.R. Buswell interjected.

The SPEAKER: Minister for Transport, I formally call you to order for the second time today.

Mr M. McGOWAN: The first point is that during question time I asked the Premier why he said that the new palace would cost \$17 million when it will actually cost \$26.9 million. The Premier did not answer the question. He misled the house in March on the cost of his new palace for good reason. He did that because people would be quite concerned about that level of expenditure on a new building for the Premier. He has not answered the question about why he did that. According to the budget that was just handed down by his Treasurer, the total cost will be \$26.9 million when we factor in the cost of refurbishing the building, site works and moving the staff who are currently there out of the building. I want the Premier to answer that question about why he misled the house.

Mr C.J. Barnett: It's not question time; this is an MPI. Why didn't you do your MPI on this?

Mr M. McGOWAN: The Premier does not answer questions during question time, so why does he not answer questions during an MPI?

Secondly, we received this document during question time. It raises a number of questions for the Premier. First of all, on 23 March he told this house —

Point of Order

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: The motion is very clear. It states that this house condemns the Premier and the member for Swan Hills for their dishonesty on their election commitments. What the member for Rockingham is discussing now has nothing to do with this motion.

Several members interjected.

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: No, it is not.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Thank you members! I formally call the member for Cannington to order for the first time today. I had hoped that he might have a clean sheet today—impossible! I take the Leader of the House's point of order and I ask the member for Rockingham —

Mr E.S. RIPPER: This matter of public interest is about the dishonesty of the Premier and the member for Rockingham canvasses the dishonesty of the Premier in talking about the Premier's palace. It is well within the terms of the MPI for the Premier's dishonesty on that issue to be canvassed.

The SPEAKER: That may be the case, Leader of the Opposition, but I have not heard that yet. I give the member for Rockingham the opportunity, if he quotes or uses that document, to relate it directly to the MPI. That is my instruction to the member for Rockingham. If he speaks about other issues, I will pull him up.

Debate Resumed

Mr M. McGOWAN: I thank the Speaker for his guidance.

Members recall that the Liberal Party released a policy document during its election campaign that outlined its economic and financial plan. That document stated that the Liberal Party, if elected to government, would be prudent in the use of the state's financial resources. This matter is not an example of prudence in the use of the state's financial resources. It directly relates to the Liberal Party's election promise, which I am sure someone will run off for me, of prudent financial management, put up by the Premier as a hallmark of the election campaign. Is it prudent financial management to drive up the state's debt from \$3.6 billion to more than \$22 billion? No, it is a direct breach of that promise. The expenditure highlighted in this document is part of that extraordinary driving up of debt by this Premier in this term of office. Quite frankly, he should be ashamed as a member of the Liberal Party by the level of debt he has driven this state to. He should be ashamed of the extraordinary debt binge he drives Western Australia on. Nothing is more indicative of that dishonest policy commitment and that amazing level of debt than the Premier's commitment to create his own palace. The Premier said that he had to move to Hale House because that was the best option, but he failed to mention the very enlightening Treasury recommendation contained in this document that the Constitutional Centre of

Mr Eric Ripper; Mr Mark McGowan; Mr Rob Johnson; Speaker; Mr Troy Buswell; Mr Bill Johnston; Mr Peter Tinley; Mr Colin Barnett; Mr Frank Alban; Ms Rita Saffioti; Mr John Day; Mrs Michelle Roberts

Western Australia, next door to Hale House, should be used as a reception centre. What is happening? The Premier is building a new reception centre as part of his new palace. What is the cost of that? Why is it that despite the Treasury's recommendation in this document that the Premier could use the Constitutional Centre for a reception centre, he is building, as part of his plans, an additional building of about 800 square metres, intended to be a reception centre, alongside Hale House? Why is he not using the Constitutional Centre as recommended by the state Treasury?

My other point that should be very worrisome to the people of Western Australia is that the Premier's argument that there may be a slight problem with the use of Dumas House is based on the fact that the government will build a completely new Dumas House next door.

Mr C.J. Barnett: Yes, two of them.

Mr M. McGOWAN: The government is going to build two more Dumas Houses! Let us think about that. Just to refurbish Dumas House will cost \$56 million. The Premier wants to build two more such buildings as part of his proposal. The Premier has not only ignored Treasury advice to use the Constitutional Centre of Western Australia as a reception centre, but also earlier advice. It is interesting that the Under Treasurer makes a recommendation one month and suddenly a month later makes a new one and that I did not receive it in the reply to my freedom of information request today.

Mr C.J. Barnett: What are you saying about the way Under Treasurer works?

Mr M. McGOWAN: It is an interesting observation more about the way the Premier works than the way that the Under Treasurer does.

Mr C.J. Barnett: You are questioning the Under Treasurer's professionalism.

Mr M. McGOWAN: No, I question the Premier's professionalism.

I find it very interesting that there were a range of choices for new office premises available to the Premier, which he denied.

Mr C.J. Barnett: No, I didn't.

Mr M. McGOWAN: Yes, he did. That is exactly what he said on 23 March.

A whole range of new buildings need to be provided. My next point is that the Premier again misled the house. He said that there was no opportunity for his office to stay in Governor Stirling Tower. The document I hold states that the opportunity still remains to stay there.

Mr C.J. Barnett: No, it doesn't.

Mr M. McGOWAN: Yes, it does. On page 2 it states that the opportunity still remains to seek a lease extension. The Premier has provided answers to questions in the other place indicating that his office could have stayed there. Therefore, the Premier has misled the house entirely on this matter. In one statement after another, the Premier has misled the house on this matter. This document merely reinforces the fact that there are a whole new set of questions that the Premier needs to answer, particularly about a state reception centre and the use of all these other proposed buildings. According to this document, the Premier will move all his ministers out of Dumas House, which he is refurbishing, into another Dumas House next door.

Mr T.R. Buswell: What a load of rubbish!

Mr M. McGOWAN: That is what this document states. The Premier must provide a new set of buildings for government departments.

Mr C.J. Barnett: You are absolutely inept; you are attempting to be the Labor leader.

Mr M. McGOWAN: The Premier is inept. He is the twenty-two-billion-dollar man. All those Liberal Party members sitting at the back of the chamber should know that on the government's watch, state debt rose from \$3.6 billion to \$22 billion. There is a whole range of other examples of the Premier misleading the house, and this document supports the claim that that is the case.

MR T.R. BUSWELL (Vasse — Minister for Transport) [3.07 pm]: I make a couple of comments in relation to the Ellenbrook railway line. I was there yesterday with the well-liked local member.

Mr P.C. Tinley interjected.

Mr T.R. BUSWELL: I am going to Port Hedland soon, member for Willagee. I wonder whether I will see anyone he has evicted from his caravan park camping under the trees!

Mr Eric Ripper; Mr Mark McGowan; Mr Rob Johnson; Speaker; Mr Troy Buswell; Mr Bill Johnston; Mr Peter Tinley; Mr Colin Barnett; Mr Frank Alban; Ms Rita Saffioti; Mr John Day; Mrs Michelle Roberts

Mr D.A. Templeman interjected.

Mr T.R. BUSWELL: The member for Swan Hills will definitely speak; he will come off the leash! He will come charging in off the wrong run. So start quaking! I had to calm him down yesterday.

I quickly make one point. I find it somewhat ironic that in the same debate in which the opposition has criticised the government for its so-called debt binge, it is criticising us for not spending \$700 million, money that we would have to borrow. There is a tad of irony in that. I want to work through some of the details of the Ellenbrook railway line; because it is important to put it on the record, but before I do I will go back for a second. After an election, there is a presentation of the government's finances, which in our case was the 2008–09 midyear review highlighted by the member for West Swan yesterday, the green budgets. After the 2005 election, the incoming Labor governments commitments were rolled into, I think, chapter 3, of the *Economic and Fiscal Outlook* for that period. The chapter was headed "Election Commitments and Other Expenditure Initiatives". It gives an idea of what money was committed at the election and what was planned to be spent. I happened to find this document today and I reflected on some of the commitments made at the time, because that is what we are talking about. I just talked to my friend the member for Bunbury, the election for which was hotly contested. One of the things the Labor Party promised there and listed in this document was \$6.5 million for a cancer centre in Bunbury. That never happened.

Mr P.B. Watson interjected.

Mr T.R. BUSWELL: A promise was also made for a \$20 million redevelopment of the Albany hospital.

Point of Order

Mr W.J. JOHNSTON: I draw the speaker's attention to his instructions to the member for Rockingham that he needed to address the resolution before the house —

Mr P.T. Miles interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Wanneroo, I have neither given you the call, nor am I able to hear what the member for Cannington is saying if you interject. I am going to formally call you to order for the first time today.

Mr W.J. JOHNSTON: I will just conclude in making this point of order. It would appear to be very weak that the minister cannot defend his own behaviour. Given that this is an issue about the behaviour of the Liberal Party, it would appear that the member needs to address that issue.

The SPEAKER: I understand the member for Cannington's point of order, and I am going to give the same opportunity to the Minister for Transport as I gave to the member for Rockingham to capture what this MPI is about, with the information that he has at the moment. If he does not do that, member for Cannington, I am going to stop him.

Debate Resumed

Mr T.R. BUSWELL: As the Speaker rightly pointed out to the member for Rockingham, this debate is about election commitments, which is what I am talking about, and their implementation. I look further down the page: \$20 million for the Albany hospital; I do not think that happened. I turn over the page. There was a commitment to Fiona Stanley Hospital; that did not happen. There was a commitment to the Kalgoorlie hospital; that certainly did not happen. I have just about run out of commitments; there are too many of them. My favourite one, though, because it relates to what we are talking about, was a commitment to—members are not going to believe this—a train station in the Swan Valley, called the Swan Valley train station.

A member: What year was that?

Mr T.R. BUSWELL: That was in 2005. Do you know what, Mr Speaker? We were up there yesterday. There is no train station in the Swan Valley that was built by the then Labor government. One of the commitments I found the Leader of the Opposition delivered on was \$500 000 to put more money into the Government Media Office to help advertising, research and community consultation. Where it mattered to the Leader of the Opposition, he got the money out, he got the rubber on the road, but in a lot of those other areas that mattered to people, nothing happened. It was a vacuum.

In relation to the train line —

Mr E.S. Ripper interjected.

Mr T.R. BUSWELL: The Leader of the Opposition is very sensitive. How much did the Leader of the Opposition promise us the Office of Shared Services would cost? How much did he promise the people of Western Australia that it would save? What did the Leader of the Opposition do —

Mr Eric Ripper; Mr Mark McGowan; Mr Rob Johnson; Speaker; Mr Troy Buswell; Mr Bill Johnston; Mr Peter Tinley; Mr Colin Barnett; Mr Frank Alban; Ms Rita Saffioti; Mr John Day; Mrs Michelle Roberts

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: I appreciate that the MPI has created some passion on both sides of this place. I think the best way to share that passion might be to give a member an opportunity to speak. I am giving the opportunity to the Minister for Transport, not to anybody else.

Mr T.R. BUSWELL: In relation to Ellenbrook, as I indicated to the house yesterday, upon coming to government we sought advice from the Public Transport Authority about the business case or, at the very least, the feasibility studies that the former government had used to support its decision to commit \$700 million or thereabouts of taxpayer money to a railway line to Ellenbrook. I think that was a fair and reasonable request of an incoming government, to make sure we were investing appropriately in infrastructure that was supported by an adequate business case. We could not find one, because no justification had ever been developed. No business case had ever been developed; no feasibility study had ever been undertaken. What did we do? We went off and we conducted a feasibility study.

Ms R. Saffioti interjected

The SPEAKER: Member for West Swan!

Mr T.R. BUSWELL: Because a feasibility study generally gives a rough idea of the appropriateness of the planned expenditure. That feasibility study was conducted by a company by the name of Parsons Brinckerhoff Australia; it was completely independent of government. The report was headed “Outer North-Eastern Corridor Public Transport Strategy—Pre-Feasibility Study”. That looked at all the issues around the railway line to Ellenbrook. It looked at two different routes: an eastern route that went up Lord Street and a western route that went a slightly different direction to the west.

Mr M.P. Whitely: Tonkin Highway.

Mr T.R. BUSWELL: Tonkin Highway down to Bayswater station. We had a look at those two alternative routes to service Ellenbrook. The study made a number of observations about population growth, because a railway is a long-term investment. It made a number of observations about where people living in that outer north eastern corridor go to work, because it is important to try to work out how many people will go on the train before spending the money to put in the train line. I think that is a fair and reasonable thing. This study was based on a number of scenarios to determine passenger volume. It determined that by 2031 in peak hour on the eastern route, we would be looking at about 1 400 users of the train. On the western route, the number of users of the train at peak hour in 2031 was estimated to be around 2 000. So the former government was going to spend \$700 million.

Mr W.J. Johnston interjected.

Mr T.R. BUSWELL: Because we, member for Cannington, assumed, albeit naively, that when the opposition was in government, this work might have been done. One of the observations of the study was that there quite simply would not be the patronage. Let me put that in perspective. At the moment, 8 000 people from the Joondalup station travel on the line at peak time. At peak time at the Murdoch railway station alone, 2 000 people get onto the train. More people would be getting on the train at Murdoch—at one station on a line—than would potentially use the entire Ellenbrook rail.

The study then looked at alternative options, because public transport options in that fast-growing corridor are important. It looked at heavy rail, it looked at light rail and it looked at a thing called bus rapid transport—BRT. Under the bus rapid transport concept, the buses are taken off the road—it is like the O-Bahn in Adelaide—and they have an access way. I will very quickly read what the study concluded —

The analysis shows that BRT —

Bus rapid transport —

is the most appropriate mode for public transport along —

Mr E.S. Ripper: So you changed your mind.

Mr T.R. BUSWELL: We actually did some research, if the Leader of the Opposition would listen, that he probably should have done in government before committing \$700 million. The research showed that there is a better way to do it. The better way to do it is through BRT. The Leader of the Opposition may have noticed in last week’s budget —

Several members interjected.

Mr Eric Ripper; Mr Mark McGowan; Mr Rob Johnson; Speaker; Mr Troy Buswell; Mr Bill Johnston; Mr Peter Tinley; Mr Colin Barnett; Mr Frank Alban; Ms Rita Saffioti; Mr John Day; Mrs Michelle Roberts

Mr T.R. BUSWELL: Let me say this —

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: I formally call to order the member for Joondalup for the second time today. I formally call the member for Cannington to order for the second time today. I formally call to order the member for Forrestfield for the second time today. And I will call the Premier to order for the first time today. I am going to give the call back to the Minister for Transport. Members on both sides need to acknowledge that there is only one person speaking on this matter of public importance. Members may not like what they are hearing; they may like what they are hearing. I give the call to the Minister for Transport.

Mr T.R. BUSWELL: I will just conclude on the discussions about the outcome of that study. I think the study was a fair and appropriate thing to do. Basically, it recommends the establishment of a dedicated bus expressway in the existing rail reserve that runs effectively down Lord Street—or, as locals like to call it, the Perth–Darwin highway—and that is what we will start doing work on. That work starts as of this year’s budget. Members may see in the budget this year that some significant amounts are set aside to advance —

Mrs M.H. Roberts: What does the member for Swan Hills think about that?

Mr T.R. BUSWELL: He thinks this is a good idea. I am sure he will get up and say that in a second. There is some money for planning in the budget to advance this project. There is money for planning to advance the extension of the heavy rail to Yanchep and to look at a new investment in light rail. There are three new public transport platforms for the Perth metropolitan area. That is a very positive, well-thought-out, well-researched outcome. That does not preclude, in due course, the establishment of heavy rail into that corridor, by the simple expedient of changing the bus corridor to turn it over to heavy rail. It is entirely consistent, at an appropriate time, to deliver heavy rail.

I will quickly touch on a few things, before I sit, because others, including the member for Swan Hills, want to speak. I was in the electorate of Swan Hills yesterday. During my visits to the member’s electorate I have discovered a number of other matters that are very important to his constituents. One is the intersection of Reid Highway and Lord Street—the starting point for the Perth–Darwin highway.

Point of Order

Mr P.C. TINLEY: Again, Mr Speaker, a point of order on relevance. What does that have to do with the matter before the house?

The SPEAKER: There is no point of order, member for Willagee.

Debate Resumed

Mr T.R. BUSWELL: Thank you, Mr Speaker. The great warrior who went weak at the knees after one phone call from Joe Bullock—I would love to have been a witness to that phone call, member for Willagee.

Several members interjected.

Point of Order

Mr W.J. JOHNSTON: I find it surprising that the minister can weave into this debate an attack on a man who has been honoured by Australia with an Order of Australia in the military division.

The SPEAKER: Member, I will make a suggestion. Although I appreciate points of order, the member will have to direct the house to the particular standing order.

Debate Resumed

Mr T.R. BUSWELL: I will very quickly touch on these issues that I think are important to the people the member for Swan Hills represents. Lord Street and Reid Highway intersection—signals installed. A big tick for the member; a big tick for the local community. Drumpellier Drive and Gngangara Road—signals installed. A big tick for safety in that area; a big tick for the local member and the people he represents. The dual carriageway construction on Gngangara Road between Drumpellier Drive and Pinaster Parade—another big tick for that community. That is what I think matters to the member’s constituents; as does—and I will finish with this—the very firm commitment from this government to deliver the Perth–Darwin highway, which is a very important transport link in that area. It is so important that I wrote to Anthony Albanese. I said, “Dear Anthony, all I asked for was some planning money to help start the Perth–Darwin highway.”

Several members interjected.

Mr T.R. BUSWELL: That is what we have to do to build something. We have to plan for it and then construct it!

Mr Eric Ripper; Mr Mark McGowan; Mr Rob Johnson; Speaker; Mr Troy Buswell; Mr Bill Johnston; Mr Peter Tinley; Mr Colin Barnett; Mr Frank Alban; Ms Rita Saffioti; Mr John Day; Mrs Michelle Roberts

The federal minister's reply, again according to my notes, was —

There is no scope at the present time for the Australian government to fund new works such as the planning for the proposed new Perth to Darwin highway.

So the federal government is not going to help the people the member for Swan Hills represents in this place—but we are! We have committed money to that planning process so that in due course, when the federal government is ready to help the member for Swan Hills' constituents, we will be ready to build the road for them. That is a positive outcome.

I will close, Mr Speaker, with one reflection of my favourite member of Parliament, the former member for Armadale, Hon Alannah MacTiernan.

Several members interjected.

Mr T.R. BUSWELL: The Campbell Newman of Western Australia!

It does not matter what side of the house they sit on, they might not have agreed with her politics, but most people thought she was a reasonably sound, forward thinker. On 12 March 2008, just before the plan to commit \$700 million to build a railway that nobody could justify —

A member interjected.

Mr T.R. BUSWELL: The member will have to ask the then Liberal Premier.

Several members interjected.

Mr T.R. BUSWELL: The member was in Exmouth; the member for Cannington was running the show! Ask him! The political genius! The bloke in the back of the HiAce van.

I will close with this. According to my notes, the then minister, Hon Alannah MacTiernan, said —

Plans to build a rail line to service Ellenbrook will not see daylight for at least 10 years.

This was five months before the election. She is reported as having said that—

The suburb was beyond the urban front and a rail link was not yet a cost-effective option.

And she was absolutely right. If only members opposite had heard that in their little leadership team that ran the election campaign, they might still be on this side of the house.

Several members interjected.

Withdrawal of Remark

Mr C.J. BARNETT: The member for Cannington referred to Liberal lies, directed at the Minister for Transport. I ask that he withdraw his remark.

Mr M. McGOWAN: It is commonplace to refer to a political party in adverse terms; he did not refer to any particular member. It is commonplace —

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Take a seat, member for Cannington. I did not hear the member for Cannington make those remarks. A lot of people were making remarks in this place. I am going to give the member for Cannington the opportunity to withdraw if he wants to do so; otherwise, I am going to give the call to the member for Swan Hills.

Debate Resumed

MR F.A. ALBAN (Swan Hills) [3.25 pm]: Some months ago, the Labor opposition sent the heavy hitters of the Labor Party to my electorate and held a forum to tap into the anger in Ellenbrook over the lack of public transport. Only five people attended—two of whom were from my office! There is not that much anger in Ellenbrook. It must have had something to do with timing. This government had just announced the addition of a new bus service in Ellenbrook. Perhaps there is a little timing problem. They did not tap into any anger. Nobody mentioned the train. I believe the only thing mentioned was Aveley, which we fixed in no time flat.

I remember the occasion of the Labor great white hope, the then Premier, Alan Carpenter, visiting the electorate. It was not my electorate at the time; I was the candidate, which was not much.

Several members interjected.

Mr Eric Ripper; Mr Mark McGowan; Mr Rob Johnson; Speaker; Mr Troy Buswell; Mr Bill Johnston; Mr Peter Tinley; Mr Colin Barnett; Mr Frank Alban; Ms Rita Saffioti; Mr John Day; Mrs Michelle Roberts

Mr F.A. ALBAN: Candidates have the ability to promise trains, aeroplanes, aircraft carriers and helicopters—that is what candidates do.

Several members interjected.

Mr F.A. ALBAN: That is what they do! They knew that I had potential right from the word go! I just had to be given the opportunity.

I remember my first meeting with the then Premier. He looked me in the eyes and I thought, “Boy, you are going to frighten me for the first time in my life.” But he was a worried man. He must have read some polls that said this total unknown was going to cause him some trouble.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Thank you, members!

Mr F.A. ALBAN: It was in the light of the resignation of a very good member—Jaye Radisich. It was also at a time when it was clearly evident that the Labor government of the day was totally ignoring the constituents of Ellenbrook with the covenant. Not a single member—not one of them!—stood up for the people of Ellenbrook. They laid down like a bunch of dogs! That is what they did!

Several members interjected.

Mr F.A. ALBAN: The government that was supposed to be of the people! I have noticed that in 150 years of Labor history, the same snake oil was sold to the people as has been sold since I was elected to this place. There he was, the great white hope —

Several members interjected.

Mr F.A. ALBAN: He had been flat-footed on the covenant. He said, “Oops; but I will have this great big punch. I will sort them out with a great big knockout punch to win Swan Hills. This little bloke who is hanging around may stand a chance, so I will deliver a great big knockout punch.”

Mr D.A. Templeman interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Mandurah, I formally call you to order for the first time today. I am sure that the Leader of the Opposition, when he introduced this matter of public interest, wanted it treated with some respect and with some seriousness, and wanted everybody to have the opportunity to hear the case that he put and the supporting cases from the opposition. I am sure that the Leader of the Opposition was then also looking forward to hearing what might be said on the government side. Members, I suggest that you pay that courtesy to the member for Swan Hills and give him the opportunity in this particular matter of public interest debate to put his reasons and causes.

Mr F.A. ALBAN: Therefore, the Premier of Western Australia, whose government had had two terms, which he very stupidly cut short, wanted a third term, which is always very hard. He promised the train, not for that next term that he hoped to win—his third term—but for his fourth term, which is almost impossible to win. He thought he had conned the people of Ellenbrook; he thought for a moment that they must have all been stupid. However, members might remember seeing the clip in which a lady from Ellenbrook confronted the then Premier and said, “We’re sick of your promises!” The people of Ellenbrook at that time would have settled for a decent bus service, which we have provided. They would have settled for the previous government saying, “We will look at the covenant because you don’t have any shops or services.” The people of Ellenbrook would have been happy with that. They did not need the promise of the train; they would have been happy just —

Mr M.P. Whitely interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Bassendean!

Mr F.A. ALBAN: The people of Ellenbrook would have been happy if the government had shown them respect by looking at the covenant—a government that is supposed to defend, protect and look after them. I can tell members opposite what else they did not do. I have a list as long as an arm!

Mr P.B. Watson interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Albany, I am sure that you heard me say what I said before in this place. I formally call you to order for the third time today.

Mr F.A. ALBAN: Not only did the people of Ellenbrook need public transport, there was only one entry road to Ellenbrook. I have never heard of something as silly as that. The police station was understaffed. It was a new police station and it looked fantastic but it was short of police. I said earlier that there was a covenant, which meant Ellenbrook had no shops. There was no Dome Cafe complex, no tavern, no business precinct, and a basic

Mr Eric Ripper; Mr Mark McGowan; Mr Rob Johnson; Speaker; Mr Troy Buswell; Mr Bill Johnston; Mr Peter Tinley; Mr Colin Barnett; Mr Frank Alban; Ms Rita Saffioti; Mr John Day; Mrs Michelle Roberts

bus service. Members opposite all carry on about needing public transport, but the public transport in Ellenbrook was shocking at the time of the previous government. All entries to Ellenbrook were a safety issue. Our kids were being educated in dongas because there was a shortage of schools. Members all know that we have committed to not only secondary schools but also two new primary schools.

Ms M.M. Quirk interjected.

Mr F.A. ALBAN: There was no air conditioning in our schools.

Ms M.M. Quirk interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Girrawheen!

Mr F.A. ALBAN: Members opposite did not do anything about the covenant when they were asked for help!

Ms M.M. Quirk interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Girrawheen, I formally call you to order for the second time today. I want to hear the member for Swan Hills in silence.

Mr F.A. ALBAN: Members all know that there was no air conditioning and the then president of the parents and citizens association, Larisa Flatters, told me that she virtually begged the previous government to do something about air conditioning for the brand-new school it had just built. It was not an existing school; it had just been built. Look at what this government has done: we have budgeted \$52 million for all schools to get air conditioning. Who did that? Do we think it was the Labor government? No, it was not! Wake up! The previous government did nothing.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Joondalup, I formally call you to order for the third time today. Members, when I said “silence”, I know you can all spell it. Member for Albany, you can spell it as well.

Mr F.A. ALBAN: Of course there was traffic mayhem on all our roads, which is why this government has committed \$8 million to the Perth–Darwin highway. That is what the people of my electorate have wanted all along; they want the trucks off their roads. They want to be listened to; not to get something for Christmas that they did not ask for.

There were no lights at the intersection of West Swan Road and Great Northern Highway. There are lights there now.

An opposition member: It’s a tragedy.

Mr F.A. ALBAN: Yes, it is tragic. Great Northern Highway had not been started. Members opposite talked about it, as they did with their other projects, but it had not been started. There were no LED flashing lights at Upper Swan Primary School.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Midland, I formally call you to order for the first time today.

Mr F.A. ALBAN: There were no flashing —

Mr M.P. Whitely: What did you do on the second day?

The SPEAKER: Member for Bassendean, I formally call you to order for the first time today. I advise other members in this place that if they want to take part in this matter of public interest debate, there is a way to do that—namely, by seeking the call. If other members in this place in a future matter of public interest debate want to take part, they will probably want to do it in some reasonable silence to get their points across, member for Bassendean.

Mr F.A. ALBAN: As I said earlier, there were no LED flashing lights at Upper Swan Primary School and the entry there was the most shocking I have ever seen in my life. Bullsbrook District High School and Gidgegannup Primary School also had no LED flashing lights. We have put them in at these schools, of course. LED lights were installed to address safety issues on Great Eastern Highway in Mundaring, which has been a great success. I have been lobbying the Minister for Transport for LED lights at Great Northern Highway in Bullsbrook because Great Northern Highway goes through the township and it is quite a serious issue.

Our lakes in Ellenbrook do not hold water. Somehow the developers got away with putting in compensation basins and no-one knew about the con that was happening. Both lakes do not hold water. There is no signage to Ellenbrook.

Mr Eric Ripper; Mr Mark McGowan; Mr Rob Johnson; Speaker; Mr Troy Buswell; Mr Bill Johnston; Mr Peter Tinley; Mr Colin Barnett; Mr Frank Alban; Ms Rita Saffioti; Mr John Day; Mrs Michelle Roberts

Ms L.L. Baker: And how's the trail bike strategy going?

The SPEAKER: Member for Maylands, when I said "silence", that is what it meant; it did not mean anything else. I formally call you to order for the first time today.

Mr F.A. ALBAN: Some 20 000 people live in Ellenbrook but there is no signage to Ellenbrook. There was no fire station, but we now have a brand-new fire station. There was no St John Ambulance, but we now have a temporary St John Ambulance building and St John has committed to building a brand-new one. There were no lights at the intersection of Reid Highway and Lord Street. As the minister said, we have committed to the installation of lights at the intersection of Great Northern Highway and Reid Highway. Our members lobbied the previous government for those lights and members opposite now have the gall to say that they are lobbying our government! Aveley had no bus service and there were only basic buses for Ellenbrook. There were no lights at Drumpellier Drive. Again, as the minister mentioned, we are getting lights at Drumpellier Drive.

Ellenbrook had been there 16 years and all these issues should have been addressed in the previous government's term. That is why we have to do all these jobs in my electorate. If members opposite have the courage, they should go to my electorate and say, "Frank Alban is dishonest." Give it a go and see what happens!

Several members interjected.

Mr J.J.M. Bowler: You should be a minister!

The SPEAKER: Member for Kalgoorlie, I formally call you to order for the first time. You may not have been in this place for some of this matter of public interest debate, but I am trying to get it to a stage whereby the member for Swan Hills can be heard in silence so that the points he has the opportunity to make can be heard.

Mr F.A. ALBAN: But there is more!

Of course, I have not mentioned quite a big project that has just been completed—that is, the work on Reid Highway including the bridge on Middle Swan Road. A big project underway at the moment that will help the eastern end of my electorate—the hills and Mundaring—is the Roe Highway–Great Eastern Highway overpass. I would be remiss not to mention one more project, although it is not in my electorate. I was a City of Swan councillor for six years and it is almost a drama on its own. For six years we heard, "It's coming. It's happening. There's a letter in the mail. The minister's considering it. No, it's definitely in the mail. Come in next month. We'll think about it. Yes, money's been allocated." God knows what happened. I refer, of course, to the Lloyd Street extension, and that did not happen either.

As the member for Swan Hills, it is my job to lobby for all I can get for my electorate and I listen to my constituents and what they want; not what I want to give them without their requests. Their priority is the Perth–Darwin highway stage 1.

MS R. SAFFIOTI (West Swan) [3.40 pm]: I want to bring this debate back to the core issue: was there an election promise to build the Ellenbrook rail line?

Mr C.J. Barnett: You could not even bang a post in!

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: The Premier has got it wrong again, because I was not out there that day. The Premier has got it wrong, yet again. The key issue is: was there a promise?

The Minister for Transport had about 12 minutes to rebut whether there was a promise. Basically, the minister confirmed there was a promise to build the Ellenbrook rail line. Why has the government not built it? Because we did not do the planning for them! Apparently the Labor Party has to do the planning and preparation for Liberal Party commitments. It is absolutely ridiculous that the Labor Party has to do the preparation, the planning and the total budgeting for the Liberal Party's election commitments. There are two points. The first point is that the Minister for Transport did not rebut the fact that there was an election commitment; he actually confirmed that election commitment. Members should remember that it was the Minister for Transport who prepared the financial plan. It was the Minister for Transport who put in the Liberal Party's financial plan that construction of the Ellenbrook rail line would commence in this term of government. It is as clear as that. The Liberal Party's own documents show that it was planning, committing and promising to start the construction of the Ellenbrook rail line in this term. The second point is that members opposite said that the government is not doing that because the Labor Party did not do the preparation. Jeez! Next time the Minister for Transport should ring us up and we will do all the planning for him and make sure he has all the details for his election promises! That is absolutely ridiculous.

It is true that the Labor government committed to build that rail line and that the Liberal Party matched its commitment. Labor committed to begin construction in 2012 and to finish in 2015. It is as simple as that. The Leader of the Opposition and I remember the Premier's commitment made on television on a Monday night

Mr Eric Ripper; Mr Mark McGowan; Mr Rob Johnson; Speaker; Mr Troy Buswell; Mr Bill Johnston; Mr Peter Tinley; Mr Colin Barnett; Mr Frank Alban; Ms Rita Saffioti; Mr John Day; Mrs Michelle Roberts

claiming that he would match Labor's commitment. Every journalist in town—from the local papers, *The West Australian*, or the television media—got the same understanding from that press conference: the Liberal Party was matching Labor's commitment. The government wants us to believe that every journalist from every newspaper outlet at a press conference on a key election issue, a core issue in the last week of the election campaign, got it wrong. The government wants us to believe that everybody got it wrong and the Premier was so smart—like he always is—and so tricky that he said it had another meaning and everybody else got it wrong. That is not the case. The Premier committed to matching Labor's election commitment, and he has broken that promise.

The Premier also talked about Geoff Gallop and his promise on tax increases. The one key difference is that Geoff Gallop apologised for breaking that commitment. He acknowledged that. He had the ability and the humility to stand in front of the people and say, "I got it wrong." This Premier does not have the ability to say that. He does not have the ability to say, "I was wrong. We misled you and we are not building the rail line." That is what the opposition is calling for: the acknowledgement that there was an election commitment, and for an apology from the Premier saying that he got it wrong. That is what we are calling for. Honestly, I am sick of hearing this Premier, in his own world, which I call "Barnett world", where the sign on the gate says, "The facts do not matter." In "Barnett world" he never acknowledges he got it wrong! It is on paper. It is in the government's own financial plan and its own midyear review. It is there. But no, the Premier says, "I did not say we would build a rail line to Ellenbrook. No, no, no! I was going to consider it in the second term. Yes, it was a possible and logical extension." Heaven forbid! This is not "Barnett world"; this is the real world. We all live in the real world. We acknowledge when we make mistakes and break promises. I have to respond to the member for Swan Hills.

Mr R.F. Johnson: He is a great member.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: He is a very loyal member to the Liberal Party; I will say that! I do not think any one of us on this side would have copped what he has copped. An election commitment has been broken, yet the member for Swan Hills has not wavered in his undying loyalty to the Liberal Party. That is fine, but the member has also got to stand up for his electorate.

Mr F.A. Alban: Name me something that has happened in your electorate, member? I have a list for my electorate!

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: Member for Swan Hills, I am talking about the Ellenbrook rail line. Did the member promise the Ellenbrook rail line?

Mr F.A. Alban: I, as a candidate, promised the train.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: Yes!

Mr F.A. Alban: Where does it say, "I will start it this term"? Where does it say, "It will be built in this term of government"? Where does it say that the big Mr Alban will start the train for you?

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: Calm down! I have something for the member: on 3 September 2008 the member for Swan Hills was interviewed on 6PR radio about the Ellenbrook rail line. He said —

I raised it three months ago, and, ah, I'm pretty wrapped that the Labor Party came out suggesting that they would put a new rail link to Ellenbrook and the Liberals have promised the same, plus some extra parking, ah, to go with it.

In that interview, the member for Swan Hills promised to commence construction in 2012, because he matched Labor's commitment. The interview continues —

So, as a candidate, I'm wrapped that I've been able to get so much for ... electorate like that.

Harvey Deegan asked —

So, you're taking credit for Labor's promise of extending the rail to Ellenbrook?

The member replied —

Yes, I am. And all my advertising and all my leaflets the wording is exactly this: campaign for adequate public transport, a rail link and appropriate access road infrastructure for the Ellenbrook regional district.

The member for Swan Hills stood yesterday and said he believed there were other priorities, which is his prerogative. Governments can break election commitments—that is their prerogative. A government can break an election promise, but it must admit that it is doing so. That is the key point. Members opposite are rewriting history in "Barnett world". It does not work!

Mr Eric Ripper; Mr Mark McGowan; Mr Rob Johnson; Speaker; Mr Troy Buswell; Mr Bill Johnston; Mr Peter Tinley; Mr Colin Barnett; Mr Frank Alban; Ms Rita Saffioti; Mr John Day; Mrs Michelle Roberts

Mr F.A. Alban: I am rewriting history—I have a number of projects in my electorate. How many have you got in your electorate? All of these are commitments you made and did not go ahead with.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: It does not work. There was a clear commitment made and now the government is not delivering on it.

Mr F.A. Alban: I delivered everything else.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: So the member for Swan Hills admits he is not delivering his election commitment to build the Ellenbrook rail line?

Mr F.A. Alban: As member for Swan Hills, it is my job to lobby. I did not say I would stop lobbying. I also said I would listen to my constituents.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: I will read what is in black and white. I will reiterate the promise.

Several members interjected.

Mr T.R. Buswell: I have never seen a response like that.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: I have this in black and white in the Minister for Transport's own financial plan.

Mr T.R. Buswell: And, guess what? It all added up!

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: Is the minister saying that just to irritate the Premier, or what? I do not understand why he would say that. Does he talk just to irritate the Premier? The minister's own financial plan—the one that added up, as the minister keeps saying, states, "Construction of the Ellenbrook Railway Line ... to commence in 2010–11", and also, "... will provide \$53 million over the first four years."

As members on this side have said, this was a core election promise made in a marginal seat in the last week of the campaign, and the government has broken a promise; it has to answer for that

Mr T.R. Buswell: Can I ask a question?

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: No! You have to stand up, admit it and apologise.

MR J.H.D. DAY (Kalamunda — Minister for Planning) [3.48 pm]: I have a recollection of the last election campaign to some extent. I was mainly focussing on other areas of policy and on my own electorate of Kalamunda, which adjoins the Swan Hills electorate of course. I remember a few days before the election the then Premier and leader of the Labor Party went out to Swan Hills, and Ellenbrook in particular, to bang a stake in the ground with a sign saying that the train is coming to Ellenbrook, or whatever the statement was. Obviously the Labor Party had been doing some polling in the Swan Hills electorate and its overall polling, presumably, was not going well, so as an act of desperation concocted by the now member for Cannington or the now member for West Swan, they came up with this brilliant idea of a stunt in Ellenbrook: we will bring a train to Ellenbrook! Quite naturally, the then Liberal candidate for Swan Hills said that we would do the same, because there would have been an assumption on the part of the then opposition that there was a bit of science and thorough evaluation behind what would be a \$1 billion or so project. One would assume that the head of a supposedly mainstream political party seeking to remain in government would have done some thorough assessment on whether it was justified.

Mr E.S. Ripper: Why would you have matched it?

Mr J.H.D. DAY: It was assumed that the government of the day would have had some proper planning and science behind this proposal. I ask the member for Cannington or the Leader of the Opposition: was the then Minister for Planning and Infrastructure supportive of this commitment?

Mr W.J. Johnston: Yes.

Mr J.H.D. DAY: Was she even asked about it? Did she support it? The member is saying that she did. It would be very interesting to know why she would have changed her view. I do not believe that she would have changed her view from only a few months earlier that year when she said it would be at least 10 years away.

Mr W.J. Johnston interjected.

The SPEAKER: My observation is that the member for West Swan was heard in relative silence by people to my right. I noticed that the majority of the people who I heard and saw interjecting were from the same side as the member for West Swan. I have given the call to the Minister for Planning, not the member for Cannington. When the member for Cannington gets to his feet, I will give him the call.

Mr J.H.D. DAY: It is simply not credible that the then Minister for Planning and Infrastructure would have changed her view from March 2008 to September 2008 on the prospect of a rail service being justified through to

Mr Eric Ripper; Mr Mark McGowan; Mr Rob Johnson; Speaker; Mr Troy Buswell; Mr Bill Johnston; Mr Peter Tinley; Mr Colin Barnett; Mr Frank Alban; Ms Rita Saffioti; Mr John Day; Mrs Michelle Roberts

Ellenbrook. Given that the Labor Party initiated this MPI, it would be very interesting to know whether it is the Labor Party's policy for the next election, which is now less than two years away, to make a similar commitment. If the Labor Party is elected to government at the 2013 election, will this be a Labor Party commitment?

Ms R. Saffioti interjected.

The SPEAKER: I formally call the member for West Swan to order for the first time today by the looks of it, unless I missed it once.

Mr J.H.D. DAY: Is this —

Ms R. Saffioti interjected.

The SPEAKER: I formally call the member for West Swan to order for the second time today.

Mr J.H.D. DAY: Is it a Labor Party commitment for the next election? Is the Leader of the Opposition prepared to say "yes" or "no"?

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: I call the member for Willagee to order for the second time today. I advise members in this place that yelling and screaming across the chamber from both sides does not achieve anything in terms of the knowledge of members in this place in a general sense.

Mr J.H.D. DAY: The Leader of the Opposition is clearly not prepared to make that commitment, because he knows that at this stage the provision of such an expensive project is simply not justified against all the other needs; that is, to extend the passenger rail network in the metropolitan area and alternative ways in which public transport can be provided. As the member for Swan Hills said, what matters to the people of Ellenbrook is that a good public transport service is provided, and that is now the case. The Premier, the former Minister for Transport and the member for Swan Hills and I visited the Ellenbrook area in December last year. We used a Transperth bus for the purpose of doing so. From the briefing we were provided and the comments directly from the member for Swan Hills, we learned that the residents of that area are now well satisfied with a very good public transport service, which has been put in place by this government and enhanced by last week's budget as outlined by the Minister for Transport. At some stage a passenger rail service, heavy or light rail, may be justified through the north eastern corridor with the population growth expected in that area. However, we need to remember that Whiteman Park, a large area that will never be developed for residential purposes, is between the Midland rail line and Ellenbrook; that makes it much harder to justify such an investment.

MRS M.H. ROBERTS (Midland) [3.54 pm]: I think today is a most remarkable day; it is a day on which the opposition has accused the Premier and the member for Swan Hills of dishonesty in their election promises and the Premier has not stood to defend himself. The fact that he will not even address the issue says something about his pomposity and arrogance. It is a serious issue; he has been accused of being dishonest in his promises on electricity prices, Royal Perth Hospital and the Ellenbrook railway. We also know that he has been dishonest in his promise to contain debt. He has also been dishonest in promises contained in documents that were put out as election commitments. In "Securing the economic future of Western Australia" the now Premier said that he would have an economic audit and that —

All savings identified by the Economic Audit will be quarantined for return to the Western Australian taxpayer through the Tax Reform and Reduction Strategy.

Have we seen that money quarantined? No. The Premier said —

... a Liberal Government will be committed to delivering significant tax reductions in its first term.

To demonstrate this commitment to significant tax reform, a Liberal Government will allocate a minimum additional \$250 million to tax cuts in its first term over and above the current forward estimates.

Has that happened? No. The Premier said —

Windfall state budget surplus revenues will also be directed to tax cuts ...

When there was the windfall this year when the surplus was more than anticipated, was it directed to those tax cuts? No, it was not. Further to that, in this same document, the Premier said —

Labor is the Party of high taxes.

This is the Liberal Party's election document —

Mr Eric Ripper; Mr Mark McGowan; Mr Rob Johnson; Speaker; Mr Troy Buswell; Mr Bill Johnston; Mr Peter Tinley; Mr Colin Barnett; Mr Frank Alban; Ms Rita Saffioti; Mr John Day; Mrs Michelle Roberts

The Liberal Party proudly stands for lower taxes, and is committed to reducing the tax burden on Western Australian families and small businesses.

How much more dishonest could the Premier be? Not only has the government failed to reduce the burden, it has also astronomically increased the burden, including a 30 per cent rise for business electricity this year. That is how dishonest this Premier is, and he will not even stand to defend himself. We still have yet to elicit any kind of apology for misleading the public over the Ellenbrook railway or the Royal Perth Hospital or any of the other issues. We have even had the Premier, his ministers and members of the Liberal Party say that either they did not promise it or it was a next-term promise. It was not, because if members look at the Liberal Party's transport policy, they can see that it is quite specific. The policy said —

A Liberal Government will provide \$53 million over the next four years toward the construction of a new rail line to Ellenbrook, to meet needs in the ... Corridor.

The government cannot say that that is a second-term commitment; it is clearly a first-term commitment in this document. It is black and white and quite specific as to the dollar amount. The lie was told over and over again. The Leader of the Opposition quoted the ads, but there were also articles in *The Sunday Times* and other journals. In an article published in *The Sunday Times* on 31 August 2008 under the heading "Interview with Colin Barnett: My Stance on the Issues that Matter", the Premier said —

... families in this state face a 70 per cent increase in their electricity bills. That will hurt families in WA. I will fix up the problem in Western Power. It will avoid a 70 per cent increase in electricity prices and that's what people are facing right now.

What have we seen? He is planning a 107 per cent increase in electricity prices—46 per cent in just the first two years. How much more dishonest could the Premier get? The Premier conned the people of Western Australia. His election promises, flimsy as they were and cobbled together in a month because of the early election, did not promise much, but they did promise a lie. We have heard the member for Swan Hills today list a range of projects he is claiming he delivered. The member for Swan Hills did not, because nearly every one of those projects —

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order! Member for Midland, take a seat. The question is that the motion be agreed to.

Question put and a division taken with the following result —

Ayes (20)

Ms L.L. Baker	Mr M. McGowan	Mr E.S. Ripper	Mr A.J. Waddell
Mr R.H. Cook	Mr M.P. Murray	Mrs M.H. Roberts	Mr P.B. Watson
Ms J.M. Freeman	Mr A.P. O'Gorman	Ms R. Saffioti	Mr M.P. Whitely
Mr W.J. Johnston	Mr J.R. Quigley	Mr C.J. Tallentire	Mr B.S. Wyatt
Mr J.C. Kobelke	Ms M.M. Quirk	Mr P.C. Tinley	Mr D.A. Templeman (<i>Teller</i>)

Noes (25)

Mr P. Abetz	Mr V.A. Catania	Mr R.F. Johnson	Mr D.T. Redman
Mr F.A. Alban	Mr J.H.D. Day	Mr A. Krsticevic	Mr A.J. Simpson
Mr C.J. Barnett	Mr J.M. Francis	Mr W.R. Marmion	Mr M.W. Sutherland
Mr J.J.M. Bowler	Mr B.J. Grylls	Mr P.T. Miles	Mr J.E. McGrath (<i>Teller</i>)
Mr I.M. Britza	Dr K.D. Hames	Ms A.R. Mitchell	
Mr T.R. Buswell	Mrs L.M. Harvey	Dr M.D. Nahan	
Mr G.M. Castrilli	Dr G.G. Jacobs	Mr C.C. Porter	

Pairs

Dr A.D. Buti	Mr T.K. Waldron
Mr F.M. Logan	Dr E. Constable
Mr T.G. Stephens	Mr A.P. Jacob
Mr J.N. Hyde	Mr I.C. Blayney
Mrs C.A. Martin	Mr M.J. Cowper

Question thus negatived.