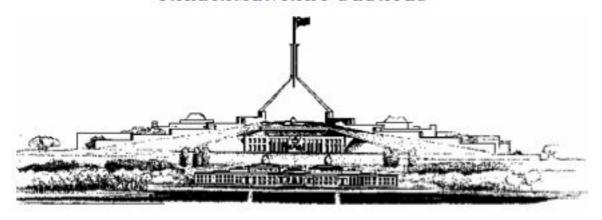


PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES MATTERS OF PUBLIC IMPORTANCE

Western Australia: Infrastructure

SPEECH

Thursday, 6 March 2014

BY AUTHORITY OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

SPEECH

Page 1930

Questioner

Speaker Irons, Steve, MP

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Mr IRONS (Swan) (16:05): It is always a pleasure to follow a Western Australian member—sorry, a South Australian member talking about Western Australia. When was the last time that the member for Adelaide was there? I would like to note, for people in Western Australia who are listening to this motion about Western Australia, that I cannot see one Western Australian member on the opposition benches in the House at the moment during this important discussion about Western Australia. On the government side, there are currently five Western Australian members sitting here and listening to this debate which is so important to the member for Perth.

It is amazing that just before the member for Perth moved this motion she had a nice little photo opportunity with the member for Brand, the member for Fremantle and the Leader of the Opposition. On 7 September when she was elected, she declared all her love for Anthony Albanese as the new leader of the federal Labor Party. No wonder the Leader of the Opposition did not hang around to support her during her motion.

The member for Brand let the cat out of the bag when he started pleading with the Western Australian people for their vote in the upcoming Senate election in WA. So this is the whole purpose of this farcical and ineffectual matter of public importance brought to the House by the member for Perth.

I remember a story that was told to me by the member for Curtin with regard to facts. She related a story to me about a time she and the former member for Swan, who was then the Deputy Prime Minister of Australia, were delivering speeches in Adelaide. After the speeches were done, the member for Curtin approached the member for Swan and said, 'Some of the facts you gave during your speech weren't correct.' His response was, 'Julie, you have your version, and we have our version.' That is what we have heard from the opposition today —their version, which is so littered with nontruths that it would be amazing if the people of Western Australia swallowed the story that was put forward.

As the member for Swan I was also most surprised by the matter brought to the House by the member for Perth. I know that other members have also been very surprised by this matter from the member for Perth, because the coalition government, under the leadership of the infrastructure Prime Minister Tony Abbott, is delivering the \$1 billion Gateway WA infrastructure project in my electorate of Swan. In 2010, during the election campaign, there was a commitment to this project by both parties. One party said that it would finance it through the mining tax. We, the coalition, said that we would fund the project without the mining tax. This is a \$1 billion infrastructure project that could never have happened under the Labor government because, as I just said, Labor linked the project to the mining tax. As we have heard from the members from WA, that tax has raised nothing.

It is even more surprising that the member for Perth should raise this MPI when she herself, only yesterday, stated her support for the mining tax, saying the idea was 'sound'. As all Western Australians know, it was an anti-Western Australia tax. Eighty per cent of the revenue that was to be raised from the mining tax was to come from Western Australia. This is not a great position for the member for Perth to be taking to the Western Australian people before the Senate election. I note that the WA Senate team said yesterday:

Anyone who was expecting Alannah MacTiernan to stand up for WA's interests will now be sorely disappointed with the confirmation she will simply toe the line for the Labor party and its anti-WA policy agenda.

There is further trouble with the member for Perth's position on the mining tax. The mining tax is resented in WA because it is an anti-WA tax. Labor's mining tax has killed off investments and jobs in WA, and it hurts WA more than it hurts any other state. Surely the member for Perth understands that. We both represent central Perth seats, so I am not sure what she is hearing from her constituents. My constituents are telling me that the mining tax is an anti-WA tax that threatens jobs and job security in Western Australia, and should be repealed. That is probably why there are 12 sitting federal members from the coalition in Western Australia and only three from the Labor Party. Labor and the member for Perth need to stand up for WA. They need to get out of way and repeal this mining tax, along with the carbon tax.

Thanks to the coalition's plan to provide certainty and deliver Gateway WA, the people of Swan can look forward to upgrades at key intersections in my electorate of Swan. In closing, I advise the people of Western Australia: stay on board with the coalition. The Senate election is important to Western Australia in getting rid of the mining tax and the carbon tax.