

# Labor muddled over needs & wants

The Labor Government seems to have "needs" and "wants" confused at the moment.

Taxpayers need a world-class healthcare system that WA residents can be proud of and is well maintained, staffed and funded.

Taxpayers need a well-resourced education system that provides a safe workplace for students and teachers. Class sizes need to be reduced, and buildings made permanent instead of multiple demountables on sites. Existing buildings need to be maintained to an improved level.

Taxpayers need more "green space" for mental health, recreation and exercise. WA has the lowest tree canopy in Australia, and with the major removal of mature trees due to shot-hole borer, this needs to be a priority. Taxpayers need a strong law enforcement sector that has the staff to deal with the ever-growing tobacco wars. More detention facilities need to be built to accommodate those who are detained.

Taxpayers need more affordable housing.

What the Cook Government wants is:

- A third racetrack in a high-density residential area, where all the data for the business case was provided by the Government for a government project and final costing isn't available.
- A rugby team that has failed in the past, but now taxpayers are paying over \$60 million to the project.
- A ferry service that can't be moved due to "independent" research stating that is the best location.

Labor has had over nine years to fix our State and they need to realise all the extra



**Roger Cook**

money from mining will come to an end, and debt needs to be paid back.

**Sharon Newman, Mandurah**

## Get on with fixing it

Well, well, well good news Roger the Dodger has finally decided to accept the blame for the embarrassingly disgraceful condition of our ever-failing health system (*News*, 17/1)— and so he should.

Having while in Opposition criticised the Barnett government as ambulance ramping rose to 1000 hours per month, Cook then, as Health Minister, under-funded, under-resourced and neglected our health services to the extent monthly ramping is now over 4000 hours and, as reported by *The West*, due to lack of maintenance hospitals are now barely fit for purpose.

Finally, after eight years, his admission of responsibility for the degradation of the hospitals is all well and good, but they are just words which now have to be backed up with action to mean anything at all.

It is well past time this Government started spending taxpayer money on our essential services rather than throwing it away on their own expensive and quite often

unwanted vanity projects. As Basil Zempilas has told the Premier: "Do your job."

**Alan Freind, Leeming**

## Demise began pre-Cook

It is not only Roger Cook who needs to answer for the poor maintenance of our hospitals — so do many preceding premiers and their governments.

Having worked in a public hospital in Perth for over 40 years, I watched the decline in maintenance happen year after year due to funds being cut.

The biggest mistake was removing the individual workshops, which had great expertise, from each hospital and outsourcing the work. The plumbers, electricians, engineers and all other maintenance workers were very much part of the staff and showed great pride in their work. They were a phone call away from a problem and it was usually fixed instantly.

Once there was no staff on site it either took many weeks to get the smallest repairs done or nothing happened.

You do not need a \$400,000 independent report to find out what the problems are — any nurse who has worked in the system for the last 50 years knows exactly what happened.

**Lynette Browne, Como**

## Give ideas, not criticism

I used to enjoy reading Basil Zempilas' 10 things on Friday, but no more. We all know the shortcomings of the Labor Party. Please start giving us some ideas of how the Liberal Party plans to improve the State. Simple. Bashing the Labor Party should be kept to Facebook. The readers of *The West* are too intelligent.

**Greg Purdue, Currumbine**