

FREMANTLE PORTS — PRIVATISATION

**399. Mr M. McGOWAN to the Premier:**

I refer to the Premier's promise to Parliament in 2012, and I quote —

Can I categorically say that if this government is re-elected, there will not be privatisation of Fremantle Ports.

I refer also to the Premier's backflip announced last week to sell off Fremantle port.

- (1) Why did the Premier break his promise?
- (2) Does the Premier have a detailed analysis and business case to support this sale; and, if so, will he release it?

**Mr C.J. BARNETT replied:**

- (1)–(2) Yes, I did say that we would not be selling public utilities, meaning the energy utilities and the Water Corporation, and I did say we would not be selling the government ports.

**Ms M.M. Quirk:** You said Fremantle port!

**Mr C.J. BARNETT:** That is what I said; I just answered it. The member does not listen.

That is the case. However, circumstances have changed and we have changed our mind. The proposal for Fremantle port is a lease arrangement, so we will retain ownership of the port but we will lease out its operations. The detail of exactly what that involves is yet to be determined. In the budget, we listed about seven or eight items that are under consideration for privatisation. Fremantle port is one of them. Indeed, if Fremantle port or its operations are privatised, then it will be the last container port in Australia to be privatised. It essentially is the only one in public ownership. Melbourne port is in public ownership, but that is being sold at present by a Labor government.