



COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

Housing

SPEECH

Monday, 16 March 2009

BY AUTHORITY OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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Date Monday, 16 March 2009
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Questioner
Speaker Robert, Stuart, MP

Source House
Proof No
Responder
Question No.

Mr ROBERT (Fadden) (9.28 pm)—Angela Saurine, in the *Daily Telegraph* today, writes:

IT'S the ugly truth of the economic downturn almost too heartbreaking to think about.

Entire families living in cars parked in suburban shopping centres.

Kids doing their homework in the back seat, not knowing what to tell their friends when they want to come over to play on their trampoline after school.

Parents getting ready for job interviews in public toilets.

It is the horror of homelessness, of people having nowhere to go. I kissed my little one-year-old and three-year-old boys goodnight tonight, thankful that they had a home to go to. I have seen the effects of homelessness not only in Australia but across the world. I have been in internal displacement camps. I have seen the horrors of civil war. I welcome the drop in home repossessions and the increase in home sales in Western Sydney, but the answer to homelessness starts and ends with three simple words, and they resound as true today as they will tomorrow—that is, jobs, jobs and jobs. The only things that keep people away from the streets are jobs. As Angela Saurine says:

Never in a million years did they—

these people—

think they would be in this position. All it took was one breadwinner to lose their job.

The answer is jobs.

Whilst I look at the \$42 billion cash splash and I reflect on the \$10 billion from December, I note that 80 per cent was saved—there are no jobs in that. I reflect on the \$13 billion following—there are no jobs in that. As to the \$6.4 billion in public housing, whilst it is commendable on the surface, 30 to 40 houses a day will have to be built by the same incompetent state governments that are racking up debt like there is no tomorrow. It has taken the states eight years to spend \$6 billion; this government wants to do it in 18 months. The answer is not a failed hope in public housing; it is jobs.

Debate interrupted.