

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY

Amendment to Motion

Resumed from 1 April on the following amendment moved by Hon Sue Ellery (Leader of the Opposition) on 18 March —

That the following words be added to the motion —

but regrets to inform Your Excellency that the government has failed to adequately address a number of serious issues affecting Western Australia

HON SALLY TALBOT (South West) [2.21 pm]: I am very pleased to rise to support the amendment moved by Hon Sue Ellery.

It was unlikely that the opposition would move this amendment. If members look back through the opposition's original contributions to the Address-in-Reply debate, they will see that we—I think universally—on this side acknowledged that new governments should be given a fair chance to show what they are made of, and that the community will give a certain amount of grace to a new government while it finds its feet and works out its direction. I recall noting in my Address-in-Reply contribution that of course the community was apprehensive. It had just been landed with a minority Liberal government—not even a coalition government—that had not taken any policies or plans into the election, and was clearly floundering in its first few weeks in office. I have said before in this house that during the election campaign it was pointed out that the Liberals had no policies, no plans and no team—that became abundantly clear in the weeks and first couple of months that followed the election —

Hon Simon O'Brien: It was a very successful election campaign by you guys; no doubt about it!

Hon SALLY TALBOT: I did not hear what Hon Simon O'Brien said, but I recall that I managed to get a concession out of him in my first contribution to the Address-in-Reply that Labor had actually won the election. If I can get him to that stage again, I shall go home happy and thinking that I have earned my money today —

Hon Simon O'Brien interjected.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT (Hon George Cash): Order, Hon Simon O'Brien! Hon Sally Talbot has the call.

Hon SALLY TALBOT: If the community, at first, was apprehensive about the outcome of the state election in September, it is now well and truly alarmed. I suggest that there are very good reasons for that.

Initially the community thought it had elected a government that did not quite seem to know what to do. Now, however, it has become abundantly clear that it has devised a—I will not demean the word “strategy” by saying it is that—way of coping with its situation. What we are experiencing now is this constant corner cutting, ducking for cover, hiding and refusing to take responsibility. Within the past 24 hours I was told an anecdote about a big community meeting with a certain section of stakeholders. I will not divulge who the stakeholders were because that would out the minister. I was told that the minister sat with this group of people and said, “Look, you guys have never been able to come to any kind of consensus amongst yourselves. What do you expect me to do if you can't even agree amongst yourselves? If you can present me with a way forward that you all agree with, I will be more than happy to consider it.” I was told that the group then did a quick whip around amongst themselves and went straight back to the minister and said, “Well, minister, we suggest that we don't want any three per cent cuts in front-line services that affect us”, and of course that minister was well and truly snookered—hoist by his own petard! I suggest that is not the responsible way to be a minister, but nevertheless that is what we are seeing. They are ducking for cover, refusing to take responsibility and hiding behind weasel words.

I know that Hon Ljiljana Ravlich has taken a deep and personal interest in the whole freedom of information process, and it will be very interesting to see the information that comes out of the government in the next few months about the number of task forces and working groups and inquiries and reviews it is setting up in a desperate attempt to try to avoid ever having to make a decision and take responsibility for it.

At first the community was apprehensive; it is now alarmed. I note that the item of business before I got to my feet for the Address-in-Reply debate was a message from the other place stating that the Treasurer's Advance Authorisation Bill will be coming to the Council for consideration. What an extraordinary device that is! The Treasurer is requesting \$1.2 billion, the most money that a Treasurer has ever had to ask for to top up the budget. What better indication could we have that there is gross mismanagement within the ranks of this government? However, this is not the place to address those issues, and I am sure everybody in this house is looking forward to the debate with an enormous amount of anticipation—I can see my colleague Hon Matt Benson-Lidholm is already getting very excited at the thought of the lengthy debate that we will have!

Hon Ken Travers: Can I let you know that I have many questions I want to have answered about that expenditure!

Hon SALLY TALBOT: I am sure Hon Ken Travers will do his usual forensic analysis of the Treasurer's Advance Authorisation Bill that will be on the notice paper soon.

Another issue in the Council this week was the urgency motion about the government's total failure to take any sort of responsibility for, or even give us the faintest impression that it cares about, job losses in Western Australia. We saw some extraordinary contributions from both the Liberals and the sole National Party representative in this chamber in response to the urgency motion about the government's attitude to unemployed people. Hon Norman Moore has asked members to give him some ideas about what he might be able to do. I am quite certain that the little anecdote I related just now about the minister with the stakeholders is absolutely true because we see it being played out before our very eyes in this chamber every day. The government just does not know what to do. That is overlaid with the kind of sanctimonious, dismissive way it has of dealing with every concrete suggestion that we put to it.

Hon Robyn McSweeney: I haven't heard one yet, I don't think!

Hon SALLY TALBOT: Perhaps Hon Robyn McSweeney needs to pay closer attention. Can I recommend that the member spend a bit of time every morning with the draft *Hansard* so that she can keep up with what is happening in this place.

I will now turn specifically to the environment portfolio, for which I have particular responsibility as the shadow minister. Nowhere has this turning of apprehension and anxiety into out-and-out alarm become more apparent than on issues surfacing about the environment portfolio.

There has been debate and extensive questioning in this house on a number of issues. I do not think it is any exaggeration to say that in not one single instance of raising these vital issues have we had anything that even remotely approximates an answer from the Minister for Environment. Last night I made a contribution to the adjournment debate in which I drew the attention of members to the questions asked recently of the minister about Roe Highway stage 8 and the proposed destruction of the Beeliar wetlands. Of six or seven questions, the minister was not able to answer a single one. I hesitate to even raise the subject of the liquefied natural gas single hub in the Kimberley. This is not because I do not have very strong views about how that process could have been handled so much better, but because this minister has to step aside every time the issue of the Kimberley hub is mentioned, because she has a conflict of interest. We are going nowhere on that issue in this chamber.

In some issues the minister has discovered a device that I must say, to my slight embarrassment, I have used myself in the past; that is, something left in the in-tray for long enough goes far enough down the order that by the time it reaches the top it has already sorted itself out. That is the case with the asphalt plant, a topic with which I am sure Hon Robyn McSweeney is very familiar, because she would drive past the asphalt plant just about every time she comes to Perth from her electorate office in Albany. The asphalt can be smelt by anyone driving past the present end of the Kwinana Freeway. Way back in November I asked the minister what she intended to do about this. The plant had been established within metres of people's kitchens, and people were reporting all sorts of ailments and problems about the operations of that asphalt plant as it powered up.

Hon Robyn McSweeney: Has that happened in the past six months?

Hon SALLY TALBOT: The honourable member should go back and read the details, because I do not have much time to spend on this issue. I am happy to give the member a briefing outside the chamber about the fact that this was approved by the present government, and it was one total, almighty stuff-up. The point is that the minister still has not ruled on this matter, and now the problem has effectively gone away. I do not think that the Minister for Environment will be able to use that device with any other of the items that must be filling up, not just one in-tray, but a whole desk full of in-trays in her office. I am surprised that she can still get through the front door.

The minister signed off on the export of lead through the port of Fremantle, and then refused four times, to my knowledge, to indicate whether she thought it was safe. In not saying that she thinks it is safe and giving her reasons for thinking that way, she leads us to the inescapable conclusion that she does not think it is safe. I will be very interested to see how things transpire in the coming months. Members will be very much aware that a hostile takeover of Magellan Metals is proposed. I understand that the Canadian company that is trying to take over Magellan has made public statements that leave us in no doubt about its view on the safety of the transport of lead through suburban areas.

Hon Simon O'Brien: You are breaching one of the cardinal underwritten rules of this house.

Hon SALLY TALBOT: I will just make a passing reference to the next issue—the Fitzgerald River National Park road. This fits in with my previous comments about this government's attitude towards people who are

made homeless. I am glad that Hon Simon O'Brien is enjoying this. BHP Billiton has closed down the nickel mine, and a number of people have been made redundant or unemployed in the most traumatic circumstances. I do not wish to imply that there is ever an untraumatic side to being made redundant or losing one's job, but in this case the company was clearly complicit in encouraging people to move to that area and take up what the workers sincerely believed would be long-term employment. And what happens? The Premier does the typical seagull act. I do not think that I will place in *Hansard* the definition of that; I think everybody knows what the seagull effect is. The Premier flies down, does a bit of a wander around the place, and has what Hon Kate Doust has characterised as one of his famous thought bubbles, and decides to bituminise the national park road. What a great strategy! That will really help, will it not? I do not think that anything has happened yet, thank goodness. When I asked the Minister for Environment whether the Premier had spoken to her about his proposed announcement, she said he had not. I wonder whether the Premier then went into the minister's office, asked the staff to leave, closed the door and said, "Don't you ever do that to me again!" We will never know that, but I seriously doubt whether it was the case. There is much further to go with that issue. Bituminising a national park road has never been an answer to unemployment, and having a Minister for Environment who is not even asked for an opinion before the announcement is made is a very sad and sorry state of affairs.

There are a number of issues with which the Minister for Environment perhaps has no direct or explicit responsibilities at this moment in time, but about which the community has every right and expectation to look to her for an opinion, and uranium mining is one of those. I refer to uranium mining because one of the major problems with it is the unsolved environmental question of what is to be done with the waste. However, we hear nothing. We have debates in this chamber, and the minister is way down the speaker's list when we deal with this issue.

I am leading up to a couple of comments about the job of a minister. Nobody who understands the way that politics works would deny that there is a ceremonial side to being a minister. As a parliamentary secretary in the previous government, part of my responsibility that I took on very willingly and with a great amount of satisfaction was to represent the minister at various functions and announcements. I used to love taking those big lotteries cheques to people. Announcements about clean beaches and tidy towns, naming animals in the zoo and launching coffee table books are all part of the job, and nobody who understands the way that our system of government works would deny that. The problem is that that is only a small part of the job. The rest of the time, the minister is looked to as a person who has carriage of matters of extreme significance and weight. The minister must lead, and a part of leading is going out and talking to people, considering issues and letting people know what the minister thinks about things. A minister must have an opinion about things relating to his or her portfolio.

Yesterday, in question time, I asked the minister whether she had seen a document that was posted on the PerthNow website. A couple of clicks would bring up the document, headed "Outline of the proposed decision-making lead agency model for mining and petroleum activities (assuming DMP as the lead agency)". I asked the minister whether she had seen the model that was posted on the website; whether she thought that the model would improve the existing system, and if yes, why, and if no, why not. I essentially also asked whether she had talked to either the Premier or the Minister for Mines and Petroleum about the lead agency model.

I also asked the Minister for Environment what she thought about the lead agency model. She could have answered that question in various ways. She could have said that she had not seen it. That would not have been terribly satisfactory but I suppose that ministers are busy people and maybe it was sitting in the bottom of a tray somewhere and she had not got around to looking at it. It would not have been the most satisfactory answer but it would have been better than the answer she gave. She could also have said that she had looked at it and thought it was very interesting.

Hon Norman Moore: It has no status.

Hon SALLY TALBOT: I thank Hon Moore for that interjection. The Minister for Environment could have said that the document has no status and that it was just another Liberal Party thought bubble. The Liberal Party must be very used to dealing with thought bubbles. She could have said that it was something that someone had put together and that she had not given it any thought because it had no status. She might also have said that she had looked at it and thought that it would work and would be a great advance for the environment of Western Australia and that she would be proud if the government adopted it. She might even have said that she had looked at it but thought it was very worrying and that she was talking to the Premier and the Minister for Mines and Petroleum about it and would keep us posted. She could have said any of those things. Although any of those answers would have sent us in various directions, they would have been better than the answer she gave. Yesterday she told us —

As the house was advised yesterday by the Minister for Mines and Petroleum, the working group has not made any recommendations to the minister.

That is not what I asked. I already knew that because I always listen to what the Minister for Mines and Petroleum says. He told us a number of times that the working group had not made any recommendations to him. I believed the minister when he said that.

Hon Norman Moore: It is true.

Hon SALLY TALBOT: I know it is true, Hon Norman Moore. I believed the minister when he said it. I cannot imagine why his colleague, the Minister for Environment, would respond to my question about what she thought about a model that was posted on a website by saying that the working group had not made any recommendations to the minister. That has absolutely nothing to do with the question.

Hon Norman Moore interjected.

Hon SALLY TALBOT: I suppose that is why many more staff are employed than is indicated. Maybe a few more staff are needed to monitor the websites. I know of some very good people who would have this material on the desk of the Minister for Mines and Petroleum even before he got to it in the morning. The minister can let us know if he needs any help with that.

That was not the end of the Minister for Environment's answer. She then talked about something completely different. She went on to say —

It should also be noted that, following the release of the Environmental Protection Authority's environmental impact assessment review ... I have stated that I will be establishing an environmental stakeholder advisory committee ...

The Minister for Environment then talked about the Environmental Protection Authority's environmental impact statement review that was released just a couple of days ago. It is an interesting connection for the minister to make. I am very glad that she made it in the way that she did because in answering my question about the process going on behind the scenes to reform the environmental approvals process, she drew attention to the reform process that we started in 2008. In 2008, the previous Minister for the Environment, David Templeman, announced the establishment of the review that has just reported. I can refer members to the location of the report if they do not know where to find it, but it is not difficult to find. Hon Norman Moore might need some assistance, but I am sure that a member from his side will show him how to find an archived media statement from a year ago. David Templeman talked about the need to streamline the process to keep up with the number of applications that were being received. He talked also about the fact that although a number of observations had been made that we had a world's best practice system in place in Western Australia, there was always room for improvement. He set up the review with the director of the EPA, who is very experienced in these matters, having had extensive experience in other parts of Australia. He has come up with what I think is a very sound review. When I was contacted by the media on Monday afternoon to get my comments about the review, I had no hesitation in endorsing it because the review was run as reviews should be run. If members look at the EPA website, they will find all the presentations that were made at the workshops where the reform process was discussed. It was an open and transparent process that came up with a series of recommendations that I think are extremely sound. I have a couple of reservations about them, as does the Conservation Council of Western Australia, which has expressed those reservations very articulately while at the same time giving broad support to the directions and findings of the review.

The process that the Labor Party put in place could be used as a model for putting in place some of the reforms that we never denied were needed to keep up with modern practice and the volume of applications being received. The matter now becomes a little more complicated. One of the things that the minister could have done at the beginning of the process was tell her colleagues in cabinet, "Hey, guys, we've actually got something like this on the books already. I have every confidence that it's going to give me a report that will form the basis of a good, sound set of recommendations. Give me a few months and I'll make sure it is released in a timely way and then we can start these processes." We asked her about her contributions to and involvement in the industry working group, the director general's working group and whoever knows what other working group. One group that was supposed to be chaired by the minister is being chaired by the Premier. Although the election policy said that she would chair the review, I am told that she has stepped aside and that the Premier has taken her place. The Minister for Environment is juggling so many balls in the air that it is no wonder her in-tray is getting to the point of overflowing. She has inquiries, reports and reviews coming out of every corner, and yet she seems to have no way of feeding in the sound findings and recommendations that she is getting from the processes that have been conducted in an open and transparent way. Instead, a strange twilight clandestine operation is being sort of overseen by the Minister for Mines and Petroleum. I suspect that the puppet-master in the background is the Premier.

As I said, we get into murky waters at this point. The reason we wanted to know yesterday what the minister thought about the lead agency model is that it has become abundantly clear that the lead agency model is the

basis of the recommendations that are being drafted by the minister's industry working group. It will come as no surprise to anybody on this side of the chamber—we will closely watch the body language of those opposite—that the industry working group is leaking like a sieve. Why do these sorts of groups leak? It is because they are coming up with proposals that are so outrageous that even the people whom the government thought were in the cart start dropping out. The people who are dropping out of the cart are doing so because although they support the reform process and the streamlined and efficient practices, some of the ideas being bandied around by this group of people are so outlandish and outrageous that they cannot be allowed to go any further. I will give the house an idea of the flavour of some of the material. As I have said, the industry working group is leaking like a sieve. Everyone in Western Australia—certainly everyone in the media who asks me to read the material and tell them what I think about it—has copies of this stuff. Everybody, that is, except for the Minister for Environment, because yesterday in answer to a question from Hon Paul Llewellyn she said that she had not seen the document to which he referred. She must be the only person who has not seen it.

Let me share the flavour of some of this. We know this is a draft report, and not for one moment am I suggesting that the Minister for Mines and Petroleum was not telling the truth when he said that no recommendations have been received by him. However, we have draft recommendation 4, which is headed “Lead agency approval model”. Recommendation 4 states that it is recommended that a broad strategic reform of the approvals process be implemented; it is recommended that a lead agency approval model be delegated, which coalesces multi-agency approval requirements into a single decision-maker for all mining and petroleum proposals. The recommendation is that this model would eliminate the existing duplication and overlap inherent in the current multi-agency approval system and provide a single entry point for applications; it is proposed that this would be achieved through the Department of Mines and Petroleum, and the Department of State Development would conduct high-level facilitation of major projects and administration of state agreement acts. It is recommended that selected approvals currently external to the state mining and petroleum acts be melded into the mining and petroleum activity approval processes. For example, works approvals and native vegetation clearing permit requirements under the Environmental Protection Act 1986 would be merged into the mining and petroleum activity approval processes. The recommendation also states that the amalgamation of other related approvals in the environment portfolio under the EPA will further reduce duplication and overlap. Therefore, I do not think that it was unusual or unexpected or inexplicable that I should ask on behalf of the opposition yesterday what the minister thinks of one of the models—it might be one of the models; it might not be the model—the lead agency model.

It gets even murkier. I have said that I have no doubt that the Minister for Mines and Petroleum has not seen the recommendations. I am quite certain that he has not had the final report from the working group. However, on 22 March he was asked by a newspaper in this town about a series of possible recommendations and he essentially said, “I know nothing.” When ministers start saying, “I know nothing”, in my experience it means that they have a problem. The problem is that we now know that—I do not know what to call them; they are a series of notes, like written chatter, I suppose, between members of the industry working group—all this chatter indicates that the draft recommendations we have seen will, indeed, form the substance, even if they are not already in a sort of substantial final form, of the final recommendations. The Minister for Mines and Petroleum on 22 March said, “I’ve seen nothing. It’s the industry working group; they’re all over there. Don’t ask me about this, go and find whoever it is that is involved in that.” However, it is clear from the notes that I have seen that one his senior policy officers, Bob Stevens, was being constantly updated about all this chatter and the direction that all this discussion was going in on about 19 or 20 March. The trail is well and truly established. Therefore, I do not know what is happening. The minister clearly does not have any people on his staff who can get their heads around the internet, or perhaps they do not know how to brief the minister on issues like this. It is an extraordinary claim that all this is somehow going on in this industry working group and somebody in the minister's office, a senior person, is being briefed, yet the minister has nothing to say about it.

I will share with the house a couple of points that have been made in this chatter. Members should understand that I am trying to indicate why the opposition has such a high level of concern about the direction that this process is going in and why we greet with such utter horror the fact that the Minister for Environment has no opinion about this matter. Indeed, I am told by a couple of people who have been pursuing this story outside this place that one of the minister's first reactions was to say, “Oh, this is a complicated question and needs to go to the Premier.” We need desperately to know what she thinks.

I am told that a point was made by a member of the industry working group, Noel Ashcroft, in a communication that I understand has gone to a substantial number of members of the industry working group and also to the minister's office. He referred to key recommendation 3. Members will recall that I just mentioned recommendation 4 about the lead agency model. Key recommendation 3, as I recall, is about the powers of the Environmental Protection Authority and about streamlining those processes. Indeed, it even makes reference to strengthening the powers of the EPA; that is the one constant between the shady background process that is

going on now and the EPA review of the environmental impact assessment process that I had no hesitation in welcoming the other day. Mr Ashcroft talked about key recommendation 3, which concerns the role and the powers of the EPA, and according to my notes he stated —

A good point, but of itself it will not achieve the outcomes we want. We will need to take away some of the power the EPA has. I understand the political difficulty of doing this, and so it will need to be done by “indirect” means. Using the Department of Minerals and Petroleum —

I assume Mr Ashcroft means to refer to the Department of Mines and Petroleum —

for 99 per cent of these projects will be part of this.

As I read it, Mr Ashcroft’s concern, his big beef with the EPA, is that it is allowed to publish its reports. The EPA publishes its findings when it does a review or an assessment of something. This has upset Mr Ashcroft, and judging by the feedback he then gets from some of his colleagues on the working group, it has upset them too. Mr Ashcroft is upset that this gives the EPA some kind of status; it makes its assessment and then, my goodness me, it tells people what it found. What a shocking and appalling thing! I am being sarcastic in case anybody in this place has missed that. According to my notes, Mr Ashcroft goes on to state —

A better way to handle this “power providing” EPA mechanism is to disallow the EPA to publish its environmental report, but only to provide it to the Minister, who would also receive an economic report from DSD (and a social report also perhaps) and then the Minister can make a decision with all the facts, and then publish a comprehensive report exploring the pros and cons etc. The report to be published would be a composite, and therefore provide a balanced and holistic view for Joe Public.

That is Mr Ashcroft’s view about how to handle this EPA problem. The way to handle it is to take away some of the power that the EPA has. I am sure it is beginning to become clear to members opposite why there is such alarm when the Minister for Environment says that she has no opinion about any of this stuff. She either says that she has not seen it or talked to anybody about it, or that nobody has talked to her about it. She comes out on Monday and endorses the EPA’s review of the EIA process, which talks about strengthening the power of the EPA. One of my comments echoed the comments of the Conservation Council that the minister would have to increase the resourcing of the EPA to be able to service the recommendations that were made in the review. Therefore, on Monday we had her endorsing a report to strengthen the powers of the EPA, but at the same time we have this shady back room deal going on where people are writing to each other saying we will need to take away some of the power the EPA has. I quote again from my notes —

I understand the political difficulty of doing this and so it will need to be done by indirect means.

This minister cannot stand by while the process in place is intent on giving away 99 per cent of these projects. Mr Ashcroft says that the department is using the Department of Mines and Petroleum for 99 per cent of these projects.

A number of other extremely worrying terms have come to light. If ever anybody wanted a window into this world of high-powered industry operatives and their utter contempt for the processes of environmental legislation, this series of communications gives that window. It is not a pretty sight. For example, reference is made to the misuse or over-exuberant use of the precautionary principle. What on earth are they talking about? These are the things we need to hear the Minister for Environment talk about. What does she understand by misuse of the precautionary principle? Can she give an example of the over-exuberant use of the precautionary principle? I cannot imagine how the minister would frame her description. However, I cannot wait to hear it.

Another contributor to this chatter that is occurring in the background is Derek Carew Hopkins, another member of the industry working group. My notes indicate that he said —

If we are proposing a lead agency, it is fundamental that the agency has sufficient powers to manage the approvals process without veto from other bodies.

I wonder whom he might be talking about. One does not have to be a genius to work out what is going on. The government should be brave enough and sound enough to throw this out the window and start again. I am not for one moment saying there is not any room for improvement. Western Australia as a resource-rich state must continue to reflect world’s best practice in its approvals process. I have already suggested that this be put in train. We have a working model in front of us that shows how to operate something of this kind, and I refer to the review that reported on Monday. The process of a bunch of mates who talk the talk among themselves and shove something through to the minister should be thrown out the window. The minister’s people have been involved in this. A couple of former chiefs of staff and current chiefs of staff are on the industry working group. Clearly, the government is in charge of this process, as it should be.

I am not naive enough to suggest that people should never ask a question to which they do not know the answer. The government knows exactly what it will get out of this process. If it goes ahead with it, it will set environmental protection in Western Australia back decades. The whole of Western Australia, from the Kimberley to the great southern, would potentially be opened up as a quarry.

This has been going on for weeks and weeks and we hear nothing from the Minister for Environment. It is not acceptable for the minister to deflect these questions to other more senior ministers. It is not acceptable for the minister to say that a process is in place and she will wait until the end of it. We want to know what she thinks about the current system of environmental approvals. We want to know what she thinks about appeals on the level of assessment, which is another area that we know the working group is looking at. We want to know what the minister thinks about community involvement in approvals and appeal processes. We want to know what she really thinks about the operations of the Environmental Protection Authority. It is apparent, as I said, that the bunch of people who form the industry working group hold the entire environmental assessment and approvals process in utter contempt. We need to know what the minister thinks about that.

The environment in Western Australia needs a champion and we have had that champion in the past. If the minister is looking for a model on how to do it, there are plenty of examples. I cannot give her that model. I have never been the Minister for Environment. However, ministers in Labor governments stopped logging in old growth forests. Did members ever hear a Labor Minister for the Environment say, "This is a little complicated, I think I will ask the Premier", or "I will defer to the Minister for Transport on this issue because I am not sure what it might be about"? Nobody who cares passionately about his or her portfolio would do that. I want to know what the minister thinks.

I will keep asking these questions. I do not know what members opposite think about this issue because they are not articulate in expressing anything that they think. Last night Hon Simon O'Brien complained that opposition members were getting nasty. While we have a minister of the Crown who is not answering the questions that are so important to Western Australia and that the community want answered, is not taking responsibility for matters for which she is the lead decision maker and is not listening to what people—people who have been working in this area for decades, are specialists in the area and who care passionately—have to say on this issue, I will continue to put these questions to her until I get the answers.

Debate adjourned, on motion by **Hon Bruce Donaldson**.