

**ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE**

**HON KIM CHANCE** (Agricultural - Leader of the House) [5.55 pm]: I move -

That the House do now adjourn.

*Answers to Questions - Adjournment Debate*

**HON NORMAN MOORE** (Mining and Pastoral - Leader of the Opposition) [5.55 pm]: I will take about one minute of the time of the House to indicate why I was a little irritated during question time today. It is not usual for me to get cross about these things, but I asked two questions of the Premier, which I handed in at 10 o'clock this morning. They were questions to which I thought I would get an easy answer. The first related to the apparent hypocrisy of the Premier's position on the President receiving a vote. I asked for the Premier to indicate to me why he held a view five years ago which was quite contrary to that which he holds now. I thought that, between 10 o'clock this morning and now, an answer could have been obtained. I acknowledge that the Leader of the House did not give the answer because he did not feel it was satisfactory, and I accept that as part of the process.

The other question I asked was about the situation in the Legislative Assembly, and whether the Government intended to do the same thing for the voting rights of the Speaker as it intended to do with the President in this place. In a sense, I perhaps should not have asked that question, because now that is what will happen, I suspect. Otherwise it would be extraordinary hypocrisy in the position of the Government. Again, I was not given the courtesy of an answer to that question. It was a simple, straight-out question about what the Government intends to do. The answer was wait and see. That is not good enough. I could have been given answers to both those questions today. They were not too hard, but the response I got was that it was a pity I had asked them, because I would not receive an answer.

On top of all that, I asked a couple of questions on notice of the parliamentary secretary representing the Minister for State Development, about overseas visits by the minister, particularly to South Korea. I am concerned that the Government, having closed the South Korean office, was denying the State some opportunities in that market. The minister said, when that matter was raised, that there was no problem because he and the Premier keep going there. They insisted they were better than an office. So I asked a question about how many times the minister had been there, and when he was going next. The answer was, basically, that the minister had made a statement in the Legislative Assembly, and I should go and have a look at that. It was a simple, easy question to answer but again, I was told to go and find out somewhere else. I asked the Minister for State Development about other trips, because I am interested in what he is doing, and I am concerned that he has too much to do. I want to know what he is doing in his position as a minister looking after the State's economic interests. Again the answer was that the information had been tabled in the Legislative Assembly, and I should go and look there. For other details, I was referred to the ministerial overseas travel reports, which have been, or will be tabled by the Premier regularly. I cannot recall the last time we received one of those. That is not to say that they have not been in here. I think the Government has now tabled reports of overseas travel by ministers in the previous Government. I am hoping that work will soon begin on the current Government. I asked Hon Tom Stephens about his own air charter travel. Again, it was a simple question about how many times he had been flying in a government aircraft, who went with him and that sort of thing. Again the answer was that he did not think he would provide that information, because the question was too hard and it would take too long to provide the information. I can understand that, because everybody tells me he is constantly in the air, and he would probably need an army of 5 000 people to collate the information.

When in opposition, the present Government said that governments should be open and accountable, as it would be when it was elected. I have asked several questions today, and all the answers were of a kind that lead me to wonder why I bother. They are not hard questions, and I think I should be able to get answers to them. If I asked a question that required four weeks of work and I wanted an answer today, I would understand that I could not possibly expect that to happen. However, the questions without notice, of which some notice was given, that I asked today were not hard. They just asked why the Government was doing something that was quite obvious to all of us. The other questions were on notice, and I did not care how long it took the Government to get me the information; I was interested in knowing what the Government was doing.

That is just an explanation of why I am a bit irritated about the answers I was getting today. I am particularly annoyed, however, that the Government is not prepared to answer those questions about its proposed changes to this House. That is an issue of significant importance to me, and I hope to everybody else in the Chamber and to the outside community. I have real fears and concerns about the future of this House under the proposals being put forward by the Government. If it turns out that, to be consistent, the same thing happens to the Assembly, I have serious concerns about that Chamber as well. We must have an impartial chairman in both Houses; otherwise, we will get to a situation in which the Houses will not function properly. I am very concerned about

that. I hope that the Government does not go down this path, but at least I hope that it will answer the questions I ask, which are fair and reasonable and deserve proper answers.

*YMCA Youth Parliament - Adjournment Debate*

**HON LOUISE PRATT** (East Metropolitan) [6.00 pm]: This evening I want to speak about the YMCA Youth Parliament which was held a couple of weeks ago and for which I had the opportunity to perform the role of Acting Speaker. It was unusual to be acting in that role and to preside over the debates that took place in the style of the Legislative Assembly. It was quite a new but worthwhile experience for me to be in the Chair in that environment.

This evening I want to compliment the members of the YMCA who put together the Youth Parliament. Teams from all over the State drafted legislation, which they debated over a couple of days. They engaged in a high level of debate on Bills covering issues such as legal rights, drug law reform and many other matters. They also had some emotional debates towards the end of their parliamentary session - I guess in much the same way that we have the adjournment debate - in which they raised some very heartfelt issues about personal experiences of such things as school bullying, youth homelessness, youth suicide and mental health for young people, particularly when young people suffer from the impact of the passing away of a loved one. The speeches were all very heartfelt and articulate. I compliment the young people who put forward their views.

When the *Hansard* of the YMCA Youth Parliament is available, I encourage members to take the time to review it, because those involved not only raised many contemporary issues of importance to young people, but also showed their willingness to debate issues of importance to the whole State. For example, they debated the issue of water resources, which is a contemporary issue. I am sure that many of those young people will grow to be the leaders of tomorrow. However, more importantly, they are already playing leadership roles in the community. I compliment them on that and commend them for their work.

*Answers to Questions - Adjournment Debate*

**HON KIM CHANCE** (Agricultural - Leader of the House) [6.03 pm]: I take this rare occasion to speak on the adjournment. I rise for two reasons. The first is to respond to the issues that have been quite properly raised by the Leader of the Opposition. I will deal with his first concern. My personal view is that I do not find it acceptable when answers to questions refer members to something that has happened in another place - for example, when a minister says, "I have made a statement of this kind in the Legislative Assembly today and the member should refer to that." If a member in this House asks a question, that member should not be referred to something that has happened in another place. That might be defensible in some circumstances, but when that event has happened on the same day and it is clearly impossible for the member to peruse the answer because the *Hansard* of the same day is not printed - that was the instance to which the Leader of the Opposition referred today - that is an area in which we need to lift our game, and I will discuss that matter with my colleagues.

I am not so sympathetic to the Leader of the Opposition on the other question, which relates to legislation that the Government may or may not bring before this place. I do not think it is appropriate for me to provide an answer relating to the technicalities of legislation that the Government may or may not be proposing to bring into this place. No Government in history has ever been led to do that; yet that was the nature of the question. I thought that the answer I provided on behalf of the Premier in that regard was perfectly reasonable. However, I just thought I would address those two questions. On one question, I do have some sympathy for the Leader of the Opposition; on the other, I have rather less sympathy.

Another question that I wanted to address goes to an issue of some long standing. I did indicate to the Leader of the Opposition that I would raise these matters with him before I made this statement. I have not had the opportunity to do so, and there is nothing -

Hon Norman Moore: I would much prefer to talk to you about it before you make the statement.

Hon KIM CHANCE: The Leader of the Opposition can disregard it as well if he wishes.

Hon Norman Moore: I think there is a better way of doing it than that.

Hon KIM CHANCE: In that case, perhaps I had best not make it. I just indicate to honourable members that I intend to speak further with the Leader of the Opposition about events which occurred in this place some months ago and which have led to the cancellation of pairs. We will be discussing some matters, and I hope that in a future adjournment debate I will be able to provide information to the House on those matters.

Question put and passed.

*House adjourned at 6.06 pm*

