

BHP — IRON ORE ROYALTY PAYMENTS

**14. Ms M.J. DAVIES to the Premier:**

I have a supplementary question. In the same interview this morning, the Premier said —

But I'm pretty hard about it. If they owe us the money, they owe us the money.

Why is the Premier in negotiation, and will he today commit to getting the full amount owed to the people of Western Australia?

**Mr M. McGOWAN replied:**

I raise the point again: why did the Liberals and Nationals do nothing about it for eight and a half years? Why did they sit there and do nothing about it? Why were you mute on this issue?

**Ms M.J. Davies** interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Leader of the Nationals WA!

**Mr M. McGOWAN:** I think you want to be very careful about what you did about this. I think the former Treasurer and members of the Liberals and Nationals want to be very careful —

**Mr D.C. Nalder:** Why?

**Mr M. McGOWAN:** Are you thick? Are you actually as thick as you seem?

*Point of Order*

**Mr S.K. L'ESTRANGE:** I refer to standing order 92, "Imputations and personal reflections". The Premier is imputing the motives of members of the opposition in his answer, which is improper.

**The SPEAKER:** No, I do not think so; not on that particular one.

*Questions without Notice Resumed*

**Mr M. McGOWAN:** In effect, the member has asked me why we are pursuing this debt.

Several members interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Members!

**Mr M. McGOWAN:** We are pursuing it because we want to receive what the taxpayers —

Several members interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** You asked a question; the Premier is answering.

**Mr M. McGOWAN:** We are pursuing it because —

**Mr V.A. Catania** interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Member for North West Central, I call you to order for the first time.

**Mr M. McGOWAN:** We are pursuing it because we are keen to obtain what the taxpayers are entitled to under the law. That is the advice we have given to BHP. We are going through the processes that, as I am advised, are contained within the agreement, which is part of the law of the land because it was passed by this Parliament.