

EXTENDED RETAIL TRADING HOURS

799. Mr F.A. ALBAN to the Minister for Commerce:

Can the Minister for Commerce advise the house of the broad level of support for extended retail trading hours in the Perth metropolitan area, especially in light of the request from the City of Swan for Midland—the regional centre of my electorate—to be given the status of a tourism precinct?

Mr T.R. BUSWELL replied:

That is a very good question, and I thank the member for Swan Hills for it. Obviously, as the member for Jandakot has indicated, there is a groundswell of disgust at the position taken by the flat-earthers opposite to the government's attempts to bring retail trading into the twenty-first century. Next week I will be attending the Treasurers' meeting in Canberra. I will be attempting to argue for good outcomes for Western Australia, and I will say that we are leading the nation into the twenty-first century. We will attempt to compare ourselves favourably with places such as Tasmania. It was interesting to discover what the Treasurer of Tasmania—that beacon of revolutionary zeal for leading the nation forward—had to say about Tasmania's trading hours regime. He said that since the introduction of new extended shopping hours in 2002, retail trades had grown by 7.1 per cent per annum. He said that it had increased by 50 per cent since 2002 and that 5 000 more Tasmanians were employed. That means that Tasmania is with the program, but over here in the leading state of the nation, the Labor Party is heading backwards—the bunch of flat-earthers!

Several members interjected.

Mr T.R. BUSWELL: It is pretty flat out in the wheatbelt; I acknowledge that!

This has been very interesting; the Premier has discussed what the government will be doing. I anticipate meeting next week with the mayors of the cities of Fremantle and Perth; I am not yet meeting with the mayor of the City of Swan. We will be talking about tourism precincts and how we can increase our footprint through regulations and our trading hours through ministerial orders, and we will attempt to make significant changes, as the Premier has outlined. The City of Joondalup has lodged a tourism precinct application, and I hope that that legislation will come into the house before the end —

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Members! Some members might be assisted in hearing what the Minister for Commerce has to say if other members would desist from interjecting to each other across the chamber.

Mr T.R. BUSWELL: That legislation will be introduced before the end of the year. The mayor of the City of Joondalup is on record as requesting that Joondalup become a tourism precinct, or whatever we call it. It does not stop there, however; as was discussed yesterday, the mayor of the City of Swan, Charlie Zannino, has written to ask for Midland to become a tourism precinct, aided and supported by the member for Midland. I expect to see her arm go up when this bill comes into the house. It does not stop there, either; they are queuing up! The mayor of the City of Armadale is on record as saying that a tourism precinct in Armadale would add to the vitality of the City of Armadale, and he is ably supported by the soon-to-be candidate for Canning. I expect that when this legislation comes in next year, she also will be right behind it; she will no doubt be out there, doorknocking!

It was disappointing to see in an article in *The West Australian* this morning about the Labor Party's response to the government's proposals for extended trading hours that the left wing of the Labor Party has reportedly seized control of the Labor Party's trading hours strategy. Who do we have book-ended in the upper house left-wing faction of the Labor Party? Comrade Hon Sally Talbot and comrade Hon Jon Ford! In the middle of those two, we have the intellectual heartbeat of the left—comrade Hon Jock Ferguson! In this house, we have comrade member for Cockburn! I think the member for Cockburn might like seven-day trading. He might like extended weeknight trading, because I have a suspicion that every now and then, when he drives home from his electorate office in Cockburn—I assume that some days he stays after five—and drives over the bridge at Fremantle, he gets a hunger pang and thinks, "Crikey, I've got to get some of that great food of the proletariat, imported Caspian Sea caviar, and take it home to the workers' gulag in Swanbourne!" Instead of pulling into the Boatshed in Cottesloe, he might want to go to the Coles in Claremont and share his pennies around! Get on board the reform train! It has left the station and we are not stopping for the Labor Party!

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Thank you, members!