

MANJIMUP, DYSFUNCTIONAL FAMILIES

**997. Hon BARRY HOUSE to the Minister for Housing and Works:**

Part (5) of question without notice 984 stated -

Will the minister acknowledge that it is not wise to encourage dysfunctional families to move to Manjimup at this time of turmoil, change and restructuring of a major industry in the area?

The minister answered that he would reply to me privately.

Hon Tom Stephens: I said that I would answer directly, not privately.

Hon BARRY HOUSE: Why will the minister not be open and accountable and answer the question on public record?

**Hon TOM STEPHENS replied:**

I am happy to be open, accountable and on the public record, and in the first instance I intend to check the public record. Last week one of Hon Barry House's colleagues informed me that 60 Aboriginal families were moving into Manjimup -

Hon Robyn McSweeney: I asked whether the minister could confirm that.

Hon TOM STEPHENS: The member asked whether I could confirm that.

When I was in Manjimup the day before, I was told that 100 families were moving to Manjimup. In towns around this State, Liberal Party members and parliamentarians have - when trying to heighten and play upon the concerns of local communities -

An opposition member interjected.

The PRESIDENT: I trust the minister will address the question.

Hon TOM STEPHENS: Mr President, I am addressing the Chair and, through you, I am addressing the question and I am providing both Hon Barry House and this Chamber with an answer.

I know the capacity of Liberal Party members and parliamentarians to ask questions in reference to these issues and to make false claims that unfairly play upon the concerns of local communities. I assure Hon Barry House that I do not think kindly of members who make false claims and who then air those claims in an attempt to heighten the concerns of local communities and to have members in this House upset because a local community is able to cooperate with government over issues aimed at their economic benefit. It all fits into a pattern.

Hon Peter Foss interjected.

Hon TOM STEPHENS: Fortunately, the Standing Orders of this House allow me to answer the question in whatever manner I so choose. That is the pattern that Hon Peter Foss -

*Point of Order*

Hon PETER FOSS: Mr President, I might not like the answer but I have to accept it. The minister must also accept that he has to answer the question; so far he has not even -

Hon Tom Stephens: What standing order is that?

The PRESIDENT: If the minister has completed his answer, I give the call to Hon George Cash.