

**LOTTERYWEST — CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER**

*Statement*

**HON TJORN SIBMA (North Metropolitan)** [6.39 pm]: I rise this evening to reflect on answers provided to parliamentary questions asked in this place by not only me but also other members. It is simply unsatisfactory for the Premier, or any future Premier, for that matter, to breezily claim to run an open and transparent government and then fail to deliver on that promise. The government has obfuscated, misdirected, deferred or grudgingly provided only piecemeal disclosure of facts when legitimate questions have been asked of it in this place.

For the better part of my life, this state has grappled with the challenge of ensuring executive accountability. It is, therefore, appropriate to reflect on some expert historical guidance in this respect. The report of the Commission on Accountability, which was provided to the then Premier, Hon Peter Dowding, in January 1989, said the following about answering parliamentary questions. I quote from this verbatim and ask members to forgive the gender-specific language —

... accountability is accountability to the Parliament and, as will appear, the Parliament is the place within which the idea of public scrutiny must find its fulfilment.

...

... whether the responsible Minister recognises that he is under a duty which he owes to Parliament—a political but not a legally enforceable duty—to answer proper Parliamentary questions which relate to the information which he has or which he has the authority to obtain.

In the brief time in which I have been a member of this place, answers provided to parliamentary questions have demonstrably fallen short of this ideal of accountability. It is, therefore, impossible to claim that public scrutiny is finding its fulfilment in the fortieth Parliament.

As we make preparations to rise for the winter recess, I would like to ask members of the opposition and the crossbench to reflect on the many questions that remain unsatisfactorily answered, if they have been answered at all. A pattern of behaviour has been established very early, and it bespeaks the government's attitude towards external scrutiny. It also makes the Premier's claim to administer an open and transparent government ring hollow.

I have asked questions in this place concerning a number of important public issues. There is a sense that answers provided by ministers are designed to evade proper public scrutiny, or to discourage forensic examination of its actions. I am not so easily discouraged, and I very much doubt that I am alone.

In recent days, there has been significant disruption at the most senior levels of the Western Australian public service. This includes the departure of the Road Safety Commissioner. It also includes the shambolic recruitment process for the new Commissioner of Police, a process marked by the political intervention of the new member for Burns Beach. The opportunity to inquire further into these matters is somewhat limited by time and the impending winter recess.

The example I would like to highlight concerns the sudden mysterious disappearance of the Lotterywest chief executive officer, Mr Paul Andrew, from his position. I have now asked about this matter on four occasions—on 20, 22 and 27 June, and again today. Question by question, answer by answer and piece by piece over the last two weeks, we have been told the following information. We have been told that Mr Andrew performed strongly as CEO, achieving the “organisational change” he was appointed to bring about. We have been told that the Premier and his deputy chief of staff met with Mr Andrew on 21 March, and that despite Mr Andrew's strong performance as CEO and the fact that news of his termination had been broken by Sean Smith in *The Weekend West* of 17 June, apparently no discussion ever took place regarding Mr Andrew's future in the role of CEO. We have been told that the decision to terminate Mr Andrew's contract came about by virtue of a spontaneous “mutual agreement”. We have been told, further, that as a consequence of this supposed “mutual agreement”, Mr Andrew will be paid 12 months' remuneration of approximately \$340 000 as a termination entitlement.

Yesterday we learned that the Public Service Commissioner, at a previously undisclosed meeting on 14 June 2017, was the person who suggested to Mr Andrew that his contract “come to an early end”. That disclosure, and the fact of the payout, reveals the purported “mutual agreement” to be a convenient, if temporary, fiction concocted by the government to explain away Mr Andrew's departure.

Today we learned that apparently the only topic of discussion that ever took place about Mr Andrew's performance as CEO and the performance of Lotterywest concerned the relationship between Lotterywest and Lotterywest retailers. We also learned that the termination of Mr Andrew's contract precipitated two separate reports to the Premier's office, which took place on 14 and 15 June, concerning the end of Mr Andrew's

contract. I make the observation that it must have been of real interest to the Premier and his staff that Mr Andrew's contract came to that termination.

The answers provided by the government on this issue are a demonstrable nonsense, designed to waste time in the chamber, misdirect attention and hide the true role of the Premier in the removal of Mr Andrew from his position. This is a contemptuous attitude to adopt to Parliament, and it means that scrutiny of an important matter of public interest has been difficult to fulfil.

**Hon Sue Ellery:** What do you think that role is? You have made a serious allegation.

**Hon TJORN SIBMA:** I would urge the minister to come clean about the facts. She has had that opportunity. I have asked about this matter on four occasions. What is the minister hiding?

**Hon Sue Ellery:** If you think you know, you should say it. You have made a serious allegation.

**Hon TJORN SIBMA:** I am waiting for the minister to come clean. Some of this nonsense has been brought undone by subsequent answers provided to follow-up inquiries. If those questions had not been asked, I suspect the government would have been content to let the matter rest in the knowledge that no-one was any the wiser about what machinations actually transpired to remove Mr Andrew from his position. I will not rest until the full story of Mr Andrew's politically-motivated removal is revealed. Members in this place need to be vigilant with the executive, as the practice of evasion and obfuscation becomes the norm by the government in providing information to this house. Thank you.

*House adjourned at 6.46 pm*

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