

REFERENDUM, OPPOSITION’S POSITION

**707. Mr A.P. O’GORMAN to the Premier:**

Will the Premier inform the House of the position taken by the Opposition on the proposed referendum?

**Dr G.I. GALLOP replied:**

I will begin by saying that it is great to live in a State that is looking to the future. It is great to live in a State in which the Government looks to the future and not to the past. In terms of the future of Western Australia, the Government has a jobs and growth strategy based upon the \$3.9 billion of infrastructure investments that are being made throughout the State. I saw those only too clearly on Saturday when I visited Geraldton with the member for Geraldton. The Government is cutting taxes because it has the capacity to cut taxes to create jobs. The Government has a plan for health, which is being implemented throughout Western Australia.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: I call to order the Leader of the National Party and the member for Greenough.

Dr G.I. GALLOP: We have a plan for our Police Service, which is based on the report of the royal commission. We also have a plan for education and to increase the school leaving age. We will make sure that every young Western Australian has the skills and level of learning required to work well in our modern economy. We have tough environmental laws and a new system of administration in the environment. We are creating new marine parks and national parks across the State.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order, members! The level of interjection builds up slowly until it is unacceptable. I call the Leader of the National Party to order for the second time. I call the member for Darling Range to order for the first time.

Dr G.I. GALLOP: In addition, we have a wonderful plan to develop our metropolitan rail system, which is now in train throughout the metropolitan area. We have the policies for the future.

We also have a plan to deal with the vexed issue of trading hours. That plan is to let the people of Western Australia decide. Let us turn to the Opposition.

Dr J.M. Woollard interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order, members! I call the member for Alfred Cove to order for the first time.

Dr G.I. GALLOP: There are more twists and turns in the Opposition than Greg Louganis could put together in any one of his magnificent dives! The Opposition is twisting and turning. Let us start with the member for Mitchell. He stated yesterday that the coalition will vote against the referendum legislation. He stated that the coalition supports current trading hours laws and it will back small business all the way. That is outlined in his media statement titled “A fair go for small business”. Further to that, the Deputy Leader of the Opposition stated -

If elected to Government, the Liberals will not extend trading hours - no ifs or buts.

That is the position of the member for Mitchell. What about the position of the absent Leader of the Opposition? On radio this morning he stated that further deregulatory steps must be taken. He also stated that if the result of the referendum is an overwhelming one, the Government would be bound to follow it. The member for Mitchell is opposed to any change in trading hours laws and tells everyone that that is the policy of the Liberal Party, but the Leader of the Opposition is saying that further change in trading hours is needed. The member for Mitchell says that a referendum is not needed and that he will vote against it. However, the Leader of the Opposition says that if there is an overwhelming result in the inevitable referendum, his party will go along with the results. In addition, on the Harvey Norman question, the Leader of the Opposition stated -

They’ve got a legitimate issue, no-one denies that.

We have brought legislation into the Parliament to sort out that issue. Who opposed it? The Leader of the Opposition and the Liberals. The Liberal Party in this State has no consistency in its policy on any issue. We have seen that in this House and the other House. Members of the Legislative Council who belong to the Liberal Party treat the Leader of the Opposition with contempt. What is the Liberal position on any issue? It depends on who is talking, what time of day it is and who they are talking to. The Liberal Party has a promise for everyone in Western Australia but it has no plan for the future of Western Australia!