

ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE

MR J.C. KOBELKE (Nollamara - Leader of the House) [7.25 pm]: I move -

That the House at its rising adjourn until a date and time to be fixed by the Speaker.

It was assumed that this would be our last day of sitting, as it was to be the last day of sitting of the Legislative Council. I understand that the Legislative Council has now indicated that it might sit through until next Friday. In that case, it is quite likely, but not finally determined, that we would need to return to deal with any Bills that are amended in the other place. On that basis, the motion is to allow you, Mr Speaker, to determine the date of any such return. If there are no amendments, we would not need to return. However, my suspicion is that there will be amendments, and therefore we will need to return.

The second issue is that I have also heard people say that although the Council is designated to sit through until next Friday, it may in fact not do so and may sit for a fewer number of days. In that case, it is open to the Speaker to make a decision. I am sure members will be able to let the Speaker have their points of view about a convenient sitting date. However, it may be that Friday, while the most likely day, will not in the end be the best day to sit in order that our sitting will match the sitting of the Council, if that is required.

This motion simply allows us to finish the work of the Parliament in a way that will enable this House to fit in with the times set by the other place, as it must. I am sure that you, Mr Speaker, will seek to do that in a way that, while it will be difficult, will fit in with the needs of the majority of members.

MRS C.L. EDWARDES (Kingsley) [7.26 pm]: This is not a sign of good government. I should imagine that the Leader of the House, no less than you, Mr Speaker, would be very disappointed at the lack of communication between the other place and you and the Government. If it had been known on Wednesday that the Legislative Council would sit next week, the sitting today could have been cancelled, and we could have come back for one or two days next week. The point is that it is inconvenient when members need to make other arrangements in their community and with their family. However, in the main, inconvenience is not the reason for the level of disappointment, because Parliament is our top priority. Cost is also an issue. The lack of knowledge and awareness and of communication between both Houses is quite appalling. The Parliament cannot operate in that way. I imagine that what is happening in the other place is really a result of mismanagement.

Day in and day out I have heard government members say that the Opposition will not pass legislation. However, I have also heard that legislation has been brought on in the other place, debated for half an hour and never seen again for weeks. What sort of management occurs in the other place? I do not wish to criticise anyone specifically. However, the Leader of the House and you, Mr Speaker, must be very disappointed at the lack of communication and the lack of good management in the other place. It certainly does not reflect well on the Government. I suggest that the Leader of the House should have a word with his colleagues in the other place to tell them that they should get it together so that there can be better management, better coordination and better communication between the other place and this place. It is not just the inconvenience of members that is involved; it is the cost of bringing us back for another day, particularly country members. Some country members will go back to their electorates tonight. Most of them will not be able to go back until tomorrow. They will then have to come back at a date to be determined. We do not know whether it will be Wednesday, Thursday or Friday next week. I have been in this place when we have determined that if the Legislative Council did not know when it would sit, we would come back after it had risen. Both Houses sitting together on the last day has occurred in the past but it has also occurred when we have not known what the Legislative Council has been doing and, as a consequence, the Assembly has returned after the Council has risen in order to deal with amendments. I imagine that in this particular instance, with a lack of coordination and communication, it might have been a far better option for this place rather than the inconvenience and disruption it is causing to members and this place.

MR M.W. TRENORDEN (Avon - Leader of the National Party) [7.29 pm]: From listening to the dissertation from the Leader of the House I hope that the responsibility is now put on Mr Speaker to determine when this House will sit again. I hope there is certainty about the date and that members will be given time to make plans. Wednesday of next week would be difficult because it is a short period between now and then. If it is announced on Monday that we will sit on Tuesday or Wednesday, it creates a significant problem to handle. If there is to be another day of sitting, let us make it Friday. It is seven days hence and will give members time to rearrange diaries. Alternatively, it could be the following week. All members, including Mr Speaker, will disappoint people if we have to sit on Wednesday, Thursday or Friday.

Question put and passed.

House adjourned at 7.30 pm

