

OSPREY VILLAGE — FLEETWOOD CORPORATION

**172. Mr M. McGOWAN to the Treasurer:**

I refer to the Osprey Village in South Hedland and Treasury's lack of awareness of Fleetwood Corporation's involvement in the multimillion-dollar project that was underwritten by the Western Australian government.

- (1) Why was this deal signed without Treasury's knowledge or approval?
- (2) What steps has the Treasurer taken to ensure these types of arrangements are not made without Treasury's formal approval?
- (3) What is the level of liability to the state when Fleetwood exercises its option to pull out?

**Dr M.D. NAHAN replied:**

- (1)–(3) I thank the Leader of the Opposition for the question. This is the second question I have had on this issue. We are seeing the separation of the Labor Party from the working class.

Several members interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Members!

Several members interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Members! Thank you. Through the Chair, minister.

**Dr M.D. NAHAN:** When we came to government, the housing policy in this state was a complete mess. Housing prices had increased by 250 per cent under the Labor Party. People on working-class incomes could not buy a house and they were forced into sky-high rental prices. The government of the day had not built any rental properties—Homeswest—and affordable housing was in complete collapse. It was worse in Karratha.

**Mr B.S. Wyatt** interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Member for Victoria Park!

**Mr B.S. Wyatt** interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Member for Victoria Park, I have called you to order now twice. I do not want to call you for the third time. Through the Chair, please.

**Dr M.D. NAHAN:** The Labor government at the time had completely destroyed the labour market for working-class people up north. People could not work there; the government did not care. It was particularly the case for people who were on low incomes, whether they worked for non-profit organisations or subcontractors, who could not work there, could not live there and could not provide services there.

*Point of Order*

**Mr M. McGOWAN:** I realise this is the last question of the day and you would like a succinct answer.

**The SPEAKER:** Yes.

**Mr M. McGOWAN:** But my question was very specific about Treasury's knowledge of the deal, what steps the Treasurer would take to ensure it did not happen again and what was the level of liability. They are very specific questions and I ask that on the grounds of relevance the questions be answered.

**The SPEAKER:** Can you focus on those, please.

*Questions without Notice Resumed*

**Dr M.D. NAHAN:** We go to the relevance of it. The Department of Housing has picked up across the state trying to use land, assets, joint venturers and contracts —

**Mr B.S. Wyatt:** Taxpayer risk.

**Dr M.D. NAHAN:** Yes, even in the member for Victoria Park's electorate to try to facilitate the development of low-cost housing. That happens in all the electorates of members opposite. They take risks. It is not Homeswest; it is low-cost housing.

Several members interjected.

**Dr M.D. NAHAN:** It was particularly relevant up north because there was simply none. All we get from members opposite is whingeing that we went out and used land —

**Mr F.M. Logan:** Taxpayers underwrote it.

**Dr M.D. NAHAN:** Yes, taxpayers underwrote it, just as we do for Homeswest homes and just as we do in the electorates of members opposite. If they do not like it with Osprey, why would we do it in Vic Park, why would we do it in Mandurah and why would we do it in Maylands? What housing does —

Several members interjected.

**Dr M.D. NAHAN:** It is the same issue. In fact, I suspect we took as much risk in the city as we did up north.

*Point of Order*

**Mr M. McGOWAN:** On a point of order, Mr Speaker. My question was very specific about the level of the liability to taxpayers and why was it signed without Treasury's knowledge or approval. I would like an answer.

**The SPEAKER:** Will the Treasurer give a succinct answer.

*Questions without Notice Resumed*

**Dr M.D. NAHAN:** That is what it comes down to. These people opposite do not care, except in their electorates, about the working class up in Karratha. They do not give a stuff!

Now I turn to the issue. The Department of Housing has a large portfolio. It does this all across the board. It has certain requirements that Treasury oversees, but Treasury does not and has not, even under the watch of the former Labor government, overseen every contract it has.

**Mr B.S. Wyatt** interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Member for Victoria Park, I call you to order for a third time. Treasurer, can we have a short answer, please.

**Dr M.D. NAHAN:** Treasury does not oversee every contract that the Department of Housing enters into. It simply does not. If the opposition wants us to do that, I will tell the member for Victoria Park, I will have Treasury scrutinise all of the assets and liabilities that are taken out, particularly in his and all opposition members' electorates, to see whether they are viable and to see whether there are excessive risks —

Several members interjected.

**Dr M.D. NAHAN:** — and to see whether they are any different from the Osprey project.

**Mr W.J. Johnston:** It's your government, you moron!

Several members interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Member for Cannington, I call you to order for the second time.

Are you finished, Treasurer? Can you wind up, please, Treasurer; you have 30 seconds.

*Withdrawal of Remark*

**Mr N.W. MORTON:** On a point of order, Mr Speaker. The member for Cannington clearly used an unparliamentary term in reference to the Treasurer.

**The SPEAKER:** It was called to order.

*Questions without Notice Resumed*

**Dr M.D. NAHAN:** The member for Cannington continues to slide down into the gutter. Can he go any lower? But Treasury did not oversee the Osprey project in detail—nor does it do that for a large number of Department of Housing projects, and nor should it.