

WATER SUPPLY — DRYLAND AREAS

**198. Mr P.J. RUNDLE to the Minister for Water:**

I refer to Legislative Council question without notice 206 asked on Tuesday. The minister confirmed that the government has been aware of the severe rainfall deficiency in the state's south since December last year.

**Mr M.P. Murray:** There was 25 millimetres in Collie last night.

**The SPEAKER:** Keep interjecting like that and you can go home and count it. I call you to order for the first time.

**Mr P.J. RUNDLE:** I ask —

- (1) Given that the government has had three months to respond to this situation, why has it only now committed to send resources in the form of departmental and ministerial staff to meet with communities early next week?
- (2) Is the state government providing support to local farmers regarding the preparation of a water deficiency declaration; and, if so, in what form is this support being provided?

**Mr D.J. KELLY replied:**

- (1)–(2) From a party that was in government for eight and a half years in this state and a party and a government that denied climate change even existed, it is pretty rough for the member to come in here and ask what we are doing about the drying climate in the south west of Western Australia. It is absolute rubbish from that side.

**Ms M.J. Davies** interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Leader of the National Party!

**Mr D.J. KELLY:** The former Minister for Water in the Barnett government is arcing up now.

**Mr V.A. Catania** interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Member for North West Central, I call you order for the second time. Listen to the answer. Your side has asked the question.

**Mr D.J. KELLY:** She was the water minister who lost all credibility in the industry when she came into this chamber and claimed to have droughtproofed Perth. She is the only water minister in the last 20 years who was silly enough to make that statement that she had droughtproofed Perth. She is now complaining that we have not solved the drying climate and the drying conditions in the south west of Western Australia.

**Ms M.J. Davies** interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Leader of the National Party, I call you to order for the first time.

**Mr D.J. KELLY:** First of all —

**Ms R. Saffioti** interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Minister for Transport!

**Mr D.J. KELLY:** Member for Roe, we acknowledge that climate change is an issue; it is real and it needs to be addressed. People on this side of the chamber talk constantly about needing national leadership on this issue. It is not a problem that can be resolved simply in Western Australia.

*Point of Order*

**Mr S.K. L'ESTRANGE:** The Minister for Planning is interjecting across the chamber at the Deputy Leader of the Opposition and I can hardly hear the minister's answer.

**The SPEAKER:** I will rule on that point of order. They were both talking. What do I do? Do I stop them both? If you cannot hear, I suggest you tell your own member not to do it, and I am sure it will happen over the other side.

*Questions without Notice Resumed*

**Mr D.J. KELLY:** This is an issue that needs national leadership. Unfortunately, we have the federal government that —

**Mr D.C. Nalder** interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Are you querying my decision? I actually saw them both talking to each other, member for Bateman. As I said to you before, you do not run this house, but I tell you what, you will be running home early soon. I call you to order for the third time.

**Mr D.J. KELLY:** Unfortunately, we have a federal government that is completely paralysed on this issue. Within the Liberal Party there is a significant group of climate change deniers. Within the National Party, people like

Barnaby Joyce are climate change deniers. Any attempt to deal with this issue on a national level is thwarted by people in the member's party. People in rural Western Australia who are suffering the impacts of climate change really look at parties —

**Ms M.J. Davies** interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Leader of the National Party.

**Mr D.J. KELLY:** As I say, the former Minister for Water, now the Leader of the National Party has nothing to say on this issue.

**The SPEAKER:** Through the Chair, minister.

**Mr D.J. KELLY:** She had nothing to say for eight and a half years in government.

**Mr V.A. Catania** interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Member for North West Central.

**Mr D.J. KELLY:** On the specific issues facing the constituents of the member for Roe —

**Mr Z.R.F. Kirkup:** You are so bad at your job.

**The SPEAKER:** Member for Dawesville, that is just not on. I call you for the first and second time.

**Mr D.J. KELLY:** It is the most excited members opposite have been about climate change, I think, in eight and a half years.

In respect to the specific circumstances faced by the constituents of the member for Roe, there is a process whereby a water deficiency declaration can be sought that triggers additional assistance. The water deficiency declaration has to come via local governments. They are the ones that ask for that declaration. No local government in the member's electorate has sought a water deficiency declaration—not one! The member got that in the answer yesterday. My department, the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation, is in constant contact with those local governments and with individual farmers about the circumstances that they are currently facing. We are constantly monitoring access to emergency water supplies. In the event that water carting is required for stock, that will be provided. Those are the arrangements that have been in place—we did not put them in place—for the eight and half years that members opposite were in government.

The drying climate and the lack—rainfall is a terribly fickle thing. There are people in the wheatbelt who have had a record harvest and others not far away who are currently struggling to have water in their dams for their stock. It is a terribly fickle thing. But climate change is the constant theme and the sooner members opposite start advocating for action at a national level the better.

**Mrs A.K. Hayden:** Stop bullying.

*Suspension of Member*

**The SPEAKER:** Member for Darling Range, I call you to order for the fourth time. As a member has been called to order more than three times, I now suspend the member from the service of the house until the adjournment of today's sitting.

[The member for Darling Range left the chamber.]

*Questions without Notice Resumed*

**Mr D.J. KELLY:** Member for Roe —

Several members interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Members, no comments.

**Mr D.J. KELLY:** We are working hard to assist those landholders who are experiencing difficult conditions. But do not come in here and say that it is a problem that we have created. We are putting in place the same chain of events, the same procedures, that were in place when members opposite were in government.