

LOCAL GOVERNMENT REFORM — REMARKS BY COMMISSIONER FOR CANNING

118. Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN to the Minister for Local Government:

I refer to the comment made by the Minister for Finance, the member for Riverton, that the Commissioner for Canning, Linton Reynolds, has deliberately misled the residents in order to promote his own agenda.

- (1) Does the minister agree with the Minister for Finance that Commissioner Linton Reynolds is promoting his own agenda?
- (2) If yes, what is Commissioner Reynolds' agenda?
- (3) Can the minister guarantee, as the Minister for Finance has done, that Riverton Leisureplex will be maintained by the City of Melville?
- (4) Does the minister agree with Commissioner Reynolds when he says, in respect of the minister's proposal to abolish the City of Canning, that it is his clear, carefully arrived at, objective assessment that it does not represent the best reform proposal?

Mr A.J. SIMPSON replied:

I thank the member for Mandurah for the question.

- (1)–(4) Linton Reynolds is the Commissioner for Canning, and he represents the council and the ratepayers. He at the moment is representing his community in a wider campaign; I think it is called Fight for Canning. I understand that a lot of public campaigning is being run by local governments around the metropolitan area—as it should be—to tell their communities that the Local Government Advisory Board is open for public submissions until tomorrow.

I want to raise a point about the amount of money that is being spent on bandying around suggestions such as the one that the member has raised, which is that Riverton Leisureplex will close if it leaves the management of the City of Canning. That is a blatant lie, because, as we know, the facilities in the community do not belong to the councils; they belong to the ratepayers.

Dr A.D. Buti interjected.

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

Mr A.J. SIMPSON: As we all know, local government facilities do not belong to the council; they belong to the ratepayers. They are merely administrated by the local government.

Mr D.A. Templeman: So will you guarantee that the leisure complex will stay?

The SPEAKER: Member for Mandurah!

Mr A.J. SIMPSON: I can guarantee it will still be operating under any local government.

Mr D.A. Templeman: Will you guarantee it?

The SPEAKER: Member for Mandurah!

Mr A.J. SIMPSON: I guarantee it. It is a great facility in the community.

The same ratepayers who use those complexes today will still be using them under the new local government. It is a lie to say that community facilities or libraries will be closing. They belong to the ratepayers of a community and the same ratepayers will be there. It is only the boundary that will be moving and the local government will have changed its name.

Dr A.D. Buti interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Armadale, I call you to order for the third time.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Mandurah!

Mr A.J. SIMPSON: We are going through this process at the moment. It is out of my hands and in the hands of the Local Government Advisory Board.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Members!

Mr A.J. SIMPSON: Hang on! "Under the current act"—have I changed anything in the act? No, I have not!

Mr D.A. Templeman interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Mandurah, I call you to order for the first time. I want to hear the minister's answer. We are making no headway whatsoever.

Mr A.J. SIMPSON: Thank you, Mr Speaker. As I said, it is in the hands of the advisory board. We are working through that process at the moment. The most important thing about local government reform is building stronger local governments to deliver better services for our ratepayers. This is the interesting part about the whole campaign at the moment. I hope and am confident that all these local governments, as of tomorrow, will get back to the work of delivering services for the ratepayer, rather than wasting money on what I call campaigns or scaremongering in the wider community.

The member for Mandurah raised a number of questions. The only —

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Members!

Mr A.J. SIMPSON: By the end of June, we will have a report back from the advisory board; it is important at the moment to focus on that. But I make the point that local governments at the moment, in my view, are wasting taxpayers' and ratepayers' money on fighting campaigns and telling, basically, lies to their communities. It is time to stop. As of tomorrow, when public submissions close, the matter will be in the hands of the advisory board.