

Mr Mark McGowan; Dr Mike Nahan; Dr Tony Buti; Deputy Speaker; Mr Bill Johnston; Ms Jessica Shaw; Mr Bill Marmion; Mr Matthew Hughes; Mrs Michelle Roberts; Mr Zak Kirkup; Ms Mia Davies; Mrs Liza Harvey; Ms Rita Saffioti; Mr Colin Barnett

**PROCEDURE AND PRIVILEGES COMMITTEE — MEMBER FOR DARLING RANGE —
REFERRAL**

Standing Orders Suspension — Motion

MR M. McGOWAN (Rockingham — Premier) [9.27 am] — without notice: I move —

That so much of standing orders be suspended as is necessary to enable the following motion to be moved forthwith —

That this house requests the Procedure and Privileges Committee to consider and report back to the house by a date to be determined by the committee itself whether there have been any breaches of privilege in relation to any statements made to the house by the member for Darling Range.

The member for Darling Range has made a statement to the house on the issues that have been raised about him. Obviously, he has made certain statements about his past and his history. In light of the significant public interest in these matters and, in my view, as a matter of regret, the fact that his explanation was not comprehensive enough, I am referring him now to the Procedure and Privileges Committee so that it can look at whether statements that he has made to the Parliament have been sufficiently honest and comprehensive. I urge the committee to take into account what the member for Darling Range said about post-traumatic stress disorder and the things that he has been through in his police and military careers and to take account of his personal circumstances in any inquiries that it makes. I urge the committee to make sure that the reporting date reflects that he may need to deal with those issues in relation to providing any evidence to the committee. It is a matter of public importance and public interest. I urge the committee to deliberate but to just take account of the circumstances of the member for Darling Range.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: As this is a motion without notice to suspend standing orders, it needs an absolute majority in order to succeed. If I hear a dissentient voice, I am required to divide the Assembly.

Question put and passed with an absolute majority.

Motion

MR M. McGOWAN (Rockingham — Premier) [9.29 am]: I move the motion.

As I indicated earlier, there is significant public interest in this matter. It is a matter of regret that the explanation provided by the member for Darling Range was not sufficiently comprehensive about the matters raised. In light of the circumstances, it is appropriate that the Procedure and Privileges Committee examine the statements the member for Darling Range has made to the house and report back to the house about them. I would urge the committee, in light of the member for Darling Range's evidence that he is suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder as a result of his military and police careers, to take that into account in relation to the time frame of any inquiry it might conduct.

DR M.D. NAHAN (Riverton — Leader of the Opposition) [9.31 am]: I would like to explore this issue a bit further. We will support, of course, sending the issues generally to the Procedure and Privileges Committee. We attempted to do so yesterday. It is true that the member for Darling Range —

Several members interjected.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Members!

Dr M.D. NAHAN: It is accurate that the member for Darling Range's statement today was entirely inadequate. A whole range of issues have been percolating in the media and the community of Darling Range and others about his curriculum vitae that he failed to respond to. I will go through some of those issues. The first major issue was that he failed to respond to, or confirm or otherwise, his involvement in a peacekeeping force in Bosnia. That was one of the issues that arose. The second issue is about his university degrees from the University of Leeds and the University of Portsmouth. You do know if you attended university. You do know if you have a degree from a university. You do not necessarily need to go back to the university to get a transcript to get authorisation. You do have a diploma, generally; you might have lost it. But the member could have drawn a line in the sand and said, "I went to the university. I have a degree in this from Leeds or Portsmouth." He failed to do that.

Dr A.D. Buti: This is what the privileges committee will look at. We don't have to go through that now.

Dr M.D. NAHAN: I am justifying the decision put forward today to send him to the Procedure and Privileges Committee. I am going through it in detail to justify the inadequacy of the member for Darling Range's statement today, which we have been waiting three weeks for and on which the member's side has been dragging the chain.

Mr Mark McGowan; Dr Mike Nahan; Dr Tony Buti; Deputy Speaker; Mr Bill Johnston; Ms Jessica Shaw; Mr Bill Marmion; Mr Matthew Hughes; Mrs Michelle Roberts; Mr Zak Kirkup; Ms Mia Davies; Mrs Liza Harvey; Ms Rita Saffioti; Mr Colin Barnett

The university issue is very important because there is reason to suspect that he used those claims about the university. There was a failure to justify or draw a line in the sand on those university degrees, which goes to the heart of his suitability to join, to be a member of, the police force some years ago, which he claimed today he had been there for a number of years, as well as corrective services. The question before Parliament is: did he use an incorrect CV to enter the police force or corrective services; and, if so, was that proper? The important aspect is that if he did, and this is speculative, use fraudulent claims to become a member of the police force, he should not be in this place at all. Therefore, the Procedure and Privileges Committee must go beyond his actions here today and look into his actions in the police force with those applications some time ago, and his actions in corrective services. The committee must go beyond all the claims.

We must also know, and this is the essential issue, the involvement and role of the Premier in this. The member for Darling Range is in this place at the behest of the Labor Party. It preselected him in 2012 for the 2013 election and it preselected him for the 2017 election. It was your requirement to vet the person. It was your responsibility to vet him and you failed to do so.

Several members interjected.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: This is an extremely serious matter and I will not have members in this house yelling abuse across the chamber on the issue. I want to hear the Leader of the Opposition in silence, please.

Ms R. Saffioti interjected.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Minister! I call you for the first time.

Dr M.D. NAHAN: The member for Darling Range is in this house at the behest of the Labor Party, unquestionably. These allegations arose not because of the Labor Party, but because of the media. The Labor Party stalled and obfuscated getting clarity on this issue for three weeks.

Mr P. Papalia interjected.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Minister!

Dr M.D. NAHAN: He could have written a statement any time over the last three weeks. He could have read out a written statement in this Parliament any time over the last three weeks; he failed to do so. You kept it to the last sitting day of Parliament because you wanted to avoid scrutiny. Yesterday, you refused to send it to the Procedure and Privileges Committee. The question we need to ask is: what scrutiny did the Labor Party put in to have the man preselected and campaigned for and supported to get into this house?

Mr R.H. Cook interjected.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Deputy Premier, I have made a statement about this house's conduct during this debate and I intend to stick with it.

Dr M.D. NAHAN: The government is trying to avoid scrutiny about its actions in respect of the member for Darling Range.

Ms R. Saffioti interjected.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for West Swan!

Several members interjected.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Deputy Premier! I have warned you. That was not necessarily helpful, member for Cottesloe. Go ahead, Leader of the Opposition.

Dr M.D. NAHAN: Thank you, Madam Deputy Speaker. Over the last three weeks, the Labor Party has tried to stall, hide, obfuscate and machine it so that this issue was raised during the last week of sitting. It made sure that the member left the Labor Party so that its members can hide from it, and now he is abandoned on the backbenches as, I guess, the Independent member for Darling Range. The Labor Party's actions in preselecting, campaigning for and promoting his statements—his degree, his background, his service—to win the seat of Darling Range for the Labor Party, will not be involved in the inquiry by Procedure and Privileges Committee. Labor members wanted to wash themselves of and abandon him. I am surprised that the member for Willagee has said that he was going to stand by his mate. He is not standing by him now. The privileges committee —

Several members interjected.

Mr Mark McGowan; Dr Mike Nahan; Dr Tony Buti; Deputy Speaker; Mr Bill Johnston; Ms Jessica Shaw; Mr Bill Marmion; Mr Matthew Hughes; Mrs Michelle Roberts; Mr Zak Kirkup; Ms Mia Davies; Mrs Liza Harvey; Ms Rita Saffioti; Mr Colin Barnett

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Deputy Premier, I call you for the first time. This debate needs to be well controlled. Please be careful, all sides of the house.

Dr M.D. NAHAN: The privileges committee must investigate not only so-called breaches of privilege, but also all the claims that the member for Darling Range made about his CV, before the election, during the election and subsequent to the election, to the public of Darling Range and the public of Western Australia and in this house. The committee must investigate not just whether he made a breach in this house, but whether he is here on false grounds. The essence of the issue is: was he elected on behalf of the Labor Party to the seat of Darling Range on false pretences? That is the issue—false pretences.

Several members interjected.

Dr M.D. NAHAN: Member for Dawesville, their attempts to change the subject means that they are trying to continue to obfuscate on this issue; therefore, we have to ensure that these terms of reference go to the essence of the issue. The Labor Party has already cut him loose, hoping that he will go—it will leave him alone—though I read in the paper today that the Labor Party has indicated that there is a pathway back to the Labor Party, to the Labor fold, if he is able to clear himself. We need to return to the origins of the issue. The issues for the people of this Parliament and for the people of Darling Range are the claims that the member for Darling Range made about his university degree to become the member for Darling Range. Today, he said that he has written to those universities for proof. He could have drawn a line in the sand and told us whether he did or did not go to those universities and whether he did or did not get a university degree of that type. The government knows it. One of the issues relates to Bosnia. Did he serve for the United Nations as a secondee from the police force of the United Kingdom in war-torn Bosnia? He did not mention that today. He also said that he worked in The Hague on the war crimes tribunal.

Dr A.D. Buti: He didn't say The Hague; he never said The Hague.

Dr M.D. NAHAN: He did.

Dr A.D. Buti: No, he did not say The Hague. You don't understand.

Dr M.D. NAHAN: You have been examining this, member, as you should.

Dr A.D. Buti: No. Tell me where he mentioned The Hague.

Dr M.D. NAHAN: He served on a war crime —

Point of Order

Dr A.D. BUTI: The Leader of the Opposition is misleading this Parliament. Can he verify whenever the member for Darling Range mentioned that he served in The Hague?

Mr Z.R.F. Kirkup: On 24 January 2017.

Dr A.D. BUTI: No, he said war crimes investigation in the Balkans.

Mr Z.R.F. Kirkup interjected.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Dawesville!

Dr A.D. BUTI: He never mentioned The Hague in this place.

Mr Z.R.F. Kirkup interjected.

Dr A.D. BUTI: No, The Hague was the tribunal where you go when you have been put on trial.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Armadale, this is not a debate; it is a point of order.

Dr A.D. BUTI: My point of order is that the —

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I have got it, thank you. It is not a substantive point of order under these circumstances. Members, I encourage you to remember what I have said.

Several members interjected.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Members for Cottesloe and West Swan, enough. This is not a personal bunfight across the chamber; this is someone's career. Enough.

Debate Resumed

Mr R.H. Cook interjected.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Deputy Premier!

Mr Mark McGowan; Dr Mike Nahan; Dr Tony Buti; Deputy Speaker; Mr Bill Johnston; Ms Jessica Shaw; Mr Bill Marmion; Mr Matthew Hughes; Mrs Michelle Roberts; Mr Zak Kirkup; Ms Mia Davies; Mrs Liza Harvey; Ms Rita Saffioti; Mr Colin Barnett

Dr M.D. NAHAN: This is your motion, and you are speaking against it. I am supporting it.

Several members interjected.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Members!

Mr R.H. Cook interjected.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Deputy Premier! Leader of the Opposition, would you please speak through the Chair and not engage with the government in that fashion during this debate.

Dr M.D. NAHAN: The member for Darling Range failed to make all those statements. There is a whole raft of other things about his work as a contractor building the dam in Serpentine–Jarrahdale and whether he was a constable or a detective in the police. There is a whole raft of issues. Read the paper. Look at the media. He failed to answer those. What he needed to do today, and the Premier promised he would do, is come in, draw a line in the sand and set things straight, and he failed to do so. We all know that the Premier and his Labor Party people have been working with him for a couple of weeks. They have been working with him, machining him, and advising him of what to say. They probably even helped him craft his speech. That is what the Labor Party does. What it did today was cut him loose from the Labor Party and induce him to quit, promising him that there is a pathway back, and now he is on his own. It did that to stop scrutiny on the government. He came here as a government backbencher at the behest of the Labor Party. It preselected him, funded him and promoted him. The Labor Party actually promoted his curriculum vitae. It was pretty impressive; I would promote it if it was real. Now it has cut him loose. Labor Party members are leaving their mate behind. They are trying to stop the scrutiny on themselves. They have cut him loose. They could have agreed to send the matter to the Procedure and Privileges Committee yesterday. He was a member of the Labor Party until the beginning of question time. The Labor Party is leaving its mate behind and trying to avoid the scrutiny of putting him here.

The Labor Party also has to go back. Yesterday, we asked the Minister for Corrective Services whether he was going to investigate the member for Darling Range's claims about when he became an employee of Corrective Services, because if the CV he presented to be elected to this place is inaccurate, the CV that he used while at Corrective Services until 2012, right before he was preselected by the Labor Party for the seat of Darling Range, was also probably inadequate. He refused to verify it. He said, "That is the past; there is no need to investigate." But if he was employed by the Department of Corrective Services when the Labor Party first preselected him for the seat of Darling Range in 2012 and if he falsely procured a job with either Police or Corrective Services, that is pertinent to the Labor Party's selection processes and his entitlement to be here. That needs to be investigated. Did he or did he not use false or accurate information to procure past employment with Police or Corrective Services for positions in service that formed the foundation for his campaign to be elected to this Parliament? Will this be included in his breaches of Parliament? No, it will not. The government has to expand this to include what occurred beyond today.

The reality is that we are debating this issue because of a fundamental failure of leadership by the Premier. The Premier has purposely, probably with the assistance of the Labor Party apparatchik, machined this issue. They have known for weeks that the member for Darling Range was preselected into this house and made false statements to this house. They have known it for weeks.

Withdrawal of Remark

Mr W.J. JOHNSTON: The Leader of the Opposition just said that the member for Darling Range came into this house and made statements that were false. That is an imputation against the member and he must apologise and withdraw.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Leader of the Opposition, just be careful with your use of language in this debate please because we do not have the facts yet.

Dr M.D. NAHAN: I think we have facts, which have been made public, about his University of Leeds degree, which he claimed in his maiden speech to have. He did not mention it.

Mr W.J. JOHNSTON: It would appear that the Leader of the Opposition is canvassing your ruling. It does not matter what the facts are. He was saying that the member for Darling Range has knowingly said something that is not true. The Leader of the Opposition has no evidence to support that and that is why this matter is going to the PPC. He needs to stick to the standing orders of the Parliament.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Leader of the Opposition, I remind you that this matter is being referred, so please be very cautious in your use of language around this. It is a sensitive issue.

Dr A.D. Buti interjected.

Mr Mark McGowan; Dr Mike Nahan; Dr Tony Buti; Deputy Speaker; Mr Bill Johnston; Ms Jessica Shaw; Mr Bill Marmion; Mr Matthew Hughes; Mrs Michelle Roberts; Mr Zak Kirkup; Ms Mia Davies; Mrs Liza Harvey; Ms Rita Saffioti; Mr Colin Barnett

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Enough from this side of the house, thank you.

Debate Resumed

Dr M.D. NAHAN: Yes; I thank you.

We have been needing a thorough inquiry for some time—three weeks. It was up to the member for Darling Range’s leader, until yesterday, to make a decision. This issue has illustrated the lack of leadership by the Premier. Let me go through it. It has been clear for some time. The rumours about the medals have been out there for quite a while, and when *The West Australian* journalist made inquiries of him, the member for Darling Range, to put it politely, obfuscated. Indeed, he told some porkies. He told a bunch of stories.

Point of Order

Mr W.J. JOHNSTON: The Leader of the Opposition has done it again. He has accused the member for Darling Range of telling a lie. He cannot do that.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, minister. I am not of the same opinion on this one. I have warned you twice. Please stick to the facts, member.

Dr M.D. NAHAN: The facts are that the member for Darling Range admitted he falsified claims about his medals. He admitted that. He admitted it today in the paper.

Mr W.J. JOHNSTON: Point of order, Madam Deputy Speaker.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member, I think we understand what you are saying.

Mr W.J. JOHNSTON: I draw your attention, Madam Deputy Speaker, to the fact that he said he got the matter wrong; he did not say that he falsified it. The Leader of the Opposition cannot make a statement that he does not know to be true; that is called lying. I am just asking for the Leader of the Opposition to comply with the standing orders that are applied to everybody else in this chamber.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you again, member. Please be cautious with your use of language.

Debate Resumed

Dr M.D. NAHAN: He wore a medal—I have seen the pictures—that he first defended and said that he quite rightly was awarded. He then said it was a mistake and he admitted that he got it online. All along he was saying something else.

Dr A.D. Buti: Did you say online?

Dr M.D. NAHAN: Yes, he did.

Dr A.D. Buti: No he didn’t. He didn’t say he got it online.

Dr M.D. NAHAN: Other issues then started coming about a whole range of issues, particularly going to his police service, his service in the United Nations and his universities. Clear claims have been made about his adequacy for, first, being preselected by the Labor Party, then elected to this house, and then remaining as a Labor member of Parliament. The Premier failed to investigate and failed to pursue it. He failed to do it.

Several members interjected.

Ms J.J. Shaw: You’re lying!

Withdrawal of Remark

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Excuse me, who yelled out across the chamber, “You’re lying”?

Ms J.J. SHAW: I apologise. I withdraw the comment.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. This is a very delicate debate. I have said it too many times. Be careful.

Debate Resumed

Dr M.D. NAHAN: Over a week ago we asked the Minister for Police —

Several members interjected.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Leader of the Opposition, please continue.

Dr M.D. NAHAN: Over a week ago we asked the Minister for Police, given there was evidence about —

Several members interjected.

Point of Order

Extract from Hansard

[ASSEMBLY — Thursday, 30 November 2017]

p6397a-6417a

Mr Mark McGowan; Dr Mike Nahan; Dr Tony Buti; Deputy Speaker; Mr Bill Johnston; Ms Jessica Shaw; Mr Bill Marmion; Mr Matthew Hughes; Mrs Michelle Roberts; Mr Zak Kirkup; Ms Mia Davies; Mrs Liza Harvey; Ms Rita Saffioti; Mr Colin Barnett

Mr W.R. MARMION: I cannot hear my own leader because of the interjections by the Minister for Transport. Several members interjected.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I am starting to feel like a jack-in-the-box. Would you please keep your voices down and do not engage in debates across the chamber. The Leader of the Opposition is completing his speech.

Dr A.D. BUTI: Madam Deputy Speaker, I seek your clarification and you may want to get some advice on this. The motion is that the member for Darling Range be referred to the Procedure and Privileges Committee. Members of that committee are sitting in this chamber today. I ask for your guidance or ruling on statements being made by the Leader of the Opposition that are potentially prejudicial to the member for Darling Range.

Several members interjected.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I understand, member.

Dr A.D. BUTI: I have not finished my point of order, Madam Deputy Speaker. It should be heard in silence too, I believe.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member, I do understand your point of order. Would you like to complete it, if you want to add anything additional?

Dr A.D. BUTI: Yes. I would like to add that the Premier has moved a motion that the member for Darling Range be referred to the privileges committee. That is the motion we are discussing.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Yes, you have already said that, member.

Dr A.D. BUTI: If the Leader of the Opposition agrees to that motion, that is fine —

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: That is not a point of order.

Dr A.D. BUTI: — but it is not an opportunity for him to canvass matters that will go before the privileges committee.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member, you need to sit down. Thank you, and enough. This is not a point of order. There are always members of the privileges committee sitting on the floor when these issues are brought —

Dr A.D. Buti: But how often is this issue raised?

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: That is enough. I do not need backchat to the Deputy Speaker. Continue, Leader of the Opposition.

Debate Resumed

Dr M.D. NAHAN: Thank you for your protection.

The Minister for Police was asked over a week ago whether the member for Darling Range, when he applied to be a policeman—which I accept as accurate; he confirmed that today so I am pretty sure he was—used an accurate CV in that application. The former Commissioner of Police, Karl O’Callaghan, said that that is a very serious issue and that it should be investigated forthwith. We asked the question of the Minister for Police and she said that that was some time ago, that it is probably very difficult to find and that it is in Iron Mountain, which indicates that it is locked away somewhere. However, a real leader would have told his Minister for Police to find it and make a decision, because it goes to the essence of the member’s credibility and suitability to be preselected by the Labor Party, to be campaigned for by the Labor Party and to be the member for Darling Range as a member of the Labor Party. The minister could not find it. We asked the same thing of the Minister for Corrective Services. That minister could not find it. The Minister for Corrective Services was asked the same question. He said, “I don’t have to. It’s in the past.” However, it was germane to finding out whether the member for Darling Range used an accurate CV to become an employee of the Department of Corrective Services. Whether he did or did not was germane to his ability and suitability to be here.

Will those factors be considered by the Procedure and Privileges Committee? Will the committee, under these terms of reference, be able to go back, outside the statements he has made in this house, to find out his suitability for being here in the first place? That is the essence of the issue—not so much what he has said here to date, but what he said to the people of Darling Range to get here in the first place. That is the essential issue. The Procedure and Privileges Committee must go widely about what the member for Darling Range has said, not just in this house, but what he said and what he claimed in the run-up to the election to his community about his CV. This should not be controversial. We should not be hearing a loud cry from members on the opposite side who are trying to obfuscate. They claim he is no longer a member of the Labor Party. This is their motion. I am asking them a legitimate question. The Procedure and Privileges Committee must examine issues outside the Parliament.

Extract from Hansard

[ASSEMBLY — Thursday, 30 November 2017]

p6397a-6417a

Mr Mark McGowan; Dr Mike Nahan; Dr Tony Buti; Deputy Speaker; Mr Bill Johnston; Ms Jessica Shaw; Mr Bill Marmion; Mr Matthew Hughes; Mrs Michelle Roberts; Mr Zak Kirkup; Ms Mia Davies; Mrs Liza Harvey; Ms Rita Saffioti; Mr Colin Barnett

I want to get clarification from the Premier, who moved this motion: will it include the member for Darling Range's claims and submissions to the Labor Party? I assume that when the Labor Party preselects somebody, it asks for their CV and background.

Mr D.J. Kelly: We asked if he was a dual citizen.

Dr M.D. NAHAN: That is a good question for Labor Party people.

Mr D.J. Kelly: Honestly, for the Liberal Party to be raising that, vetting candidates, is a bit ridiculous.

Several members interjected.

Dr M.D. NAHAN: The government has raised questions about a former member of the Labor Party and I am responding to its own submission and asking: will the investigation by the committee go to his application to the Labor Party for preselection?

Dr A.D. Buti: What does that have to do with it?

Dr M.D. NAHAN: Because that is why he is here. He is here at your behest. You preselected him and promoted him. You promoted his background, and the people of Darling Range elected him because he was a member of the Labor Party and because of his background, not so much because of what he said here; that is an after effect. We have to go back to the origins of his claim, to his suitability to be here, and that is when he was put here in large part on the basis of him being a member of the Labor Party and his claim that the Premier publicly, during the election, went out and promoted.

What is the remit of this committee investigation? That is the question. We need to have his full CV, not just as he has mentioned in this Parliament, in this place—that has to be investigated—but beyond that, into the community, before the election, and whether he should have been, dependent upon the accuracy of his CV, a member of the police force and an employee of Corrective Services. We must look at all those claims that he made to the community, even if he did not put them on his CV or provide them to the Western Australian Electoral Commission or otherwise. This has to be a full and wide-ranging inquiry about the statements that the member has made about his claim to be a suitable candidate as the member for Darling Range. That is why he is here. Since he has been here, he has made some claims and answered all sorts of questions inadequately. I agree with the Premier on that. I am surprised the Premier claims to have been informed of that just now, particularly since the Labor Party has been at the member for Darling Range's house and has briefed him for some time. It should have known what he was going to say; it probably helped him write his speech. The Labor Party is a very professional outfit; it would have been cautioning and coaching him for some time. When he cleansed his online statements on his Facebook page and otherwise, I am sure that the Labor Party advised him what to do and how to do it and whatnot. Nonetheless, it did not work very well. We need a statement that this inquiry cannot be restricted only to the actions and statements that the member for Darling Range has made in this place. It must go back to his initial claims when he became a candidate on behalf of the Labor Party for the seat of Darling Range.

Mr M. McGowan: We'll get them to investigate your life story. You think that's what a committee can do—investigate your life story and what you did in America, where you went to university? You want them to do that?

Dr M.D. NAHAN: Yes. Go ahead. Investigate all the claims I made to become the member for Riverton.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Members, just let me remind you that this is the most serious charge that can be made against a member of Parliament. Let us have complete silence when a speaker is on their feet.

Dr M.D. NAHAN: The issue here is the member's suitability to be in Parliament. That did not start only today. That is what the government is trying to do today. It has drawn a line in the sand and said that he is no longer a member of the Labor Party. But he is here at the behest of the Labor Party. It began in 2012, but mainly in 2016–17 when he was preselected and made repeated claims to the people of Darling Range, who elected him. That has to be included in the investigation. The information also has to include what he said personally to not only the people of Darling Range, but also the party that put him there—the Labor Party. The Procedure and Privileges Committee must inquire into the information provided to the Labor Party. It must have the powers to investigate what the Labor Party knew and what the Labor Party inquired into when it preselected him. Also, the inquiry must have access —

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Members!

Mr Mark McGowan; Dr Mike Nahan; Dr Tony Buti; Deputy Speaker; Mr Bill Johnston; Ms Jessica Shaw; Mr Bill Marmion; Mr Matthew Hughes; Mrs Michelle Roberts; Mr Zak Kirkup; Ms Mia Davies; Mrs Liza Harvey; Ms Rita Saffioti; Mr Colin Barnett

Dr M.D. NAHAN: He is here at the behest of the Labor Party. Did he provide accurate information to the Labor Party, which preselected him and put him here? I have sympathy for the Premier because I understand from reading the paper that the member for Darling Range provided to the Premier at least, and I assume to the Labor Party, a diploma from the University of Leeds. That is what I read in the paper anyway. The information that he provided to the Western Australian Electoral Commission is relevant because the Electoral Commission has certain requirements of truthfulness. The inquiry should cover not only what he said in this house, but also the CV he provided to the Electoral Commission, the Western Australia Police Force and the Department of Corrective Services. That is the essence. Is he a suitable member for Darling Range? The Labor Party cannot draw the line after ditching him from the Labor Party when it brought him here and promised that the member for Darling Range would give a fulsome discussion of his background, which he did not do. Again, the government failed to deliver.

The SPEAKER: Leader of the Opposition, can you talk through the Chair please.

Dr M.D. NAHAN: Yes. Also, the inquiry needs to know what the Premier has been doing over the last two weeks. What information has he possessed about the CV or accuracy of the CV and the claims and, therefore, the suitability of the member for Darling Range to be a member of this house or a member of the Labor Party? Supposedly, he has been investigating the matter in the past two weeks. My office has received numerous statements from a range of very authoritative sources.

Mr M.P. Murray: Table them.

Dr M.D. NAHAN: I do not need to. The Premier has every one of them.

The SPEAKER: Member for Collie–Preston, I call you to order for the first time.

Dr M.D. NAHAN: The people who sent it to the Premier also sent a copy to me. That is the beauty of online communication. We know the Premier has those. Some are very authoritative. A real leader would have said that he needs to draw a line in the sand here because one of his members clearly has serious questions to answer and he needs to investigate the matter. The Premier needs to answer the questions in Parliament and force the member to get the information.

Point of Order

Mr M. HUGHES: Mr Speaker, I refer you to the standing order on repetitious or irrelevant debate and I seek your ruling. The standing order provides —

A member who persists in irrelevance or tedious repetition, either of the member's own arguments or of the arguments used by other members, may be directed by the Speaker to discontinue the speech.

The SPEAKER: It is not a point of order.

Debate Resumed

Dr M.D. NAHAN: I imagine that for some people on this side this would be a bit tedious because we have been going through this for three weeks and it has been tedious. There should have been leadership here and members know it. By restricting the terms of reference, the government is trying to avoid scrutiny once more.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Members, I repeat that this is a very serious matter. Member for Cottesloe, you should know better.

Dr M.D. NAHAN: The privileges committee should have access to the information that the Premier had over the last three weeks or before and what actions he has taken to investigate this matter.

Ms M.M. Quirk interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Girrawheen!

Dr M.D. NAHAN: It should have access to what actions the Premier has taken to investigate the various claims that have arisen about the member for Darling Range's CV. He has not made a single statement. He always says that he will leave it up to the member for Darling Range. The Minister for Police said that she is looking at it. The Minister for Corrective Services said that he does not have to do it. The Minister for Veterans Issues said that he stands by his mate. The government has not addressed this in any leadership manner at all. I am saying that this started with you. You put him there. You supported him. You stood by your mate. You protected him. You protected him against the people of Darling Range. If we listen to the people of Darling Range, at least online, we will see that they are very angry with the Labor Party and the member for Darling Range. The privileges committee must go beyond what he has said and done in this house and —

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Mr Mark McGowan; Dr Mike Nahan; Dr Tony Buti; Deputy Speaker; Mr Bill Johnston; Ms Jessica Shaw; Mr Bill Marmion; Mr Matthew Hughes; Mrs Michelle Roberts; Mr Zak Kirkup; Ms Mia Davies; Mrs Liza Harvey; Ms Rita Saffioti; Mr Colin Barnett

Ms M.M. Quirk: You can't.

Dr M.D. NAHAN: Yes, you can. The Parliament of Western Australia has very few restrictions on what it can do.

Ms M.M. Quirk: Look at the functions of the committee.

Dr M.D. NAHAN: The terms of reference restrict it, but the privileges committee should not be so constrained. Several members interjected.

Dr M.D. NAHAN: We support this, but we want to ensure and have a statement from the Premier that the terms of reference for the committee are wide-ranging and go beyond what the member for Darling Range has said in this house and to the claims that he made to the people of Darling Range prior to the election, to the Labor Party, to the Electoral Commission and outside this house. We should also ensure that the committee has all the evidence that the Premier has accumulated over the last three weeks. We cannot have the Labor Party and the leader of the government, the Premier, not provide to that committee all the evidence in their possession. The Labor Party is not a member of this house; it is not clear whether the Procedure and Privileges Committee can search its material or material from the Premier's office. We have to have a commitment—this is a motion by the leader of the government—that the Premier, his officers and departments will provide the committee all the information they have accumulated about the member for Darling Range. We have to have a commitment from the government that the Minister for Police and the Minister for Corrective Services will investigate the claims that the member for Darling Range made when he became an employee of those agencies. We have to make sure that the committee has the remit to inquire to the Labor Party and get information about his application —

Ms M.M. Quirk: It can't. Read the standing orders. Don't let the facts ruin your story.

Dr M.D. NAHAN: I know the member is trying to protect him.

The SPEAKER: Member for Girrawheen, I call you to order for the first time.

Dr M.D. NAHAN: We have to make sure that the committee has the remit to get access to the Western Australian Electoral Commission and to the member for Darling Range's application to the Labor Party, including all the statements put into it. What we are saying is that this has to be a wideranging investigation.

Ms M.M. Quirk: It can't be.

The SPEAKER: Member for Girrawheen, you have made your point.

Dr M.D. NAHAN: If it cannot be, then something else has to happen. Make a decision. The government has to have a wideranging investigation into how it put him there.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Members!

Dr M.D. NAHAN: As we said yesterday, we agree that this should be sent to the Procedure and Privileges Committee. We want a statement from the people. Obviously, from the responses to my inquiries and my speech here, the government wants to limit this to avoid scrutiny.

Mr R.H. Cook: Oh, you are pathetic. You really are pathetic.

Dr M.D. NAHAN: Why is the member for Darling Range here? You put him there. Now you have cut him loose, and you want to leave him high and dry and say, "We had nothing to do with it".

The SPEAKER: Leader of the Opposition, talk through the Chair. Members, I do not want any interjections, please.

Dr M.D. NAHAN: This is an example of absolutely pathetic leadership by the Premier—absolutely pathetic. He has been trying to avoid responsibility every inch of the way on this, as the government has across the board. It is leaving him high and dry. We say that this did not start today or yesterday, when the member resigned from the Labor Party. The issues need to go beyond that. We support the motion, but we need a commitment from the government that it will not truncate, delimit or avoid; the Procedure and Privileges Committee's inquiry must be wideranging.

MRS M.H. ROBERTS (Midland — Minister for Police) [10.12 am]: I rise to support the motion moved by the Premier today that this house requests the Procedure and Privileges Committee to consider and report back to the house by a date to be determined by the committee itself on whether there have been any breaches of privilege in relation to any statements made to the house by the member for Darling Range. This is an appropriate motion.

It is interesting, is it not, that the Leader of the Opposition has spent the time on his feet questioning the suitability of the member for Darling Range for the position that he holds; the thing I would question is the suitability of the Leader of the Opposition for the position that he actually holds. What he demonstrated in his speech today is how entirely unsuitable he is to lead any major political party in this state, how ignorant he is of the standing orders, and how ignorant he is of proper processes. He has suggested that somehow the Procedure and Privileges

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Committee is restricted to examining only matters referred to it by the house. The Procedure and Privileges Committee can examine any matter that properly fits within its remit. It is the master of its own destiny and it can choose where the inquiry appropriately takes it. On that very basic point, the Leader of the Opposition is wrong.

Further, the Leader of the Opposition has made some inane comments. He has suggested that I should personally find the personal file of the member for Darling Range. He came in here and said, “She couldn’t find it.” What nonsense; how embarrassing! How embarrassing to have this muppet for a leader who comes in here and says that I have not personally gone to Iron Mountain or the police archives, ferreted it out, examined it and compared it with the CV the member gave to the Labor Party and others.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Members! Leader of the Opposition! Member for South Perth!

Mrs M.H. ROBERTS: The member for Perth said it: corruption. You want to corrupt the system of government in this state. That is how you might have operated; they might have been the standards that you employed in government, but I have gone through a proper process. I advised the house last week that I had raised these issues with the Commissioner of Police and had called upon him to take what action he felt appropriate. He advised me at the time that he would take steps to secure the personal file and matters pertaining to the member for Darling Range.

I can now advise the house that last night I received a memo from Deputy Commissioner Stephen Brown. That memo was slightly amended this morning and I have been provided with a fresh memo. There are only a couple of very minor variations between what was sent to me last night and what I have been provided with this morning. Those variations are minor in matter. The earlier memo referred to police making inquiries with tertiary institutions. Now, more correctly, it refers to the Hertfordshire Constabulary assisting with that part of the assessment from its holdings; the police have not made direct inquiries, and the wording has been changed to reflect that. There was also a date changed from when Mr Urban graduated from the academy. Originally there was a specific date; now it is just 2006, because Mr Urban was a direct entry applicant.

I intend to inform the house fully and provide copies of both the earlier memo and this memo to the Procedure and Privileges Committee so it can consider whether there is any information that is appropriate to any inquiry it might want to conduct. The memo is brief, and it reads as follows —

ISSUE: MATTERS PERTAINING TO FORMER WA POLICE FORCE OFFICER, MR BARRY URBAN
MLA

KEY LINES:

- This briefing note supersedes the earlier briefing note dated 29 November 2017.
- Western Australian media outlets have suggested the police and military service qualifications and awards provided by former Western Australian Police Force member Mr Barry Urban MLA, Member for Darling Range, are not correct.
- Mr Urban is expected to make a statement relating to these allegations to the Parliament of Western Australia on Thursday 30 November 2017.

BACKGROUND:

The Commissioner of the Western Australian Police Force has requested an assessment be conducted into the recruitment and service history of Mr Urban.

CURRENT STATUS:

Senior investigators have undertaken an assessment of Mr Urban’s WA Police Force recruit application and employment files. The following documents held by WA Police Force for Urban have been secured and reviewed:

- Application file 30 July 2001.
- Application file 27 May 2005.
- WA Police Force Personnel file 2005 to 2012.

The documents establish the recruitment processes and service history of Mr Urban.

The files contain a number of documents relating to Mr Urban’s previous police and military service history in the United Kingdom.

Mr Urban commenced employment with the WA Police Force on 21/11/2005 as a Police Recruit, graduating in 2006. Mr Urban resigned from the WA Police Force on 21/08/2012, at which time he was deployed to Mundijong Police Station as a Senior Constable.

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To date, review of the documents by the WA Police Force, including inquiries made in the United Kingdom have not identified any criminality.

RECOMMENDATION:

At this point in time WA Police Force do not intend to undertake further investigation into this matter unless evidence of criminality is established.

The memo is stated to be current as at 29 November 2017 and endorsed by Stephen A. Brown, APM, Deputy Commissioner, Specialist Services. I would like to table that advice.

[See paper 1014.]

Mrs M.H. ROBERTS: Contrary to the ludicrous and desperate assertions from the Leader of the Opposition, proper process is taking place here. The proper people to make an assessment of Mr Urban's police record are the police themselves. If there are issues to be raised, they need to come from the police service—from the Commissioner of Police, his deputies, or whomever he allocates to do that task. Contrary to the assertions of the Leader of the Opposition, I have not swept this matter under the carpet, nor have I been derelict in my duties because I have not gone and done my own personal little search. That would just be so wrong, and so improper. I have said a couple of times in here that I am not about to run down and check through the records of the member for Kalgoorlie. I have no reason to believe that they are anything other than impeccable, but if anyone were to write in and raise an issue about the member for Kalgoorlie, or one of the former police officers in the upper house, or the former member Murray Cowper, saying that they had made a false assertion, or something was inaccurate about what they had been saying about their service history or whatever, I would not dash down and say that I need to review that record and compare it with other records that I have, or that I am going to grab their records and provide them to the Premier's office. It is very alarming that this is what the Leader of the Opposition is recommending. I doubt that he will be sitting there this time next year, because his performance today and over recent weeks has been totally and completely embarrassing and improper.

Let us utilise the proper processes here. The police are doing their investigations. The Procedure and Privileges Committee has a proper role here. The Premier has done the appropriate thing in moving the motion today to refer the matter to the Procedure and Privileges Committee. The Procedure and Privileges Committee is never limited by the reference that it gets at a particular time. It can expand inquiries on its own remit, or it can conduct a second inquiry of its own design if it believes there is cause to do so. There are proper processes in this house and in government, and the separation of powers between the police, the Parliament and the judiciary. These are established and proper processes. The Leader of the Opposition jumps in early every time and makes outrageous allegations, gets everything mixed up in some muddle and accuses people of things that are just not true. I have had to put up with him making allegations about me not following up with the Commissioner of Police, not conducting my own investigation, and not personally securing the file of Mr Urban. That is what happens in countries where corruption is rife. We are maintaining a high standard and following proper processes.

MR Z.R.F. KIRKUP (Dawesville) [10.23 am]: I rise to speak for the opposition in supporting this motion. It is important for all of us in this place to reflect on the statement made by the member for Darling Range today. I appreciate that we all have some concerns about its accuracy and the many questions that it did not answer, but there are comments from the member for Darling Range that we should all heed, and the opposition has done a good job thus far on a very complicated issue. It disappoints me and, I am sure, all members of this place that we have been informed of this issue, and been given a relatively sparse explanation from the member at such a late stage. We are now on the last day of this year's sittings. It has taken too long for us to be given information about the issues that have been raised about the member in public and in this place. Given the issues the member informed us today he is going through, and that the Premier previously informed the house about, I cannot imagine why it is a good thing that this has been stretched out for so long. I cannot imagine why it is a good thing that, since 8 November, when the Premier was first made aware of the matter—although, as he has let us know in this place, he has sought assurances since then and it only really became public after his trip to China—it has taken so long for us to come to any conclusion or receive any explanation from the member for Darling Range. That concerns me greatly.

It bothers me too that the only thing we got out of the member for Darling Range today was an admission that there were some inconsistencies in the claims he made about his diploma in local government. Many more questions have not been answered, and in fact more questions have now been raised because of the member's inconsistent statement today. It is important, given that the Premier has made the case to refer a former member of the Labor Party to the Procedure and Privileges Committee, that all of us take heed of the fact that the Premier and the government obviously have some reservations about the statement. I am curious about what they are, and I expect the Procedure and Privileges Committee to get to the bottom of it.

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It is disappointing that, after the great moral lecture we got from the member for Willagee about how members opposite stick by their mates, the government now does not believe the member for Darling Range and decides to send him off to the Procedure and Privileges Committee. It raises a question about what the government knows about why it should refer the member to the Procedure and Privileges Committee. The Premier must innately believe that the information provided to this house is not good enough. I question where the inconsistency is arising. Why has the Premier felt the need to refer the member to the Procedure and Privileges Committee? What does he know that is inconsistent or has not been made available to this house? When a member is referred to the Procedure and Privileges Committee, the case must be made that there is something wrong with the member's statement. For the Premier to take a very big step here, in stark contrast to the member for Willagee who previously said he stood by his great Labor mate regardless of the mistakes that he made, he obviously thinks there is something wrong with what the member for Darling Range said today. Perhaps there might be some issues with the claims that the member previously made in his inaugural speech about his police service. Perhaps there are some issues with the military service that the member has spoken about in not only his inaugural speech, but also in speeches given in this place on 20 and 22 June. A number of claims have also been made publicly by the member in his local *Examiner* newspapers about his police service, leading a team of investigators in Bosnia–Herzegovina. It is interesting to me that the motion does not seek to identify those issues, but simply refers to a matter of privilege.

It is important that the motion recognise the concerns of the public, and the Parliament of Western Australia, and indeed the concerns that the Premier of Western Australia must have to refer a former member of his party—a member only one day ago—to the Procedure and Privileges Committee. It is interesting to talk about those inconsistencies and what the Premier must know. Up until this point, the Premier has made a range of statements about his office's support for the member for Darling Range. I asked a question on 22 November, and in reply the Premier said —

My office sat down with the member for Darling Range to discuss his statement and make sure he clarified all the issues that were being asked of him.

That is normal practice. That would have happened when the member for Dawesville was an adviser to the former Premier when members had issues arise in respect of them; it happened a lot. That is normal life in politics. Issues arise in relation to people and they make contact with media advisers, who are more used to dealing with journalists, to make sure there is clarity and precision, as far as is possible, in respect of the information that is provided.

It is curious to me, and we in this place should all be interested; I suspect journalists would be, as would the people of Western Australia: if the Premier's office has been quite clearly providing support to the member for Darling Range, when did that support stop? After supporting the member for Darling Range for so long, why does the Premier feel compelled at this time to refer him to a powerful committee that can suspend the member for Darling Range for misleading this place or bringing it into disrepute? At some point in time, the Premier needed to turn off the tap of support for the member for Darling Range, and it will be interesting to learn on what date and at what point in time that occurred. The member for Willagee stood here, in a great foray to the inevitable leadership contest, saying that he stood by every single one of his Labor mates. The Premier of Western Australia stood by, saying he was using the resources of the entire Western Australian government to support the member for Darling Range. At some point in time that stopped and the Premier later referred that same member to the Procedure and Privileges Committee. Many questions are being asked that this place should seek to understand and apprise itself of. However, I also think the Premier needs to answer the many questions about his use of government resources to support a now Independent member.

It is interesting also that in this process, a day before I asked a question of the Premier, on 21 November the Premier said very clearly —

We are seeking the information, as I said. We will make it available when we see it.

I could be confused, members, but I am yet to see any information released from the Premier and the Western Australian Labor Party. We know that the ALP acting state secretary, Matt Dixon, had been sitting down with the member, trying to ascertain his length of service, the issues that were raised and the tertiary qualifications of the member, yet I have seen no information in the press, the public or this place confirming those details. In fact, it was unusual that the member for Darling Range in his statement today did not seek to once assert that he was a graduate of Leeds or Portsmouth universities. He did not once seek to assert his claims in the press on 17 June, I think it was, when he said he led a war crimes investigation team. All he had to do was simply say that and the onus of proof would have been reversed. The Parliament and the Procedure and Privileges Committee would be in a position to find out whether those claims are correct but, simply, the member did not. It is interesting that the member for Darling Range made that statement today but did not seek to assert any of the previous

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statements he has made. I suspect that could perhaps be because if he made them, he would know that he was misleading the Parliament yet again. Indeed, the greater and larger question that now needs to be answered, which we have been seeking the whole time this entire debate has been going, for 22-odd days, is the role of the Premier, the Western Australian government and the Premier's office in supporting the member for Darling Range and at what point in time they stopped supporting him. We have not, contrary to the statements made by the Premier, seen any information released publicly. Unfortunately, at some point in time the Premier's office made a decision, perhaps arbitrarily or perhaps after finding out too much, that they no longer wanted to support the member for Darling Range. The flip side of that coin is that, indeed, they have been continuing to provide support to the member for Darling Range, and perhaps provided support in crafting his statement today, yet the statement has not been good enough and so they are seeking to refer the member to the Procedure and Privileges Committee. There are two situations: the Premier and the government of Western Australia continued to provide support to the member for Darling Range up until this very day, up until perhaps crafting the media statement, which again they seem to have taken issue with and which is, thus, the basis for the referral today, or they have stopped. At what point in time did that occur? It should cause concern for all members opposite that at some point in time their leader decided to support one of their team and then at some point in time he came across information, which he is not letting the house know about, that caused him to stop providing that support, or arbitrarily stopped providing support to what the member for Willagee called one of their great Labor mates.

I am aware, as all members in this place will be, that the member for Darling Range stood in 2013; he stood again in 2017. Much has been said about the Labor Party's background certainly in relation to the federal candidacy issue and federal members' citizenship status. Quite clearly, the Labor Party is claiming it has a great vetting system. I wonder about the extent to which that has occurred because clearly many claims have been made by the member for Darling Range that are inconsistent with the information that is public and with what the Parliament knows, and it warrants investigation by the Procedure and Privileges Committee. I believe it should go also to the extent to which the Premier's office and the government of Western Australia helped provide support to the member for Darling Range—what they discovered and at what point in time that support stopped.

MS M.J. DAVIES (Central Wheatbelt — Leader of the National Party) [10.35 am]: I rise very briefly to advise that the Nationals will be supporting this referral motion. It is indeed a grave and serious matter that this house is considering. It is very disheartening to think that one of the members of this place has brought into question the integrity of everyone who sits in this place. When that happens it really does force the public to question whether or not we all operate like that. It is disheartening when we have to have these types of discussions instead of focussing on things that we need to be getting on with in the business of the house and making sure that this state is running.

I believe the now Independent member for Darling Range will have to reconcile this matter with his electorate, and I imagine that will be very difficult. I cannot imagine, having heard only a part of the story this morning, walking down any of the main streets of the communities in my electorate and being able to explain or reconcile what has happened in the run-up to the election and now, beyond that, having taken a pay packet as a member of Parliament, standing in this place, and, potentially, as the Procedure and Privileges Committee has the right to investigate, on false premise. That is why it is appropriate that the Procedure and Privileges Committee has an opportunity to investigate these matters. I again say that it is incredibly disheartening that we have to spend the last day of this sitting year debating this matter.

The member has provided an explanation to the house which, in the view of members of the National Party, been found to be wanting. It has not answered the questions that have been put by the opposition over the past two weeks. It has not answered the questions raised by the media and certainly none that have been raised in the broader community. It was his opportunity to put some of these things to rest and it has been found wanting. I believe that the opposition has been correct in pursuing not only the questions that it has been raising but the involvement of the government and the Premier's involvement, because he was a member of the Labor Party when he came to this place. It is now the role of the Procedure and Privileges Committee to investigate that. That is right and proper and we support the referral to that committee.

MRS L.M. HARVEY (Scarborough — Deputy Leader of the Opposition) [10.37 am]: I, too, rise to support this motion. However, I think the referral motion is limiting and I will be proposing an amendment to the motion, which I hope the government will support. This is a very serious matter. What we have seen in this place by this Premier is a contempt for this Parliament. Here we are on the last day of the sitting year. Yesterday, we had a long debate about referring the member for Darling Range to the Procedure and Privileges Committee, but the Premier and the government refused to support that motion. This matter could have been dealt with yesterday. Now we have business before the house and another suspension of standing orders, this time by the government, for the same referral—referring the same member to the privileges committee. What changed between yesterday and today?

Mr Mark McGowan; Dr Mike Nahan; Dr Tony Buti; Deputy Speaker; Mr Bill Johnston; Ms Jessica Shaw; Mr Bill Marmion; Mr Matthew Hughes; Mrs Michelle Roberts; Mr Zak Kirkup; Ms Mia Davies; Mrs Liza Harvey; Ms Rita Saffioti; Mr Colin Barnett

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Members, I will hear this in silence. It is a very serious issue.

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: Mr Speaker —

Ms S.E. Winton: He made a statement today.

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: Why do you not get up and seek the call!

The SPEAKER: Member for Wanneroo, I call you to order for the first time. Member for Scarborough, speak through the Chair, please.

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: I will not go back over all the issues that have brought us to this point. The issues with respect to the member for Darling Range's claims, both to get elected to this place and his credentials to the constituency of Darling Range, have been well canvassed in the media and in this place. Hopefully, they will also be well canvassed by the privileges committee. What was significantly lacking in the member for Darling Range's explanation to this Parliament about his actions was an apology to his constituency.

Several members interjected.

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: They elected him based on a series of —

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Members!

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: Once again, we see from those opposite a deliberate attempt to stop the opposition interrogating these matters with all these inane interjections. I have something to say about this matter, but all we get are attempts from the government to shut down debate. I know government members are trying to do that because this is embarrassing for the Premier. It is embarrassing because the Premier has failed to show leadership on this matter and the stunt he has pulled today in referring this matter to the Procedure and Privileges Committee is because he is now trying to take the lead.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: All right, members, the next person who interjects, I will call you to order. I keep telling you that this is the most serious thing that can happen to a member of Parliament. Let us have some decorum from both sides of the house.

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: Thank you, Mr Speaker.

That is the issue that the opposition has been raising over the past few weeks. We have been asking the Premier to show some leadership on this matter and the fact is he has not. He has been sitting on the fence; he was hoping it would go away; he did not commence any investigation; and he is still silent about whether he requested that the member for Darling Range resign from the Labor Party. We found that out yesterday midway through question time. If that was not orchestrated, I do not know what was. Midway through question time, suddenly there is a media release saying that the member for Darling Range had resigned from the committees of the Parliament that he was representing the Labor Party on, and resigned from the Labor Party—very convenient! The Labor Party brand gets protected.

Ms A. Sanderson interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Morley!

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: Now that he is no longer a member of the Labor Party in this Parliament, he gets a referral by this Premier to the Procedure and Privileges Committee. Now the Labor brand cannot be tarnished as part of this process. That is what the Labor Party is trying to achieve. We have seen this contempt and stunts like this from day one with this government. Now the parliamentary process is being manipulated so the Premier can look like he is taking a lead on an issue.

Ms A. Sanderson interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Morley, I call you to order for the first time.

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: Now the parliamentary process is being manipulated to make it look as though the Premier is taking the lead on a very significant issue on the actions of one of the members of the Labor Party. To say that he is no longer a member of the Labor Party is interesting when he arrived at Parliament today in the presence of the acting secretary of the Labor Party, Mr Dixon. If he was in the car all the way from Darling Range to Parliament, did they not discuss what would be in that apology? Did the acting secretary of the Labor Party not say to the member for Darling Range, "This apology is woefully inadequate; it does not cover enough of the

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issues”? Did they give him advice or did they leave it to the member for Darling Range, no doubt in a very stressed state of mind, to draft that apology, that explanation, to Parliament. Knowing it was woefully inadequate, they let him come in here and stand up and deliver it, when it did not cover all the issues. Then the Premier said, “Perfect—an inadequate apology to Parliament; we’ll throw him under a bus and refer him to the privileges committee now and I’ll look like I’m a strong leader.” Supporting your member is providing them with advice and ensuring that when they stand in this place and give a personal explanation, it covers all the criteria you would expect of a respected member of Parliament. That is what you would expect.

I would have thought that if the acting secretary of the Labor Party was in the car with the member for Darling Range, he might have provided some advice to the member for Darling Range and advised him: “This will not hit the mark; you need to reword this. This needs to cover off on all the issues that have been raised in the media or you will find yourself in front of the privileges committee because it will not cover the areas it needs to cover.” But no—not the Premier, nor the government or the Labor Party provided the member for Darling Range with the advice he needed to give an appropriate apology to this place. Now that they have cut him off, they are sending him to the Procedure and Privileges Committee, which is the right thing; that is where the member for Darling Range needs to be referred. I find the government’s action appalling.

The Minister for Veterans Issues gave an impassioned support to the member for Darling Range. Where was he when the member for Darling Range was giving his apology—his personal explanation? He was hiding behind the Chair. He was hiding; hovering behind the Chair.

Point of Order

Mr W.J. JOHNSTON: It is well-known practice in this house that you do not reflect on where another member is during debate. With respect, I have been here and made some points about other members and have had the exact same issue raised with me. It is not appropriate —

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Members! I will hear the point of order in silence. You might not agree but let them put their case first.

Mr W.J. JOHNSTON: It is not appropriate for the member to say those words. Further, it is a reflection on the member and therefore is also a breach of the standing orders.

The SPEAKER: Member, I do not have the standing order, but it is a standard that since I have been in Parliament you do not comment on members who are not in the chamber. It is not a point of order; it is just a standard that has been here for a long time, since I have been here.

Debate Resumed

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: Thank you, Mr Speaker.

Amendment to Motion

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: Let us get to this referral to the privileges committee. The wording of this motion reads —

That this house requests the Procedures and Privileges Committee to consider and report back to the house by a date to be determined by the committee itself whether there have been breaches of privilege in relation to any statements made to the house by the member for Darling Range.

I think that is too narrow, so do the other people on this side of the house, because it confines the privileges committee to look at breaches of privileges in relation to statements made to this house, so I have an amendment. I move —

After “Darling Range”, to add the following —

, and whether the member for Darling Range is a fit and proper person to serve as a member of the house in light of the representations he has made, both inside and outside the Parliament, as to his career and qualifications

I move this amendment because in adding those words, the Procedure and Privileges Committee can clearly canvass the representations the member for Darling Range has made to his Darling Range constituency, which elected him on the basis of those representations. If we confine the investigation and terms of reference of this referral to the privileges committee only to what has been said in this house—the member for Darling Range has made a small number of speeches in this house as well as his explanation—that is all the committee can interrogate. The opposition, the community of Western Australia and, I believe, the Darling Range constituency deserve a broader inquiry into all the claims made by the member for Darling Range that had him occupy a seat in this chamber in the first place. The Procedure and Privileges Committee is the appropriate committee to look at that.

Mr Mark McGowan; Dr Mike Nahan; Dr Tony Buti; Deputy Speaker; Mr Bill Johnston; Ms Jessica Shaw; Mr Bill Marmion; Mr Matthew Hughes; Mrs Michelle Roberts; Mr Zak Kirkup; Ms Mia Davies; Mrs Liza Harvey; Ms Rita Saffioti; Mr Colin Barnett

I hope the government will agree to this. This will enable a full and proper canvassing of all the claims the member for Darling Range has made and it will help the committee inform this Parliament whether the member for Darling Range is in fact a fit and proper person to be in this place.

I do not have much further to say on that. I think the words I have requested be added speak for themselves. I am interested to hear whether the government agrees to the rounding out of this referral to the Procedure and Privileges Committee and why it would do so, because it is clear that adding those words will enhance the ability for the committee to inquire into a range of different aspects of the member for Darling Range's behaviour. I think this Parliament, the community of Western Australia, the Darling Range constituency, and, indeed, the police constituency and the veterans' constituency in Western Australia want to know fully and accurately the truth about the member for Darling Range, what we can believe about him and how he got to this place. In doing so, all members of Parliament can then learn from whatever that inquiry recommends to this Parliament.

DR M.D. NAHAN (Riverton — Leader of the Opposition) [10.48 am]: I stand in support of this amendment. This is an important issue. It is less than a year—10 months—since the election and when the member for Darling Range was elected to the seat of Darling Range. He has been there a very short period, as the Deputy Leader of the Opposition said, and he has made a few speeches in this house, besides his speech today. I take it from the Premier's decision to send it to the privileges committee that he believes, as we do, that the member's explanation today was inadequate. I assure members that the people of Darling Range will think the same thing. The member for Darling Range has been here a short time, he has said very little, his speech was inadequate, and it goes to the heart—as I said before, the core—of his suitability to remain here as a member of Parliament. That is what needs to be investigated. That is what the amendment says: is he a fit and proper person to serve as a member of the house?

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: If members want to have a meeting, go outside the chamber, please.

Dr M.D. NAHAN: The essential thing is that we do not represent just ourselves in this house. The member is acting on behalf of the electorate of Darling Range. I assure members that the electorate wants to know not only what he said in this house, but also what he said to them. Clearly, the Premier agrees, if he is honest with us, that there are questions to be answered.

Mr M. McGowan interjected.

The SPEAKER: Premier!

Dr M.D. NAHAN: The real issue here is that we need to go beyond what the member said in here. We need to go beyond the process that has been machined by the Premier to avoid scrutiny of himself and his government. The Deputy Leader of the Opposition indicated quite clearly that the Premier's motion has been carefully crafted by the Premier's office and the Labor Party to avoid scrutiny on their role in this. Their role was putting the member for Darling Range here in the first place. The people of Darling Range want the Premier and us, on their behalf, to ensure that the member for Darling Range's statements made to them, upon which he was elected to Darling Range 10 months ago, are accurate. They want to know whether he is a fit and proper person to remain as an Independent member, as it turns out. Do they want him to be paid as their representative for the next three years? The member for Darling Range said that there is a pathway back to the Labor Party. The Labor Party put him there on certain claims and he intends, as I understand it, to be the Independent member for Darling Range for the next three years. The question we have is: is he a fit and proper person to remain in this place? In order to ascertain that, we have to go to the claims that the member for Darling Range and the Labor Party made to the people of Darling Range in the run-up to the election, during the election and since. That is all we ask. That is legitimate because that is the essence here. It has to be inside and outside this house.

We also have to investigate the claims that the member for Darling Range made to the Labor Party when it preselected him. He is here at the behest of the Labor Party. He would not be here without the Labor Party. This is simple. I think it is easy to agree to this proposed amendment. It expands the Premier's motion. The people of Darling Range and the community of Western Australia want to know not only what he said in this house, but also whether what he said inside and outside this house, upon which he was elected, is accurate and therefore whether he is a fit and proper person. It is a very simple and adequate amendment. We want to ensure it is not too narrow. It is what the people of Western Australia want us to do.

As we know, and as inferred by other speakers, the profession of politicians is not very highly rated in the public right now. It has not been for a while, but it is really low. People are saying in Canberra and elsewhere: How did he get there? Why is he there? How does this happen? In Canberra, people are leaving. People in the community

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are asking—this is a decision for the government because it has the numbers—whether the government wants to act on behalf of the people of Western Australia and go to the real core issue here: is he a fit and proper person to remain as a member of this house given what he said to the electorate before the election, since the election, and inside and outside this house? That is the core question they want us to investigate. Anything narrower means the government is trying to avoid scrutiny. This is an adequate and appropriate, indeed a necessary, amendment for the purposes of this house.

MS R. SAFFIOTI (West Swan — Minister for Transport) [10.54 am]: I rise to speak to the amendment. What we have seen today is a Premier who has taken unprecedented strong leadership on this issue. It has left the opposition with nowhere to go. It has left the opposition floundering, so it created this amendment, which basically impacts the ability of the Procedure and Privileges Committee to do its job. The committee has a role, and it will do its job well, and the Liberal Party has a member on that committee. Both parties have two members. The role of members is to provide advice and input to that committee. That committee will examine all the issues. That is what we are doing. It is actually unprecedented that the Premier today refers a former Labor member to that committee. It is a level of accountability and transparency that the former government never delivered!

Let us go through it. The member for Scarborough stands and questions the Minister for Police's role in this. The member for Scarborough was the Minister for Police when one of her cabinet colleagues drove drunk through Subiaco in a government car, impacting houses and cars along the way.

Mrs L.M. Harvey: And he was investigated!

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: You did nothing about it. You covered it up. You are telling me —
Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Members, I repeat: this is a very serious issue. Minister, talk through the Chair, please.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: That was never referred to the Procedure and Privileges Committee, was it? Was that ever referred?

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Members!

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: The member for Scarborough comes in here and really believes that when she was Minister for Police, she had no idea that was happening.

Mrs L.M. Harvey interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Scarborough!

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Scarborough, I protected you when you were on your feet. You might not like what you hear, but that is what is going to happen. Through the Chair, please, minister.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: The member for Scarborough came in here and basically said, "Stop chasing the member for Vasse. Stop chasing and tormenting; give him time to make a statement. Give him time." And remember, at least the member for Darling Range stayed in the state for the past couple of weeks, unlike the member she was protecting. On this issue, the member for Scarborough never made it clear about the communication between her and the commissioner and the rest of government. She played a key role in hiding that issue and has never been transparent to this place. We know that.

Mrs L.M. Harvey: I acted absolutely properly.

The SPEAKER: Member for Scarborough, I have warned you. You have had your say and I protected you. Now I will protect the minister.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: The level of accountability we are showing for the member for Darling Range is unprecedented. We will go through every comment the member for Scarborough made on that issue and we will see if we believe she was telling the truth and maybe we will refer that issue once again to the committee to exactly examine all her comments.

The member for Central Wheatbelt said that the member for Darling Range was voted in as a Labor member and now, as a result of him not being a Labor member, that is a major issue and he was voted in on false pretences!

Several members interjected.

Mr Mark McGowan; Dr Mike Nahan; Dr Tony Buti; Deputy Speaker; Mr Bill Johnston; Ms Jessica Shaw; Mr Bill Marmion; Mr Matthew Hughes; Mrs Michelle Roberts; Mr Zak Kirkup; Ms Mia Davies; Mrs Liza Harvey; Ms Rita Saffioti; Mr Colin Barnett

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: The member should look behind her!

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Members!

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: The member for Central Wheatbelt said that the member for Darling Range was voted in on false pretences, yet the former government appointed the member for North West Central to a parliamentary secretary position in the Parliament. That is what it did. Member for Dawesville —

Ms M.J. Davies interjected.

The SPEAKER: Leader of the National Party, you cannot have it both ways. You attack this side and they attack you back, but you have got to take it.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: The member for Dawesville is very interested in what happens in the Premier's office, because we know that he used to be in the former Premier's office. There he was in the Subiaco Hotel with Mr Larsson —

Mr V.A. Catania interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for North West Central, I call you to order for the first and second times. The second time, I was on my feet. I do not care what happens over this side. The minister has the call.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: The member for Dawesville is very interested in what happens in the Premier's office. When members opposite were in government, he was at the Subiaco Hotel with Mr Larsson. Mr Larsson was texting —

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Members!

Ms S.E. Winton interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Wanneroo!

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: You were there with Mr Larsson —

Mr Z.R.F. Kirkup interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Dawesville! You just had a go on that side; accept what is coming.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: The member for Dawesville was texting that the member for Rockingham was at the Subiaco Hotel; actually Mr Larsson was, and the member for Dawesville did not know what he was texting. You were sitting there talking to him but you did not know what he was texting. Somehow Mr Larsson was sacked for that but you survived. You sat there with him or next to him —

Mr Z.R.F. Kirkup: Opposite.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: Opposite. The two of you were there.

Mr Z.R.F. Kirkup interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Dawesville!

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: After, you both talked to Mr Pontifex and said that you had seen the member for Rockingham at the hotel. He was there texting away but, of course, the member for Dawesville did not get a penalty for that. No, Mr Larsson did.

I turn to the Leader of the Opposition and his shareholdings. As a minister, he held shares in companies for which he was making financial decisions. It is as clear-cut as that and, as a result, nothing happened. Was the matter referred to the Procedure and Privileges Committee? No. Was it referred to anything? No, it was not because of the good bloke principle—he is a good bloke, let him go. We have gone through what happened with the member for Bateman on numerous occasions. The level of accountability and transparency on this side is far greater than anything they ever established and delivered. The Premier has made a very tough decision. This is not an easy decision for the Labor Party.

Ms L. Mettam interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Vasse.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: It was a hard decision, and it was made after the Premier felt that the statement made by the member for Darling Range today was not suitable. That is what happened. It was a very, very tough decision and, of course, it has impacted on members on this side. It was a tough decision. When the Premier stood and made

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that tough decision, the opposition was left floundering so it came up with this stupid amendment, an amendment that pre-empts the committee work. We have put this motion to Parliament to refer the member for Darling Range to the committee so that the committee can investigate all these issues. That is the strong thing to do and it is the right thing to do.

I refer to what members opposite have shown today in their performances. They came in and basically said that it is the right decision, but it is the wrong decision. Members opposite could not maintain a constant argument in their speeches. They said that the government has done the right thing, but because we are not backing up our mate, we have done the wrong thing.

Mrs L.M. Harvey: No. You took steps in the right direction but it wasn't far enough.

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

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: Steps in the right direction! We know how members opposite did it—cover up, cover up, cover up! That is what they did. There was scandal after scandal—cover up, cover up, cover up. We have made a very tough decision today. We reject the amendment and we believe the committee should be given the ability to investigate the issues at hand.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Members!

MR C.J. BARNETT (Cottesloe) [11.03 am]: I have been fairly quiet for me, but this has degenerated into a race to the bottom. It is not a good day for this Parliament. It has been a race to the bottom.

There is more than a little bit of doubt about the member for Darling Range's credibility. I do not think anyone in this Parliament could deny that. Certainly, after listening to the radio this morning, his constituents are of that view. There are serious doubts about the credibility of his account of his police service, his military service perhaps, his qualifications and his right to wear service medals. He has made comments publicly, which have been reported publicly, and he has made comments in this house.

Yesterday, the Deputy Leader of the Opposition made the point that this matter is about not only the member for Darling Range, but also the standing of all members, the quality and standing of this Parliament and the right of the public to get to the truth, whatever it might be. I do not think anyone has suggested any criminality. I certainly have not and I do not think that is the case. But there is an issue: is he a fit and proper person to be a member of this Parliament? The decision to refer the matter to the Procedure and Privileges Committee is the right decision. The member for Darling Range had an opportunity to speak this morning—I would have thought at a little more length—to provide either a full explanation or a full apology. He did neither. The referral motion moved by the Premier is to simply send the matter to the Procedure and Privileges Committee to determine whether he breached privilege. Fair enough; that question can be asked, but it is a pretty lame referral. This is a far more serious issue than that. The amendment moved by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition is entirely appropriate because the public wants to know the answer to this and the 26 000 electors in Darling Range have a right to know whether their member, the person they voted for, is a fit and proper member of Parliament and, indeed, whether he is a fit and proper representative for Darling Range. The government should accept this amendment and ensure that the intention of this Parliament is a full and proper investigation of the claims he has made. He may be exonerated on some matters and may not be on other matters. But all those matters should be clearly made and the intent of this house is that it be looked at properly, not whether he breached the privileges of the house. That is lame.

The Procedure and Privileges Committee can do a number of things depending on what it determines. It can call members to appear before it. It could call the Premier. I would be interested to know whether he would agree to appear before the privileges committee. It will certainly call the member for Darling Range and maybe others. People are speaking their mind and making all sorts of claims and accusations in this house; be a little temperate. I do not think they would want to be drawn as witnesses before the privileges committee. They need to think about that. Whatever the privileges committee finds, it should look at all the issues in detail so that the intent of this house is clear. It is true that it can inquire into what it wants to, but this house should at least have the integrity to display its intent in the motion that is accepted. I strongly recommend that all members support this amendment. It is a proper amendment and one that should go forward. When the privileges committee has made its deliberations and spoken to whomever it wishes, it can do a number of things. As I said, it may exonerate the member for Darling Range on some or all of the matters. It will refer its recommendations back to this house and the house might choose to suspend him, which has happened to previous members over time. It will be a decision of this house; it will not be a decision of the privileges committee. It will come to each and every one of you. You will have to make the decision as to whether the member is exonerated, suspended or

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Mr Mark McGowan; Dr Mike Nahan; Dr Tony Buti; Deputy Speaker; Mr Bill Johnston; Ms Jessica Shaw; Mr Bill Marmion; Mr Matthew Hughes; Mrs Michelle Roberts; Mr Zak Kirkup; Ms Mia Davies; Mrs Liza Harvey; Ms Rita Saffioti; Mr Colin Barnett

expelled from Parliament. It will come back to you, members, so be a little moderate in thinking about what you are going to do when that recommendation comes here. But the very thing that we should be doing today is making sure that a full and strong motion and referral to the privileges committee is endorsed by this house, not the lame one that has been proposed. I urge all members to do the proper thing and send a strong referral because this is not a minor issue.

A government member interjected.

Mr C.J. BARNETT: I was referred to the Procedure and Privileges Committee because my son, it was alleged by the Labor Party, had a conflict of interest in his career. It was completely false. It was a trivial thing for political reasons. This is not a trivial thing at all and we should do our job properly today.

Division

Amendment put and a division taken with the following result —

Ayes (15)

Mr C.J. Barnett	Mrs L.M. Harvey	Mr W.R. Marmion	Mr K. O'Donnell
Mr I.C. Blayney	Mr Z.R.F. Kirkup	Mr J.E. McGrath	Mr P.J. Rundle
Mr V.A. Catania	Mr A. Krsticevic	Dr M.D. Nahan	Ms L. Mettam (<i>Teller</i>)
Ms M.J. Davies	Mr R.S. Love	Mr D.C. Nalder	

Noes (38)

Ms L.L. Baker	Mr W.J. Johnston	Mr P. Papalia	Mrs J.M.C. Stojkovski
Dr A.D. Buti	Mr D.J. Kelly	Mr S.J. Price	Mr C.J. Tallentire
Mr J.N. Carey	Mr F.M. Logan	Mr D.T. Punch	Mr D.A. Templeman
Mrs R.M.J. Clarke	Mr M. McGowan	Mr J.R. Quigley	Mr P.C. Tinley
Mr R.H. Cook	Ms S.F. McGurk	Ms M.M. Quirk	Mr R.R. Whitby
Ms J. Farrer	Mr K.J.J. Michel	Mrs M.H. Roberts	Ms S.E. Winton
Mr M.J. Folkard	Mr S.A. Millman	Ms C.M. Rowe	Mr B.S. Wyatt
Ms J.M. Freeman	Mr Y. Mubarakai	Ms R. Saffioti	Mr D.R. Michael (<i>Teller</i>)
Ms E. Hamilton	Mr M.P. Murray	Ms A. Sanderson	
Mr M. Hughes	Mr L.M. O'Malley	Ms J.J. Shaw	

Pair

Mr S.K. L'Estrange

Mr T.J. Healy

Amendment thus negated.

Motion Resumed

MR M. McGOWAN (Rockingham — Premier) [11.13 am] — in reply: The government hopes that the motion that was moved by me earlier today will be supported by the house. According to the statements of the opposition, it will be supporting the motion that I moved to refer the matters concerning the member for Darling Range to the Procedure and Privileges Committee. We need to get a little bit of an explanation around the order of what has occurred in order for there to be a proper summation of the reasons behind what has gone on.

As I have indicated to the house on a number of occasions, I heard about the alleged issue involving the medal on 8 November. I went and spoke to the member for Darling Range. He assured me that there was no veracity to claims surrounding the medal. I then put the matter out of my mind, assuming what the member for Darling Range had told me was correct. That happened 22 days ago or thereabouts. When the opposition says that this matter has been going on for 22 days, that is the context. The member advised me that there was nothing to it and I put the matter out of my mind because I took him at face value. Then, during my visit to China, the journalist Mr Gary Adshead raised the matter at dinner one evening. I said to him at dinner, "Barry's informed me there's nothing to it. You're barking up the wrong tree" or something to that effect. Upon my arrival back in Australia, the issue broke, and that was last week. So when the opposition says that we have dragged our feet and that this matter has been going on for all these weeks, it has essentially been a public issue since *The West Australian* article Saturday week ago; that is how long it has been a public issue. I said that we should wait to hear from the member for Darling Range before this Parliament decides what it might do about these matters. That is a simple matter of natural justice and treating a fellow parliamentarian with basic decency; that is all it is.

The member for Darling Range came to the Parliament this morning. I am sure it was a very difficult experience for him. He provided an explanation to the house about the matters that had been raised and I heard his statement,

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as did other members. As I said earlier, I believe that his statement was nowhere near comprehensive enough and did not address some of the matters that he had raised in this Parliament about himself and, therefore, because of that, and because of the significant public interest in these matters, it was appropriate that it be referred to the Procedure and Privileges Committee for its inquiry. Today the government has referred that matter to the Procedure and Privileges Committee so that it can examine the member for Darling Range's claims about himself in this Parliament. I have never before seen a Premier in this place do that about one of their own members. When matters came forward about Mr Buswell during the course of the last government that involved criminality, and serious criminality, the former government just tried to cover it up; that is what happened. Staff members were involved and we learnt today that the Minister for Police was involved because she admitted it. The former government attempted to cover those matters up, and you tried to cover it up too!

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Members! Member for Cottesloe!

Mr M. McGOWAN: You covered it up, criminality by —

Mr C.J. Barnett interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Cottesloe, I am on my feet. I call you to order for the first time.

Mr M. McGOWAN: Then the opposition attempted to amend the motion referring the matter to the Procedure and Privileges Committee with the intention, according to the wording, of working out whether the member for Darling Range should be expelled from the Parliament. That is what it is—expel from the Parliament. I have had a look at expulsions from Parliaments. According to my research, it has happened once in the history of Federation. In 1920, the federal member for Kalgoorlie, Mr Hugh Mahon, was expelled from the federal Parliament for sedition. With the member for Darling Range, there is no serious argument that he is corrupt; there is no serious argument that he is a criminal. The argument is that he has misled and not told the truth. That is serious, but I do not think it warrants expulsion from the Parliament in the same way that a serious issue of criminality or corruption would potentially warrant that sort of conclusion or consequence. All I am saying to the Parliament is that we have treated this matter seriously.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Members!

Mr M. McGOWAN: Honestly, Leader of the Opposition, there you were last term, dealing with matters involving shareholdings you owned, benefiting yourself with decisions you were making, and you have no right to claim any moral high ground with respect to anything!

Dr M.D. Nahan interjected.

The SPEAKER: Leader of the Opposition, you had your opportunity to speak. I call you to order for the first time.

Mr M. McGOWAN: Therefore, I have referred the matters involving the member for Darling Range to the committee for its examination so that it can get to the bottom of statements he has made to the house, which is a fair matter of privilege. These are matters of privilege. Members should think about the name of the committee: it is the Procedure and Privileges Committee. It examines matters before the house and statements to the house and perhaps declarations made to the house that might be inaccurate. They are the sorts of things that committee would examine. It does not go into a member's life history. It is not a committee that examines a member's life history and everything they might have said or done for the duration of their life. It does not examine those things; that is outside its remit. It is outside of 400 years of parliamentary history to allege that that is what it should do. It says something about opposition members that they do not understand the fundamentals of the Westminster system. If they read this book about parliamentary practice based upon 400 years of Westminster history, they will find that it is very clear that the Procedure and Privileges Committee examines matters before the house. That is what it does. If people have allegations of corruption or criminality, they should take them to the police or to the Corruption and Crime Commission. To say that the résumé of everyone in here should be examined by that committee is, frankly, ridiculous. That is what members opposite have alleged. Then they moved a motion saying that this place should contemplate the expulsion of a member of Parliament. I could go through a range of actions of opposition members that could be referred to the committee, and we could contemplate their expulsion. It is certainly outside of my experience in this place for an opposition to suggest such a thing. However, if that is the way it wants to run these things, it is certainly open to the government to look at that way of examining these matters.

Let us imagine an MP signed a declaration as part of one party, was elected using the funds of that party on the basis that they were —

Mr Mark McGowan; Dr Mike Nahan; Dr Tony Buti; Deputy Speaker; Mr Bill Johnston; Ms Jessica Shaw; Mr Bill Marmion; Mr Matthew Hughes; Mrs Michelle Roberts; Mr Zak Kirkup; Ms Mia Davies; Mrs Liza Harvey; Ms Rita Saffioti; Mr Colin Barnett

Mr V.A. Catania interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order! Member for North West Central, I do not care.

Mr M. McGOWAN: Let us imagine that an MP was elected to this place and signed a declaration that they were to remain a member of the party that elected them, using the funds of that party to secure their election, and then changed parties halfway through the term. Let us imagine that occurred. Is that not a fraud on the people who voted for that member? Is that not fraudulent to the political party that supported them?

Several members interjected.

Mr V.A. Catania interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order! Member for North West Central, that is your third call to order.

Mr M. McGOWAN: That would be fraudulent to the people and the party that elected that person and, according to the opposition's logic, that would be entirely appropriate for the Procedure and Privileges Committee to examine with a view to whether that person was a fit and proper person to be a member of this place. That is entirely a matter that the committee should examine.

Let us imagine that a minister was making decisions about matters involving their own shareholdings.

Mr B.S. Wyatt: Hypothetically, of course.

Mr M. McGOWAN: Yes, hypothetically. Let us imagine that that was going on and that it was benefiting themselves and they were having meetings with business partners in order to benefit from their own shareholding interest. Let us imagine that that was taking place. That may well be a matter that should be referred to the Procedure and Privileges Committee according to the logic of members opposite. They are the sorts of things that can and may be referred in the future. Let us imagine that a member was not totally honest about their declaration and subsequently submitted additions to their declaration. They are the sorts of things that perhaps the Procedure and Privileges Committee could look at.

The government has been more than scrupulous here. We allowed the member for Darling Range to make his statement to the Parliament today to explain himself.

Dr M.D. Nahan interjected.

The SPEAKER: Leader of the Opposition!

Mr M. McGOWAN: We have said, and I have said, that it was not comprehensive enough and it was not good enough.

Dr M.D. Nahan interjected.

The SPEAKER: The member for Dawesville is the only one laughing, so it could not have been funny.

Mr M. McGOWAN: We have allowed the member for Darling Range to make his statement to the Parliament today. We gave him some space over the past 10 days or so since this matter arose to organise his thoughts and get his evidence together and come before the Parliament today to make a statement. I heard the statement and other members heard the statement and I think we agree that it was not comprehensive enough so we moved to refer it to the Procedure and Privileges Committee, as is appropriate. I give just one bit of advice to the Procedure and Privileges Committee: take account of what the member for Darling Range said about post-traumatic stress disorder when conducting any inquiries in relation to that matter. I think it is beyond dispute that the member served in the British Army and in the police force and people who have had that background often see or do things that affect them. All I am saying is give him that little bit of room and understanding in relation to those matters. The Procedure and Privileges Committee can now examine matters that are appropriately considered privileges before this house, because statements in this house are appropriately considered part of the privileges of this house.

That is what the government has done. I think it is appropriate. That is in accordance with good standards. It is in accordance with natural justice and I think it is in accordance with community expectation. People across Western Australia and the Parliament should now let the Procedure and Privileges Committee do its appropriate work.

Members: Hear, hear!

Question put and passed.