

ELECTRICITY AND WATER PRICES — INCREASES

**192. Dr M.D. NAHAN to the Premier:**

I refer to the Premier's comments this time last year that a three per cent increase in electricity prices was "mean spirited penny pinching" and an attack on families and seniors. What does that make the government's 10.9 per cent increase in electricity prices and 6.9 per cent increase in water prices, which will add \$266 to the expenses of an average WA household?

**Mr M. McGOWAN replied:**

It is true that today the Treasurer has announced an increase in charges for electricity and for water. Those increases in charges for electricity and water are a direct result of the financial catastrophe inflicted —

*Point of Order*

**Mr S.K. L'ESTRANGE:** The Minister for Child Protection is holding up a poster of some description, which is unparliamentary.

**The SPEAKER:** Unless you have permission to bring that into the chamber, you cannot hold it up.

**Ms S.F. McGURK:** It is an A3 piece of paper. I was not aware that I was not allowed to have that.

**The SPEAKER:** Members, something like that can be used only by the member who is on their feet, so I suggest that everyone else who has a nice bit of paper in their hand, sit on the bit of paper.

*Questions without Notice Resumed*

**Mr M. McGOWAN:** The increases in fees and charges announced today are a direct result of the financial catastrophe left to this state by the Liberal–National government. That is exactly what occurred here today. The Liberal–National government should be ashamed of itself for what it left this state.

Several members interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Members, when I am on my feet, you do not speak. Leader of the Opposition, you have asked a question, at least let the Premier answer the question. You have an opportunity to ask a supplementary question.

**Mr M. McGOWAN:** The increases are a direct result of the Liberal–National government's financial mismanagement over the course of eight and a half years.

Several members interjected.

*Point of Order*

**Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN:** Is the word "wimp" inappropriate? If so, I think you should call the Leader of the Opposition to order.

**The SPEAKER:** It depends on who he is saying it to!

**Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN:** He was saying it to the Premier.

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

**Mr D.A. Templeman:** You're a wimp! You're a wimp, mate! You're the wimp in this place because you have put us in this situation! You're the wimp!

**The SPEAKER:** Well! Leader of the House, I call you to order for the first time. I remind you that when I am on my feet, you do not speak.

*Questions without Notice Resumed*

**Mr M. McGOWAN:** Year after year, during the course of the last government, the Labor opposition, as it then was, warned the Liberal–National government about its reckless spending and the way it was treating the Western Australian budget. Despite all the warnings about the mountain of debt it was racking up, it did nothing except add more and more to what the people of Western Australia would have to pay.

Several members interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Leader of the Opposition, I call you to order for the first time. I give you leeway because you are the Leader of the Opposition, but it is not a shouting match.

**Mr M. McGOWAN:** We warned budget after budget, year after year, about the situation in which the Liberal–National government was putting WA and it continued to do it. We have now inherited a situation in which our level of debt is climbing to \$42 billion because of its legacy with \$3 billion deficits. Unfortunately, because of its legacy —

Several members interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Member for Cottesloe, I call you to order for the first time. Members, the idea is that the opposition asks the government a question and it gives an answer. Opposition members are shouting before he even gives the answer.

**Mr M. McGOWAN:** Obviously the opposition is not going to allow me to speak, but all I will say is that this is the Liberal and National Parties' fault. This is their legacy. Members opposite should hang their heads in shame.