

RETAIL TRADING HOURS — EFFECTS OF RESTRICTIONS

**627. Mr P.T. MILES to the Treasurer:**

Can the Treasurer outline to the house, and to my electorate of Wanneroo, the lost opportunities for Western Australians seeking employment and Western Australian consumers resulting from the opposition's decision to keep restrictive retail trading hours in the dark ages?

**Mr T.R. BUSWELL replied:**

I thank the member for Wanneroo for the question. Before answering it, I acknowledge in the public gallery some young people I met earlier who are members of a Catholic home school group, a very important group of people in Western Australia who exercise their right to choose the form of education that they think is best for their children. It is great that they are here, because we are also here to debate choice—the opportunity to give Western Australian families a choice about what time they choose to go shopping, and if they turn up at the shops —

**Mr A.P. O’Gorman** interjected.

**Mr T.R. BUSWELL:** I will get to the member in a second.

If they turn up at the shops at one minute past six they should still be able to go shopping. I have been interested in the public outrage at the position adopted by the Australian Labor Party, led by no less a luminary than Mr Joe Bullock, the Labor powerbroker. He is the reason the member for Cannington is in this place, and the reason the member for Armadale is leaving this place. Joe Bullock said —

The Opposition has succumbed to an impulse of many oppositions—to oppose for the sake of opposing without recognising that there'll be few occasions over the next 3½ years when they get the opportunity to influence the course of events.

He also said —

Labor was playing politics rather than looking for an outcome in the best interests of the State ...

Labor is playing politics. The Leader of the Opposition is in a barrel of political opportunism, and is feeding in the scum on the bottom. He is a bottom feeder in the barrel of political opportunism.

There are two points. Over 60 000 Western Australians are currently looking for work. Coles and Woolworths have clearly indicated that if they are able to open on week nights until 9.00 pm, 700 jobs would be created. The opposition yesterday turned its back on creating an opportunity for 700 Western Australians to gain work. Of course, the Leader of the Opposition has form. He sent 5 000 Western Australian jobs over the border to the Northern Territory in relation to Inpex. He should have focused yesterday on creating 700 new jobs for Western Australians rather than protecting his own job. He has adopted a very selfish position.

The other point I make is that the opposition has denied consumers choice. It has denied consumers the opportunity to decide when they shop. Denying that choice comes at a cost. It comes at a cost to the individual and an economic cost. I also say to the member for Joondalup that it comes at an economic cost to his constituents. They might turn up at the Lakeside shopping centre in Joondalup, and go into the Woolworths store to buy a package of goods. However, if the shopper arrives at one minute past six he is too late, and has to go down the road to the little IGA store. I have here a package of 17 standard goods, including things like toilet paper, Nescafe coffee and Weet-Bix. An elector in Joondalup turns up at the Lakeside Woolworths to buy these things, but cannot do so because of the opposition, and must go up the road to the IGA. Do members opposite know how much more that elector will pay? Do they know that the 17 goods at the Joondalup Woolworths would cost \$99.68? Exactly the same 17 goods, up the road at the IGA, will cost \$119.94. The opposition is making those people pay an extra \$20.

I will share the contents of this package with members in the house. I have here a packet of Weet-Bix. For Weet-Bix—the great Australian tucker—people will pay 55 per cent more up the road at the IGA. Hold that for me, Attorney General. I hand the Minister for Health a packet of Whiskas, for the hungry cat, which will cost 25 per cent more. If we want a cup of coffee to stay awake, we only have to pay 64 per cent more. Hold on to this jar of Nescafe, Premier. I will get to the Rexona later on. The last one—hang on, I have forgotten the toilet paper! If the member for Murray-Wellington wants to buy toilet paper, it will cost 61 per cent more. The member can hold the toilet paper.

*Point of Order*

**Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN:** For the past two weeks, Mr Speaker, you and the Acting Speakers have been calling the opposition to order for antics. We have just seen the Treasurer throw something across the chamber to

another member. I suggest that, not only is that not parliamentary, it demonstrates that we are not being heard fairly in this place.

**The SPEAKER:** There is no point of order. I ask the member for Murray-Wellington to return the item he is holding to the Treasurer.

Several members interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** I formally call the member for Pilbara for the first time. I am answering a point of order. This is not an opportunity for the member to interrupt. He should know that by now. Members, I have given —

**Mrs M.H. Roberts:** Mr Speaker —

**The SPEAKER:** Member for Midland! I have given the Treasurer the call on the question. I do not see that the Treasurer is doing anything that is unparliamentary.

Several members interjected.

*Questions without Notice Resumed*

**Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN:** Point of order, Mr Speaker.

**The SPEAKER:** Take a seat, member for Mandurah. I am going to formally call the member for Pilbara for the second time. Now I will take the point of order from the member for Mandurah.

*Point of Order*

**Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN:** Mr Speaker, with due respect, you have now demonstrated to this place that if a member throws something across the chamber to another member, you will accept that behaviour. I ask you to seriously review your decision, because you have now sanctioned the throwing of material across this chamber.

**The SPEAKER:** Member for Mandurah, I am not sanctioning the throwing of material, because that would imply that I am going to allow any member in this place to throw any object at anybody in this place on either side. I am observing the Treasurer's behaviour, and I am not always impressed. The Treasurer clearly indicated to the member for Murray-Wellington that he was going to throw that object. I know what the object is made of; I had observed it. All right? I am going to make a ruling —

**Ms M.M. Quirk:** Is this all right?

**The SPEAKER:** Member for Girrawheen, I am not asking anyone in this place to throw anything in this chamber. What I am indicating to this house is that the behaviour that the Treasurer is engaged in is on the edge. I have noticed what he —

Several members interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Do members want me to rule on this or not? I am taking the member for Mandurah's point of order; I am not taking anybody else's point of order. I know the intent of the member for Mandurah's question, and I am not avoiding answering it. Every person in this place should know that. If the Treasurer is going to persist, I will ask him to stop. But, as far as I am concerned, that is the first time I have seen that particular member throw anything in this chamber. I know whom he was throwing it to, I know what the content of it was, and it is not going to do any damage to any member in this place. There was no aggression in it.

**Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN:** That is not the intention, Mr Speaker.

**The SPEAKER:** It is not the intention?

**Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN:** That is not the intention of my point of order.

**The SPEAKER:** Members, I call the Treasurer.

*Questions without Notice Resumed*

**Mr T.R. BUSWELL:** I shall not be casting others. However, there is one other item to which I would like to draw the attention of the house. It might come in handy for the member for Mandurah and for the member for West Swan. It is a packet of Huggies—nappies. They cost 13 per cent more. It is not a joke. I will tell the member for Kwinana why it is not a joke. In Joondalup, the working families that the member comes in here and pretends to protect pay 20 per cent more because the member wants to shut the shops.

Several members interjected.

*Point of Order*

**Mr B.S. WYATT:** Mr Speaker, yesterday you stopped question time after, I think —

**The SPEAKER:** Half an hour.

**Mr B.S. WYATT:** — three questions had been asked by the opposition. The opposition had been particularly quiet after the dorothy dix question asked of the Attorney General at the time. You then shut question time down. I am curious to see whether the standards that you applied to the opposition yesterday will be the same standards that you apply to the government today.

**The SPEAKER:** Member for Victoria Park, my actions yesterday applied to both the government and the opposition. That message should be well and truly interpreted that way by both sides of this house. They were certainly not directed at one side of the house. I have had discussions with people in this place, and they know that that was the intent of them.

*Questions without Notice Resumed*

**Mr T.R. BUSWELL:** I will draw my comments to a close. However, I want to finish by making this observation for the benefit of the member for Kwinana and others. By their decision yesterday, what they have effectively imposed on the people of Joondalup who choose to shop after six o'clock is a 20 per cent tax. The people of Joondalup are now paying the 20 per cent Joondalup early-to-bed tax. That is what it is: the 20 per cent Joondalup early-to-bed tax. The member for Joondalup should not worry. We are going to write to every one of his constituents to make sure that they know that he is making every one of them pay more.

*Point of Order*

**Mr M.P. WHITELY:** Yesterday the Premier chastised the member for West Swan for drinking bottled water, and it turned out to be with the Speaker's permission. Now the Premier is sitting there with a packet of Huggies behind his head —

**Mr C.J. Barnett:** Whiskas and coffee.

**Mr M.P. WHITELY:** And Whiskas and a jar of coffee. I suggest that the Premier is bringing this place into —

**The SPEAKER:** There is no point of order.

*Questions without Notice Resumed*

**Mr T.R. BUSWELL:** The Labor Party's decision yesterday to deny people choice costs jobs and costs consumers money.