

BUSSELTON JETTY

**416. Mr M.P. MURRAY to the Minister for South West:**

- (1) Can the minister advise the house why the Busselton jetty is in poor condition and in need of a major state government support package?
- (2) Is the minister aware of other failures of administration in the Busselton area?

**The SPEAKER:** Order! I call the member for Mindarie to order for the first time for having his mobile telephone switched on.

**Mr M. McGOWAN replied:**

- (1)-(2) I thank the member for Collie-Wellington for the question. Indeed, I can. I am aware of who has responsibility for the maintenance and repair of the Busselton jetty on behalf of the people of Western Australia. In fact, I have the agreement here between the state government and the Shire of Busselton, which sets out who is responsible. The agreement was signed by the Shire of Busselton with the state government some years ago. It sets out the responsibility to keep and maintain the jetty structure in a state of good and substantial repair, order and condition at all times. A large sum of money was handed to the Shire of Busselton for that purpose in 1988. Who is therefore responsible? We have an agreement that sets out that it is the responsibility of the Shire of Busselton. Who was on the Busselton Shire Council for a long period when that council had responsibility for maintaining and repairing the jetty? None other than the member for Vasse. He was on the council - the same person who had responsibility for the jetty; the same person who is opposing our plans to fix it.

**Mr T. Buswell:** I am not opposing the plans to fix it.

**Mr M. McGOWAN:** Those plans, incidentally, will result in hundreds of tourism jobs for people in his constituency.

**Mr T. Buswell:** There is a public meeting. Why do we not go there together?

**Mr M. McGOWAN:** The member for Vasse can explain why he wants to deny his constituents jobs. I thought that because of his attitude to the jetty, I had better look at this issue. He is a potential Deputy Premier. The member for Collie-Wellington -

**Mr T. Buswell:** The member for Collie-Wellington is interested in this because the jetty forms the northern boundary of the southern abalone district. He has knowledge of the Busselton jetty. It pokes right out to sea. Had he been on the other side, he would have been safe; he could have fallen in the ocean and never got fined. No wonder he has an interest in it.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! I know that members wish to stop the minister from giving his answer. However, the minister has the call.

**Mr M. McGOWAN:** As the member for Collie-Wellington asked me, I thought I had better look at the record of the Shire of Busselton because it covers the one period of experience of public administration that the alternative Deputy Premier has had. I looked at the record of the Shire of Busselton and found "Shire of inaction" as the heading of an article on the front page of the *Busselton Margaret River Times* of December 2004. What does it reveal? It states -

Busselton shire president, Troy Buswell admitted the council had failed to act on many of its past resolutions.

The resolutions fell into a black hole - the Buswell black hole. Councillors were advised by the shire president, Mr Buswell -

... to reintroduce any motion they knew had been neglected.

He said -

We are trying to improve, but I admit our performance was lacking.

I wondered what had happened. The article also stated -

He blamed the previous administration for the inability of the council's administrative arm to track the action taken on resolutions ...

I was relieved because I had worked out it was not his fault but that of the previous administration. However, when I had another look at the article it turned out that he was part of the previous administration. He was on the council during 1995 and 1996. He was sworn in as councillor on 7 May 2001 and served until 23 March 2005.

He was there for five years of the time for which he blamed the previous administration. He was the previous administration!

This is the bloke who would be the next Deputy Premier and, according to various reports around the place that I have heard, he could be the alternative Liberal Party leader. I am sure that members have heard that around the place. However, it turns out that he has not changed. His administration of the Shire of Busselton reflects what other people have had to say about him. We know about his rooster-like behaviour towards the member for Kalgoorlie. I will repeat what some of his colleagues have had to say about him. The member for Hillarys had this to say about him only last year -

His cowardly and gutless disloyalty will be the start of his demise and I think you will find the shining star of Troy Buswell will diminish over the coming months.

That is prescient. Another well-respected member of the opposition is the member for Murray, a close colleague - in fact they are now sitting together - of the victim of the rooster, the member for Kalgoorlie. An article in *The West Australian* of 27 March 2006 reads -

Shadow transport minister Murray Cowper . . . said . . .

“One of the things you learn from playing footy is discipline and mateship and loyalty and it’s just very disappointing to see how people’s interpretation of that can be flouted like a discarded old sock . . .

He said that at the time of the leadership challenge. The rooster was treating the member for Kalgoorlie like a discarded old sock.

**The SPEAKER:** I am hard-pressed to see how this has much to do with the Busselton jetty. I would encourage the minister to draw his answer to some conclusion.

**Mr M. McGOWAN:** I will, Mr Speaker. There is a very serious point here. The member for Vasse puts himself out there among his colleagues as the next Deputy Premier and, potentially, Premier. When he had the responsibility of running a shire council - not a state but a shire council - the resolutions of that council were lost. He then had the hide and the temerity to blame others when he was in charge of that council for a long period of time and also a councillor on that council for a long period of time. He opposes plans for jobs and investment in his electorate when he is partly responsible for the cause of the funding shortfall. Could we ever have him running this state?