

**BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE**

*Motion*

**MR J.C. KOBELKE** (Nollamara - Leader of the House) [12.18 pm]: I move -

That from 26 November 2002 and for the remainder of this year, unless otherwise ordered, so much of standing orders be suspended as is necessary to -

- (a) enable private members' business to take precedence on Wednesdays between 4.30 pm and 6.00 pm;
- (b) suspend grievances;
- (c) enable Bills to be introduced without notice and to proceed through all stages in one day; and
- (d) enable messages from the Legislative Council to be taken into consideration on the day on which they are received.

This motion is similar to motions that are traditionally moved towards the end of the parliamentary year. The motion is worded to take effect from the commencement of the next sitting week after next week's recess. This means that it is envisaged that only the last two weeks of sitting will have restrictions on private members' business. It will allow additional time for the House to deal with a number of Bills on the Notice Paper.

Paragraph (a) of the motion reduces private members business from three hours to 1.5 hours each Wednesday for the remainder of the year. Since 1994, it has become the practice to reduce the time allotted to private members' business for the last two, three or four sitting weeks of each year. In this case, it is intended to do it only for the last two sitting weeks. It is envisaged that from 26 November, and for the remainder of this year, the House will sit on Wednesday evenings after the dinner suspension to provide additional time to consider legislation.

Paragraph (b) of the motion suspends grievance debates for the remainder of this year, as has been the practice in this House for many years. I remind members, however, that the 90-second private members statements each Thursday will continue under the standing orders.

Paragraph (c) of the motion will enable Bills to be introduced without notice and to proceed through all stages in one day. I do not foresee the need to introduce without notice any new government Bills this year, which would require this provision. There is nothing up the Government's sleeve. We have put on the Notice Paper the legislation we consider urgent, and on which we wish to make good progress. I need to indicate that one piece of legislation is still to come, in relation to a uniform agreement between the States and the Commonwealth on acts of terrorism. It is the intention of the Government to introduce that Bill into the Parliament following next week's recess. However, that Bill will be introduced in the normal way. It is a counter-terrorism measure, which the Commonwealth is keen to put in place very quickly, and I am hoping that once it is kicked off it will have the support of the Opposition. The Government will wish to declare it an urgent Bill. That is not to say that it will be introduced and pass through all stages in the one day. That is not the intention of the Government.

As has been the practice in the past, these provisions enable the House to deal with any Council amendments on the day they are received, if need be.

I commend the motion to the House. The Opposition has generally given support to legislation over the past few weeks, and I hope the House can continue in that atmosphere of cooperation and see most of the Bills on the Notice Paper passed over the two weeks in which these restrictions will apply, to give more time to deal with government business.

**MR R.F. JOHNSON** (Hillarys) [12.21 pm]: I am relieved to hear that the Leader of the House has nothing up his sleeve. I will take his word on that, and I am sure he is a man of word and will keep to it. He is now showing me his empty sleeve, just for the Hansard record!

The Leader of the House is quite right: this has been the normal practice of the House for some years. As always, the Opposition will do everything it can to facilitate the speedy passage of Bills through this House, so that the legislation of the Government can be put in place in an appropriate way. I return to the adage that the Government should have its way, but we do insist that the Opposition should have its say. We intend to have our say on all Bills of significance that go through this House. I am sure we will cooperate when the Leader of the House, the Premier, or whichever minister is responsible brings in the anti-terrorist legislation.

Mr J.C. Kobelke: I have not seen the Bill, but it relates to the discussions that have taken place between the Attorney General and the commonwealth Attorney General to make sure that the Commonwealth has powers to deal with acts of terrorism.

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: Will it be complementary legislation?

Mr J.C. Kobelke: I think so, yes.

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: Obviously the Opposition would give wholehearted support to any Bills brought in by the Government to reduce acts of terrorism in this State. I am sure every member of Parliament would be of that view. We would certainly not wish to delay in any way legislation of such importance.

I ask the Leader of the House to confirm with me, across the Chamber, that when the Government brings in Bills, he will give me, as manager of opposition business, some notice so that I can make sure that the shadow ministers are available to deal with that legislation. At this time of year, and certainly in the last two or three sitting weeks, legislation very often must be brought on out of the blue. It is already on the Notice Paper, but unless members on this side of the House who are responsible for those Bills have at least a little notice, it puts the Opposition at a tremendous disadvantage. Without some notice we cannot do justice to those Bills as Parliament would expect.

The Opposition will agree to the motion moved by the Leader of the House, and I give an assurance that, as manager of opposition business, I will do everything I can to facilitate the passage of those Bills. I ask that the Leader of the House show me the courtesy of giving as much information as possible about any Bills that are to be brought on in a hurry, so that the Opposition is able to prepare for them.

Question put and passed.