

**MINISTER FOR POLICE AND EMERGENCY SERVICES - STAFF SUPERANNUATION
PAYMENTS**

Standing Orders Suspension - Motion

MR P.D. OMODEI (Warren-Blackwood) [9.02 am] - without notice: I move -

That so much of standing orders be suspended as to allow the following motion to be moved forthwith -

That this house censures the Minister for Police and Emergency Services for misleading the Parliament and lying to the people of Western Australia regarding his superannuation responsibilities and directs the minister to answer the following questions immediately -

- (1) Is it not true that he was aware of unpaid superannuation entitlements to his staff earlier than November 2005, as he admitted in Parliament yesterday?
- (2) When was he first made aware, and by whom, that the Australian Taxation Office was examining this matter?
- (3) Why did he lie about this matter on radio today?

Mr Speaker, there is no doubt that the minister misled the Parliament yesterday about this issue when he said that he had become clearly aware that there had been anomalies in staff superannuation payments over the previous two to three years. We know today that his staff have come forward and clearly said that he was well and truly aware of this matter in May of last year. This is a very serious issue. It is an issue about the ability of the minister to hold his portfolio in this government and run a government department responsible for the expenditure of many hundreds of millions of dollars when he did not pay his own staff their superannuation. A lot of questions need to be answered. The minister certainly has not been forthright in his answers not only in Parliament but also on radio this morning.

We believe that this is a very serious matter and one that the minister should respond to. I note that he is not in the house. Surely the minister would have expected the opposition to ask some serious questions about his activities in this regard. There are a whole lot of anomalies relating to what happened before he sold the business, when he sold the business, when he became aware of the anomalies in his superannuation payments and when he was made "clearly aware" of events. That was obviously a very careful choice of words. The fact is that he was well and truly aware of the situation before November last year.

A number of people have come forward and said that not only did they raise this issue but also the minister did pay some of those cheques, and they were able to indicate the number of the cheques. Young people said that they were afraid of the minister, that he had a bad temper and that they were concerned to come forward. The matter is very serious. This side of the house believes that the matter should be debated; hence we have moved this motion to suspend standing orders to allow this matter to be debated.

MR J.C. KOBELKE (Balcatta - Leader of the House) [9.05 am]: This appears to be another stunt by the opposition but we will certainly provide an opportunity for the matter to be discussed so that again the opposition can be shown up for how shallow and nasty it is.

Mr M.J. Birney: If it was a stunt, you'd be voting against it.

Mr J.C. KOBELKE: I am happy to let the Leader of the Opposition perform another stunt, as he has done already this week, so that people can see just what he is really like. I am very happy for him to stand up and show what a fool he is rather than sit there and remain one. The fact is that the Minister for Police and Emergency Services, who is the subject of this motion, is not currently in the chamber.

Mr M.J. Birney: Did you see what was written about you in the paper today?

Mr J.C. KOBELKE: No, I haven't read the paper.

Mr M.J. Birney: You bluster on and say nothing.

Mr J.C. KOBELKE: Has the Leader of the Opposition been talking to his mates again over a glass of wine? He has a track record.

Mr P.D. Omodei: Where is the minister? Why isn't he in this chamber this morning, given the allegations that have been made on radio this morning?

Mr J.C. KOBELKE: The allegations made on radio may still be unfolding. The minister is supposed to be here to answer allegations which are taking place almost at this current time! The minister will be happy to be in the chamber in a short time. It is not appropriate to start this debate until the minister is here, which will be in the next few minutes.

Mr P.D. Omodei: Why doesn't he wait until tomorrow then?

The SPEAKER: Members!

Mr J.C. KOBELKE: I think the noise of members opposite indicates that they have no arguments. They will be wasting the time of this chamber. As I have indicated, we are happy to let opposition members run their particular arguments or lack of arguments on this matter, but we want the debate run according to MPI rules in terms of time of debate. Also, with the assistance of the Clerk, we would like it to proceed after we have done ministerial statements, which will only take a few minutes.

Mr P.D. Omodei: We would be happy with that.

Mr J.C. KOBELKE: I need to change the wording to do that because it is worded to occur "forthwith". As soon as we have that amendment, we will be able to accede to the Opposition's request for a suspension, but on the basis that it follow MPI speaking times and take place after we have concluded matters up to and including ministerial statements and committee statements.

Amendment to Motion

On motion by **Mr J.C. Kobelke (Leader of the House)**, resolved -

To delete the word "forthwith" and to add the following words -

and that the debate be conducted after brief ministerial statements and be subject to the time limits specified in standing order 101 for a matter of public interest

Motion, as Amended

Question put and passed with an absolute majority.