

**APPROPRIATION (CONSOLIDATED FUND) BILL (NO. 1) 2002**  
**APPROPRIATION (CONSOLIDATED FUND) BILL (NO. 2) 2002**

*Declaration as Urgent*

**MR RIPPER** (Belmont - Treasurer) [3.05 pm]: In accordance with Standing Order No 168(2), I move -

That the Bills be considered urgent Bills.

It is necessary that I move this motion to allow the second reading debate to occur and for the estimates hearings to be scheduled for next week. The timetable is in accordance with arrangements previously advised to the House by the Leader of the House and to the Opposition.

**MR JOHNSON** (Hillarys) [3.06 pm]: We do not have a problem with the Government declaring these Bills urgent. We are also aware that the Government wants a cognate debate on both of these Appropriation Bills. We had cognate debates last year, in 2000 and a couple of years before that. It is important to point out that a cognate debate on these two Bills reduces the opportunity - by once a year - for members of Parliament, other than ministers, to speak on behalf of their electorates and community groups throughout Western Australia. In the past these Bills were treated separately, with two second reading speeches. This is important because this House was established so that members could have their say on behalf of their electorates and the people of Western Australia. The Opposition will not oppose the motion for a cognate debate on these two Bills, but it should not be taken as a *fait accompli* in the future. A cognate debate is always handy for the Government. Government backbenchers are not encouraged to speak during the passage of Bills, and a cognate debate reduces the opportunity for opposition members to ensure accountability and openness in government. This is one instance when members will not have that opportunity.

We do not oppose this motion, but the Leader of the House should not take it as a *fait accompli* that the Opposition will agree to a cognate debate every year. The Opposition is happy to look at this procedure when the timing makes it necessary, but it does not want to see members on this side of the House deprived of their right to speak on every occasion possible.

Question put and passed.

*Cognate Debate*

On motion by Mr Ripper (Treasurer), resolved -

That leave be granted for the Appropriation (Consolidated Fund) Bill (No. 1) 2002 and the Appropriation (Consolidated Fund) Bill (No. 2) 2002 to be considered cognately, and for the Appropriation (Consolidated Fund) Bill (No. 1) 2002 to be the principal Bill.