

PARLIAMENTARY SITTING HOURS

176. Mr R.F. JOHNSON to the Leader of the House:

I refer to today's *Bunbury Herald* newspaper in which the Labor members for Collie and Bunbury openly criticised the management of the business in this House that forced country members to drive home tired after long, late night sittings.

- (1) Does the minister agree with his Labor colleagues and others that the lives of country members of Parliament are being put at risk because of his management of the House?
- (2) Did the Leader of the House know that the member for Bunbury said he fell asleep at the wheel and "hit the wall at Baldivis while driving home tired"?
- (3) In view of these serious concerns, will the Leader of the House explain why he kept members back until 3.00 am last Friday when the two Bills that were considered that night could have progressed to the upper House just as quickly if they had been dealt with in this House today?

Mr J.C. KOBELKE replied:

- (1) No.
- (2) No.
- (3) I do not accept that if the legislation had not been dealt with last week, it would have passed this House today. Last Thursday, the Opposition filibustered and tried to stop the legislation going through. I point out to the manager of opposition business that during the 18 months of the Gallop Government, this House has sat past midnight on very few occasions. During the first year of the Court Government in 1993, Parliament sat past midnight on more than 50 per cent of its sitting days; therefore, we are managing the business of the House reasonably well.