

SALARIES AND ALLOWANCES AMENDMENT (DEBT AND DEFICIT REMEDIATION) BILL 2017

489. Mrs L.M. HARVEY to the Premier:

How many Salaries and Allowances Tribunal determinations are due in the near to medium term; and, if there are none, what is the actual urgency of the bill the government has brought before the house?

Mr M. McGOWAN replied:

The Salaries and Allowances Tribunal hands down determinations regularly on a range of issues involving senior public servants, the judiciary and members of Parliament. It is important that we make sure that the government's approach to the salaries and remuneration of people holding those offices is dealt with as soon as possible. Therefore, we are bringing on the bill for debate tomorrow. We would like to ensure that there are no determinations in the course of the next few months that might set the wrong example for the remainder of the public sector, and that is why we want to have this matter dealt with as soon as possible. I think that is an entirely reasonable approach by the government, and it would only be controversial if the opposition was going to oppose the laws. We face a serious financial situation in Western Australia. I wish we did not. I wish that my time, and that of the Treasurer, the Expenditure Review Committee and the cabinet was not spent trying to fix the problems the previous government created. I would love it if we were able to be in office not worrying about the finances all the time, but we are in that position because of members opposite, and it would be nice if the opposition took some responsibility and assisted us to fix the problem it created.

Mr C.J. Barnett: Why don't you grow up a bit in your attitude?

The SPEAKER: Member for Cottesloe, I call you to order for the first time.

Mr M. McGOWAN: We would like the opposition's support, but just responding to the member for Cottesloe, I am answering a question that was asked by the opposition. The premise of the question indicates to me that the opposition is not going to support the legislation.

Mr S.K. L'Estrange: We haven't said that.

Mr M. McGOWAN: You have not said that? So you are going to support the legislation?

Mr D.C. Nalder: We haven't seen it.

Mr M. McGOWAN: You have not said that either?

Members opposite have not said one and they have not said the other, but they have a definitive position. Have they not read Jessica Strutt's column? She says that the opposition has to have a position on things.

Dr M.D. Nahan: You shallow little man.

Mr M. McGOWAN: You are a very sad figure, Leader of the Opposition. I think it will take a long time for the Liberal Party in this state to rebuild.