

EXTENDED WEEKNIGHT RETAIL TRADING HOURS

**633. Mrs L.M. HARVEY to the Premier:**

I refer to today's editorial in *The Australian*, headed "It's 6pm, time for bed". What impact will the Labor Party's opposition to the extension of retail trading hours have on the state's national and international reputation, particularly given the recent announcements in the oil and gas sector, which have put the spotlight squarely on Western Australia?

**Mr C.J. BARNETT replied:**

I thank the member for Scarborough for the question. Before I answer it, on behalf of the member for Kalamunda I welcome the students of Carmel Adventist College to the gallery.

The member for Scarborough seems to have noticed what members opposite have not noticed. How embarrassing it is for Western Australia, the state that leads the nation, to have an editorial such as this published in *The Australian*. More than half a million copies have been printed, there are millions of readers across the country, and the editorial carries the heading "It's 6pm, time for bed". Let me read just a couple of small quotes from it.

Several members interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Order, members!

**Mr C.J. BARNETT:** Just listen! This is what *The Australian* had to say. If members did not read it, I want to bring them up to speed. This is what was said about Western Australia in *The Australian* editorial today. It states, in part —

... the state that earns one-third of Australia's export income might as well put up signs announcing it is closed for business after 6pm.

It continues —

The ALP's opposition was unfathomable and disgraceful. Former premier Alan Carpenter supported deregulation of trading hours before the election, pointing out that WA was an important world economy, "not a provincial Albanian council". Its vote for the dark ages rekindled memories of the party's great moralist, Brian Burke, lobbying against deregulation at the time of the 2005 referendum ...

That is what millions of people around Australia have read today about Western Australia. How embarrassing! How humiliating! But what are people closer to home saying? PerthNow had an online poll. So far more than 3 000 people have responded to the question on weeknight trading: 71 per cent are saying yes and two-thirds are saying to extend the trading hours to nine o'clock. How many are saying no? Nineteen per cent! Is that a familiar number to the Leader of the Opposition? That is who the opposition has in line.

Several members interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Order, members!

**Mr C.J. BARNETT:** Let us look at some others, just at random. I picked out a few citizens at random for their views on this. Here is one at random on the issue of trading hours —

Several members interjected.

**Mr C.J. BARNETT:** I can barely hear myself speak, Mr Speaker, but this is what the member for Armadale said —

Member for Armadale Alannah MacTiernan said the plan would allow shops in Armadale to trade on Sundays and public holidays from 11am to 5pm.

"This is great news for our town centre — it will encourage more cafes, more shops and more buzz ...

The member for Armadale has lost her buzz! She has no buzz left! She has run out of puff—she has none at all. She has lost her buzz.

What do some other random people in Western Australia have to say? In the *Weekend Courier* in Rockingham Mark McGowan said he welcomed the plan for extended trading hours. The article states —

"It also provides for greater flexibility for families juggling work and family commitments while protecting the interests of small business," Mr McGowan said.

Mr McGowan said the policy achieved a fair balance ...

Several members interjected.

**Mr C.J. BARNETT:** That is what they are saying in Rockingham. Rockingham, Armadale—it is catching on everywhere! What about up in the northern suburbs —

Several members interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Members, some of the things that the Premier might be saying might not be welcomed by certain members in this house, but I would like to be able to hear the Premier speak. I urge the Premier to come to the conclusion on this question.

**Mr C.J. BARNETT:** Yes, Mr Speaker —

**Ms A.J.G. MacTiernan** interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! Member for Armadale, I formally call you for the first time.

**Mr C.J. BARNETT:** This random citizen in Armadale supports it, people down in Rockingham are getting behind it, and in the northern suburbs there is another random person. This article states —

Labor backbencher John Quigley is lobbying the Government to make Mindarie a tourism precinct so that shops can open on Sundays.

Several members interjected.

**Mr C.J. BARNETT:** Last one, Mr Speaker. What does Mr Nineteen Per Cent—the Leader of the Opposition—have to say? This is what he had to say only recently, on 24 June; only about six weeks ago. He said —

Look I think in our society there are a lot of people, particularly people who work in ... in dual job families who are time poor who want better choice ... the issue is we already have weeknight trading, are we going to let all stores open for that weeknight trading or are we going to restrict it to one supermarket chain, the IGA.

What a joke! What an embarrassment the opposition is. Members opposite are humiliating Western Australia, but one-by-one they have all come out and supported it. They are an embarrassment! When this state is going forward —

Several members interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Order, members!

**Mr C.J. BARNETT:** — under the Liberal-National government, the opposition is holding it back. The opposition is an absolute embarrassment. I conclude with this comment —

Several members interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Members, I want to hear the Premier conclude this in the next 15 seconds.

**Mr C.J. BARNETT:** I suggest the Leader of the Opposition look at the 19 per cent, reconvene his caucus, come up with a sensible position to support weeknight shopping and finish the farce that the opposition has become.