

ANNIVERSARY OF THE *DUYFKEN'S* VOYAGE TO AUSTRALIAN WATERS

Motion

HON SIMON O'BRIEN (South Metropolitan) [2.00 pm] - without notice: I move -

That this house calls on the government to provide assistance to the Duyfken Foundation to help enable it to appropriately celebrate the 400th anniversary of the original *Duyfken's* voyage to Australian waters in 1606.

As members know, Australia is an ancient land indeed. In the view of the indigenous inhabitants of Australia, antiquity is referred to as Dreamtime or the time of dreaming, so ancient is the land that we occupy. We think of Australia as a modern country, as being of relatively recent origin in its recorded history, but, nonetheless, Australia has a recorded history, and it is a very precious thing to all inhabitants of Australia. Recorded history in Australia stretches back at least as far as 1606 when the Dutch vessel *Duyfken* traversed the Torres Strait and then landed in the Gulf of Carpentaria on the Cape York Peninsula and charted about 300 kilometres of that territory. Four hundred years ago seems a very long time ago to present day Australians because we do not have a recorded history, and we certainly do not have a European history, that precedes that time, in contrast with the lands in which so many of our forebears' families originated.

It was a very significant event when the *Duyfken* made a landfall in Australia 399 years ago. Subsequent to that, the Dutch made many landings on Australia throughout the next century or more; indeed, about 26 ships were dispatched for various reasons by the Dutch and specifically through the Vereenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie or the Dutch East India Company. Some of those voyages resulted in an unintentional landfall on the Western Australian coast. We are now familiar with the significance of the ancient shipwrecks that occurred along the Western Australian coast during the seventeenth century. We are also aware of the historic landfall of Dirk Hartog and we are aware of the explorations of Vlamingh, the encounters by Houtman and others. The eastern part of the Australian continent was similarly visited by the Dutch. I have already mentioned the *Duyfken*, but of course the great explorer Abel Tasman not only visited the east coast but also touched on the southern most parts of Australian territory.

Next year marks the 400th anniversary of the *Duyfken* visit to Australia in 1606. It is particularly significant because there is nothing else in Australia with which we can celebrate a 400th anniversary. A number of events are planned to commemorate that remarkable event. There will be a series of activities known as Australia on the Map 1606-2006 project. The flagship event of that project will be a circumnavigation voyage of Australia by the current *Duyfken*, which of course belongs to Western Australia and Western Australians. It belongs to Western Australia because in the 1990s some remarkable members of our community put together a project to reconstruct the original *Duyfken* or "Little Dove" as the vessel is known in English. It was a remarkable project, which was supported by the state government on the basis that similar private funds also be put up to enable construction. That was done, and it was a truly remarkable achievement because, of course, there were no plans or blueprints for the construction of this vessel, just old drawings and paintings, some of them sourced from Holland itself. Old lost technology and skills had to be rediscovered; for example, techniques to bend planks to form the hull, and old skills in blacksmithing, the use of textiles in ropemaking and so on. The vessel itself was built in Fremantle. Its hull is made of European oak sourced from Latvia. The sails and rigging are all natural flax and hemp. It is a remarkable achievement. In 1999 the new *Duyfken* was launched and, only a few months after its launch, it was ready for its first voyage. It is now a familiar sight on the Swan River in Perth.

In 2002, the Dutch celebrated the 400th anniversary of the Dutch East India Company. A high point of that celebration was the voyage of the new *Duyfken* to Holland. In addition to the contributions of state and federal governments in Australia and significant amounts of sponsorship and public subscription, the voyage was contributed to by the Dutch government. The Dutch took their maritime activities very seriously during the time of the Dutch East India Company. As I have already mentioned, they set out to visit Australia on commissioned voyages of exploration and they also sent vessels to rescue shipwrecked crews. In particular, I recall the voyage of the *Sardam*, which was sent from Batavia in 1629 with Captain Pelsaert to rescue the survivors of the Batavia mutiny, who were at the mercy of mutineers on the Abrolhos Islands. As it turned out, it was a successful mission. The Dutch were similarly interested in their maritime history which, of course, is now our shared maritime history. In 2002, they welcomed the *Duyfken* back to its spiritual home in Holland. Of course, the *Duyfken* has subsequently returned to Australia and visited the parts of Australia that bear significance to the original story.

As I said, at the time the Dutch government actively participated, and took a great deal of interest, in the voyage. That interest started when a member of the Dutch royal family visited Western Australia to be involved with the launching of our *Duyfken*. During the course of the 2002 celebrations in Holland - following the visit of his Royal Highness Crown Prince Willem-Alexander and his wife, Crown Princess Maxima, to launch the vessel -

the Dutch made a point of saying that they wanted to be closely involved in the 400-year celebrations of the *Duyfken*'s visit to Australia which, of course, is next year.

All of this, however, will cost money. Organising a circumnavigation voyage of the continent of Australia in a vessel built with 400-year-old technology is not an easy thing to do. It is a perfectly good ocean-going vessel of its type - indeed, it is the only one of its type in existence. It is a full-scale working model that has been tried and proven in a number of sea voyages and that will be tried and proven again next year. The voyage itself will generate income from sponsorship and from activities and entertainment at the many ports of call. Nonetheless, other sponsorship is required. I understand that only this morning - this is purely coincidental - the federal government announced a contribution of \$250 000 towards the commemorative circumnavigation. BHP Billiton has chipped in \$100 000. I understand also that the Northern Territory and Queensland governments will make contributions. At this stage, no contribution has been made by the Western Australian government, although an application has been lodged for Lotterywest funding.

Hon Kim Chance: You do mean no further contribution - there has been significant state government contribution?

Hon SIMON O'BRIEN: There has been significant state government contribution. For this particular endeavour, I will explain why I believe that it is appropriate that the Western Australian government also be an active participant. That is the proposition I put to the government today.

Hon Kim Chance: As recently as last year there was a significant transfer of funds.

Hon SIMON O'BRIEN: I look forward to hearing the government's response.

Over the years, the operating costs of the *Duyfken* have been about \$6 million. That includes its long voyages, such as the voyage to Holland. A significant contribution of \$1.4 million was made by the Dutch government to that voyage alone. It also provided an amount in the order of \$265 000 during the vessel's initial construction. As I acknowledged earlier, there have been a number of private and government sources of funding for that quite visionary project.

Next year the flagship event of the Australia on the Map 1606-2006 project - the unique situation of celebrating a 400-year anniversary in Australia - will be led by the *Duyfken*, a faithful authentic reconstruction of a ship from antiquity, which has great significance to Australian history and heritage. Its reconstruction was conceived, managed and financed right here in Western Australia. It was faithfully executed by competent local craftsmen and supported by the community at large. Further, as the Leader of the House pointed out, it has also been supported by state governments of both persuasions. For a couple of good reasons, it is absolutely essential that the state government provide assistance to this specific project. Firstly, there is merit in doing so for the return that will come from being involved in this project. I have mentioned the continuing interest of the Dutch people and the Dutch government - of course, people from Holland are looking forward to being here next year and they will bring others with them - specifically in the maritime history that our two nations share and in which Western Australia figures so prominently, with the focus on a marvellous replica ship from the earliest of those contacts. I do not know how we put a value on that type of tourism. Probably a formula could be worked out by bean counters in the back room of a tourism department. If we tried to put a dollar value on it, I think we would find a dividend for the state of Western Australia. Perhaps more than the monetary value, I ask the house to consider the value of good relations between nations - between Australia and the Netherlands. I do not know how we put a value on that, but it is tangible. There are many Dutch expatriates and friends of the Netherlands in Australia. To be given the opportunity to cement and extend such relations and friendships and to have Dutch visitors - whether they be members of the royal family or tourists - return home and talk fondly about Australia and Australians would be of significant value to all of us. For that reason, the Western Australian government must make sure that it is positively engaged in helping to make that voyage happen. The second reason the Western Australian government should be involved is because of the negative consequence if it were not. I am not saying that we would fail to derive the positive benefits; I am saying that failure to be involved would create a negative influence. Relationships have been developed between people who are concerned with maritime history - friends off shore, particularly in the Netherlands, with all who have been involved both here and interstate with the *Duyfken* adventure so far. It would be a pity if there were further lack of involvement by the Western Australian government, on the return match, as it were, to celebrate the *Duyfken*'s 400th anniversary here in Australia, having all engaged so closely with its 400th anniversary three or four years ago in the Netherlands. That lack of involvement could be construed as lack of interest by the government. I am sure that the government and all members in this house care. In light of that, I am raising this matter in the house to ensure we take this positive opportunity to be involved rather than risking the negative consequences if we fail to take that opportunity.

I received a copy of an e-mail from someone in Holland who has read on the Internet articles appearing in the local press. That person was concerned to read words to the effect that the "Little Dove" may be left to rot.

Hon Ken Travers: It sounds like a headline from the *Fremantle Herald*.

Hon SIMON O'BRIEN: It does, unfortunately. When people read things like that on the Internet, those things receive a currency they do not deserve. The *Duyfken* will not be left to rot; nonetheless, it needs to be conspicuously supported by those of us who care about the matters to which I have just referred. I will not identify the correspondent because the e-mail came via a third party. However, he has previously visited the *Duyfken* in Fremantle, in the harbour at Exmouth and when it visited the port of Rotterdam. He and his family are looking forward to coming back to Western Australia to experience that again. That is the sort of sentiment in the community. The Leader of the House can probably detect some emotion in my voice. That is because this issue matters to me; I feel it deeply. It is important. The standing of Western Australia in the eyes of our friends is important. However, particularly important is our standing in our own eyes and the eyes of posterity and how we value our heritage. In this case, I am referring to a heritage as far back as the earliest European-recorded history of Australia. It is our longest historical anniversary, being 400 years next year. It is an occasion that begs to be made extremely special, and it will be. For all those reasons, on behalf of the Western Australian people, the Western Australian government must have an up-front, conspicuous and willing involvement as a co-sponsor along with the likes of the Queensland and Northern Territory governments in making sure this circumnavigation happens.

I will mention this again on another occasion: we must then find a proper home to sustain the *Duyfken*, probably as part of a tourism museum operation somewhere around Fremantle at a shore-backed base, from which would flow all sorts of attractions in their own right and from which, as a wooden ship, the *Duyfken* can undertake the voyages it needs to sustain itself. With all those thoughts in mind, I commend the motion. It was not my intention to take up a lot of time on this matter this afternoon. The question is a simple one. It begs a simple answer and I hope we will get one that is well received by both sides of the house.

HON KEN BASTON (Mining and Pastoral) [2.26 pm]: I support this motion, which I learnt about only last night. Having seen the *Duyfken* visit northern areas and witnessed the interest it attracts, I consider the money would be a worthy dollar spent. The little replica of the *Duyfken* is only a 140-tonne ship, 24 metres long. I must admit that, when I was in Carnarvon several years ago, I imagined myself sailing on that little ship over those many seas but without the motor hidden underneath. It is not my idea of fun. The *Duyfken* has huge historic value. Schoolchildren can board it and understand its heritage and learn what people had to endure when they explored the globe. It is a far cry from the huge ships that transport resources from the north. People who step onto a little craft the size of the *Duyfken* will appreciate its contrast with the huge ships in the Port Hedland or Dampier harbours. It is a huge contrast but that little ship provides huge value for our next generations.

I notice the budget for the proposed voyage is short of some \$200 000. I thank the federal government for its contribution but I believe it is a dollar-for-dollar tied grant; therefore, the contribution from the state government needs to be in the order of \$250 000, although the balance required is \$200 000

Hon Kim Chance: It would be handy if that had been communicated to us.

Hon KEN BASTON: A number of people have contributed in kind. Some of our big companies can obviously see the value of this small craft sailing around Australia and visiting regional ports for two days at a time. I support the motion. It is a worthy trip. According to my calculations, it will be the 395th anniversary; nonetheless, the voyage is well worth the money. It is difficult to measure the value but it is a heritage value. In the same way that we lock up things for heritage in national parks - they lose money in many cases - this little ship has a value that is very hard to quantify.

HON KIM CHANCE (Agricultural - Leader of the House) [2.29 pm]: I thank Hon Simon O'Brien for raising this matter, which is clearly an important issue, and for his contribution to the debate, much of which I had never heard before. In dealing with a motion of this kind, we are faced with some challenges, because we hear about it in the morning, and we have had very little opportunity to prepare. While I was aware of the *Duyfken* - it is a delightful little vessel - and I was aware of the history of the original *Duyfken*, most of the information that has been provided to me is pretty much news to me. I was particularly surprised to hear in the more recent contribution from Hon Ken Baston that the commonwealth government has apparently already offered \$500 000.

Hon Simon O'Brien: I understand there was an announcement this morning, which I had no idea of. It was purely coincidental. I understand that \$250 000 has been offered. I was aware from my conversations over recent months with the management of the *Duyfken* that it was soliciting that amount and was hopeful of getting it. However, I honestly did not know about that. It is purely coincidental that this happened to come up today.

Hon KIM CHANCE: It is strange, because when I reviewed the information that was given to me, I came across an e-mail, which states, in part -

Have not been able to confirm Federal Funding at this stage but told a month ago the Duyfken Foundation had received \$500,000 from Feds for a trip around Australia to celebrate anniversary of circumnavigation.

I really am at a loss. Clearly, that e-mail did not state that as a fact. It was just repeating -

Hon Simon O'Brien: The state and the federal governments chipped in half a million dollars each, I understand, for the initial construction. That is what I was told.

Hon KIM CHANCE: I think that is right. The contribution of the state by virtue of contractual payments, straight-out grants from the government and grants from Lotterywest over the years totals \$1.3 million. That goes back to the time of the Court government, which I think made that \$500 000 contribution that Hon Simon O'Brien has just -

Hon Simon O'Brien: It was conditional then on a similar contribution being raised from private subscriptions, which was successful.

Hon Ken Travers: Did the federal government match that \$1.3 million?

Hon KIM CHANCE: I think the federal government matched the \$500 000 that the state contributed.

Hon Simon O'Brien: At that time, yes.

Hon Ken Travers: So the federal government is way behind, as usual.

Hon KIM CHANCE: Yes. I do not think the federal government has matched the Lotterywest payments. I referred to an element of contractual payments. There is quite a story in that. Perhaps that is where I should start, because they represent the most recent payments that have been made to the Duyfken 1606 Replica Foundation. As I understand it, an approach was made by the foundation to the state government for assistance. Last year it was agreed that a sum of money be transferred to the foundation. There was a submission to the government to participate in a three-year program. That was last year. I will try to get a more accurate date. There was a representation from the foundation, led by the chairman, Mayor Peter Tagliaferri, who presented a rescue package to government in November-December 2003. Therefore, it was at the end of 2003. The submission called for the government to participate in a three-year program, along with other sponsors, to put the *Duyfken* on a financially sustainable footing. The component sought from the government, as one of a range of sponsors in the rescue package, was a one-off \$100 000 payment to recommission the ship, and \$50 000 a year for three years to run youth programs. The remainder of the money - a sum of \$320 000 per annum - was to come from local governments, private enterprise and the University of Notre Dame Australia. That was the range of sponsors: the state government, local governments, the private sector and the University of Notre Dame Australia.

According to the submission, the local governments that had agreed to participate were Albany, Bunbury, Mandurah, Geraldton, Stirling, Cockburn and Fremantle. Each of those coastal councils would contribute \$15 000 to have the *Duyfken* home-ported in their area for a month during the year. In the end, that side was never delivered. With the exception of Fremantle and Geraldton -

Hon Simon O'Brien: This was just a proposal, not what actually came about.

Hon KIM CHANCE: This is what we were told had been agreed to, and we contributed the funds on the basis that the other sponsors were a part of the package. They probably were a part of the package, but it was impossible, for one reason or another, to finally deliver the outcome. The government indicated that it would participate only if those sponsors were in place, and we were assured that that was the case. The City of Fremantle acted as the recipient and distributor of the funds. Formal notice offering a grant of \$150 000 - that is, the three \$50 000 payments - to run youth programs and a one-off grant of \$100 000 was sent to the Mayor of the City of Fremantle in January 2004, and that came from the government's Office of Crime Prevention. This letter of offer outlined the agreed responsibilities of the City of Fremantle and the six other councils, the co-sponsors under the funding agreement. Once that was done, the government paid two components of that sum - that is, the one-off grant of \$100 000 and the first instalment of \$50 000 for the youth program - to the City of Fremantle. The request for the second instalment of \$50 000 was made by the foundation, and, in an act of good faith, the second instalment was paid in advance to the foundation.

However, it became clear that apart from the Cities of Fremantle and Geraldton, no other councils would contribute to the foundation. I do not know why that occurred. However, there was apparently a reluctance on behalf of the foundation to have the *Duyfken* visit those other regions, for whatever reasons, which were probably very good reasons.

The Office of Crime Prevention, which was responsible for handling the youth programs, reviewed the performance of the Duyfken Foundation in running the programs. The office found that the foundation was in breach of the service obligations. It notified the foundation that it was withholding any further funding and sought details on how the money paid was acquitted.

I do not want to go too much further into that. However, it is clear that the state formed a part of a multi-level and very significant co-funding rescue package, which had been facilitated by the Mayor of the City of Fremantle, and the City of Fremantle had been extremely helpful in acting as the recipient and distributor. However, for whatever reason, the funding package either was not enough or did not all come through. That brings us to where we are now.

I am grateful to Hon Simon O'Brien for bringing the matter to the attention of government. It is a matter that until today, had I been asked about it, I thought was adequately covered. I had no idea that there are still issues outstanding because recently we participated in that rescue package. If there are issues outstanding, the government appreciates its attention being drawn to them. The wording of the motion is inappropriate. It is not appropriate for a motion to call on this house to ask the government to provide assistance, especially given that the motion is not necessarily well-informed about the assistance package that the government is already a part of. Nor should it call on this house to ask the government for an appropriation of funds. Nonetheless, it draws the government's attention to the issues. On this occasion I am speaking for the Premier, but the motion enables the appropriate ministers to consider what assistance could be provided. The government will vote against the motion because it cannot be seen to be supporting a motion that calls on the government to contribute funds without a cost-benefit analysis being undertaken. That does not mean the government is not sympathetic to the issue that is raised, nor appreciative of the fact that it was raised in this context.

I will touch on one further aspect of the issue before the house. I did not have much knowledge of this issue, but the question of gifting the *Duyfken* to the state has been raised recently and some state agencies have considered that matter. The problem with gifting something like the *Duyfken* is that wooden ships are expensive mistresses to keep. The capital cost alone for the Fremantle Maritime Museum to build a slip facility to handle the *Duyfken* has been assessed at between \$3 million and \$3.5 million. That is a big ask, as much as the government regards the *Duyfken* as extremely significant and, in its own right, a thing of great beauty. I have spent hours poring over the *Duyfken*. I particularly appreciate it.

Hon Simon O'Brien: It would be a pleasure to be keelhauled on it.

Hon KIM CHANCE: And it would not take long.

Hon Simon O'Brien: No, it's only little.

Hon Norman Moore: How did you get into it?

Hon KIM CHANCE: I made most of my observations from the wharf. The first time I saw it, it was tied up at the marina in Geraldton. It provided me with the unique opportunity to inspect it in great detail without actually climbing aboard. It would be a challenge for me to manoeuvre my way through it.

I hope we can find proper and appropriate solutions. It is a real asset to the state. It is a replica; therefore, the amount of resources the museum can contribute are obviously limited by that fact. Even so, it is an important part of our heritage. The fact that it was built so faithfully to the original construction methods of vessels of 400 years ago has been a tremendous experience and adds greatly to the asset. The government appreciates Hon Simon O'Brien raising the matter. It will most certainly consider the issues that he and Hon Ken Baston have brought to its attention.

I regret that the government has to oppose the motion because of the nature of it and for no other reason. I thank members for their attention.

HON SIMON O'BRIEN (South Metropolitan) [2.44 pm]: I thank members for their contributions. I am also aware of some of the ongoing problems of keeping a full-scale working model of a 400-year-old wooden sailing vessel that is unique in the world at this time and has been for centuries the only one of its kind afloat. It is difficult.

I know the Leader of the House has a particular interest in this matter. On another occasion when we have more time, he and I may have an opportunity to discuss it further. We do not have time now because there is other important business that I know the house needs to move on to.

Hon Kim Chance: I was a former member of the committee that looked into old wrecks.

Hon SIMON O'BRIEN: What role did the Leader of the House have? Was he the patron, mascot or exhibit A?

Hon Kim Chance: As a matter of coincidence, we also looked at the *Batavia* and the *Zuytdorp*.

Hon SIMON O'BRIEN: Was that the Phil Pental committee?

Hon Kim Chance: Pental, Tomlinson and Chance.

Hon SIMON O'BRIEN: It shows, because the Leader of the House has a good understanding of the matters I have been describing. That was before my time as a member, but I have read the report with great interest.

Hon Kim Chance: It was an excellent report.

Hon SIMON O'BRIEN: It was a committee I would love to have been involved in.

Hon Kim Chance: It was my first contact with the *Duyfken*.

Hon Norman Moore: It never came to Western Australia in its original form.

Hon SIMON O'BRIEN: The Court and Gallop governments have contributed over the years. From time to time they were and have been approached for financial assistance. It costs a lot to keep this sort of operation going. This is a critical activity that needs to be sustained, otherwise it will go backwards and we will risk losing the ship. We can spend a lot of money and get nowhere if we are not careful with this particular type of vessel.

I note that there was a commitment entered into for a three-year \$50 000 per annum package of youth activities for the At Risk Youth initiative and I applaud that. In our term of government I was pleased to be involved in getting \$600 000 out of the Department of Education and Training for similar activities. It was given not as a lump of money for anything, but to be applied to a program whereby the Department of Education and Training purchased youth activities from the sail training ship *Leeuwin*. It was having difficulties at that time. The government was not handing out money to be thrown down the black hole but for the training ship to get back on a business footing.

This motion is not about the ongoing things of administration and the rest of it, but about the specific circumnavigation, as part of putting Australia on the map for the 400th anniversary celebration of that 1606 event. Let us face it, it is celebrating the 400th anniversary of what happened in 1606. What happened in 1606? The *Duyfken*, nothing else. There are plenty of things to celebrate, but only one of them happened 400 years ago, and we will look silly if we are not involved in this event. I thank the Leader of the House for taking this motion on board. I appreciate that he cannot give a full response on behalf of the government. We look forward to the response of the Premier. This is so significant that the Premier should be involved. It is a good news story. I have a reasonable degree of confidence that in due course he will be involved in it, hard hat and all. We could talk about it happily for a time.

I will conclude on this point: the Leader of the House noted in his closing remarks on behalf of the government that a vessel like this is an expensive mistress to keep. I am not about keeping expensive mistresses. Mrs O'Brien takes care of all of my time and money, so I do not have any requirement for them. The Leader of the House said that it is an expensive mistress to keep. I suggest, through the Leader of the House, to the government that this is a fine ambassador to keep. Either way it is ours and it needs to be looked after. I commend the motion to the house.

Question put and a division taken with the following result -

Ayes (12)

Hon Ken Baston
Hon George Cash
Hon Peter Collier

Hon Anthony Fels
Hon Nigel Hallett
Hon Ray Halligan

Hon Norman Moore
Hon Helen Morton
Hon Simon O'Brien

Hon Margaret Rowe
Hon Donna Taylor
Hon Bruce Donaldson (*Teller*)

Noes (11)

Hon Matt Benson-Lidholm
Hon Kim Chance
Hon Kate Doust

Hon Sue Ellery
Hon Graham Giffard
Hon Sheila Mills

Hon Louise Pratt
Hon Ljiljana Ravlich
Hon Sally Talbot

Hon Ken Travers
Hon Ed Dermer (*Teller*)

Pairs

Hon Murray Criddle
Hon Barry House
Hon Robyn McSweeney
Hon Barbara Scott

Hon Adele Farina
Hon Vincent Catania
Hon Shelley Archer
Hon Jon Ford

Question thus passed.