

NAVAL SHIPBUILDING PLAN — FEDERAL GOVERNMENT — BRIEFING

25. Mr S.K. L'ESTRANGE to the Minister for Defence Issues:

I have a supplementary question. The Minister for Defence Issues has said he refused a briefing.
Several members interjected.

Mr S.K. L'ESTRANGE: Since becoming Western Australia's Minister for Defence Issues, how many times has the minister met with or had conversations with either the commonwealth Minister for Defence or the commonwealth Minister for Defence Industry and what priorities for Western Australia did the minister discuss?

The SPEAKER: This is not a supplementary question; it is not to do with the major question.

Mr P. PAPALIA replied:

That is an extraordinary supplementary question. The member knows full well that the Minister for Defence Industry—the Liberal minister for South Australia's defence industry!—came to Western Australia and took him for a drive in his car but was too afraid to meet with me!

Mr S.K. L'Estrange: I never got in. I drove myself, minister! I was by myself. Your fascination with cars has nothing to do with the question!

Mr P. PAPALIA: What were you doing in that car?

Mr S.K. L'Estrange: I drove myself to Cockburn.

Mr P. PAPALIA: Here is the thing, member —

Mr S.K. L'Estrange: I drove myself.

The SPEAKER: Member, we know you think you drove yourself, but you are driving me crazy calling it out all the time, so let the minister finish.

Mr P. PAPALIA: Here is the thing: the former government had eight and a half years to get a better deal for Western Australia and what did we get?

Dr M.D. Nahan interjected.

The SPEAKER: Leader of the Opposition, I call you to order for the first time. Can you not understand —

Dr M.D. Nahan interjected.

The SPEAKER: I call you to order for the second time. Are you happy or do you want to go again?

Mr P. PAPALIA: Some staff from the minister's office were in my office about four days before he came to Western Australia on the occasion that the shadow minister met him. My staff asked whether he was coming in the near term so that I could meet with him; and, if that were to occur, my staff asked whether it would be possible for the minister to meet with me and chat about the arrangements for naval shipbuilding in particular. The response from Minister Pyne's staff was, "No, he's not coming and we'll let you know if he is." About four days later, in a prearranged press stunt, Minister Pyne came to Western Australia, met with the shadow minister and he did not talk to us! I cannot help it if the federal minister is afraid to meet with me in Western Australia.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Minister, wrap it up.

Mr P. PAPALIA: Maybe he saw what happened with Premier Weatherill in South Australia and was afraid the same thing would happen.

Dr M.D. Nahan interjected.

Mr P. PAPALIA: I guarantee the Leader of the Opposition that I will meet the minister any time he wants. I have asked for a meeting and we are going to meet him in Canberra in about two weeks.

The SPEAKER: Minister, wrap it up.

Mr P. PAPALIA: The suggestion that we have refused to meet him is just laughable.