

EXTENDED WEEKNIGHT RETAIL TRADING HOURS

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

I refer to recent comments by the chief executive officer of the Tourism Council Western Australia, Mr Graeme Moss, that Perth needs extended trading hours to shake off its Dullsville image. I ask the Premier to explain how the Liberal Party's extension of weeknight trading hours will help to boost tourism to the state, especially for Scarborough Beach?

Several members interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** I think the question was asked of the Premier, not anybody else in this place. Nobody else in this place was asked the question.

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

I thank the member for Scarborough for the question. The question relates to the whole of Western Australia's tourism industry, a very important industry, particularly for small business and the strong retail component that makes up that industry. It is obviously important in the metropolitan area, including Scarborough. Scarborough and Cottesloe are the prime beachfront areas of the state.

**Mr A.P. O'Gorman** interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** I consistently hear the member for Joondalup's interjections. I would appreciate fewer interjections and I formally call him for the first time.

**Mr C.J. BARNETT:** Staged deregulation in line with the wants of the community is what should happen.

**Mr P.B. Watson** interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** I formally call the member for Albany for the second time.

**Mr C.J. BARNETT:** As far as Perth is concerned, the last significant measure on deregulation was in 1994, when the Liberal-National government took the step of creating two tourism precincts—Perth and Fremantle—because visitors to this state from overseas, interstate and country areas continually complained about the lack of opportunity to do some shopping as part of their visit. That was in 1994. Surely we can now take a further step. All this government is proposing is the most modest of steps. All we are saying is that Perth people should be able to go shopping after six o'clock at night. They are big people, they are grown up and, I think, they are allowed out after six o'clock. They should be able to shop if they wish until nine o'clock. It is fundamental to the tourism industry. It is an industry that is labour intensive and small business intensive, and it is spread throughout Perth and throughout country areas.

Tourists, whether travelling on holiday, business or whatever it might be, like to spend. They like to buy gifts. They like to go shopping. From surveys conducted year in, year out, the strongest negative about tourism in Western Australia is the lack of capacity of visitors to Perth to go shopping. It is borne out by the figures. The average visitor —

**Ms M.M. Quirk** interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** I want to hear the Premier's remarks. Some members do not want to hear the Premier's remarks, and I appreciate that. Members of this place have different opinions. I ask the member for Girrawheen to desist from interjecting and I formally call her for the second time.

**Mr C.J. BARNETT:** The average visitor to an east coast capital city—I am referring to interstate and overseas visitors—spends \$125 per day. Do members know what they spend in Perth? It is \$93 per day. There is \$32 a day lost in retail expenditure in Perth. Why do the same visitors spend more in Sydney, Melbourne, Adelaide, Brisbane and even Hobart than they spend here? It is because the shops are not open here. In the metropolitan area, the City of Joondalup wants the status of a tourism precinct. The only thing standing in its way is the member for Joondalup.

This is not radical; this is about the freedom of adults in Western Australia to choose to go out after six o'clock and shop if they wish. This is not of the scale of freedoms brought about by the bringing down of the Berlin Wall. This freedom is about the right to go shopping. I advise members on both sides of the house that there has been no change of any consequence since 1994.

**Mr A.P. O'Gorman** interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** I know that the member for Joondalup has a particular interest in this, but I formally call him for the second time.

**Mr C.J. BARNETT:** There has been some change in Western Australia. Why? It is because businesses and consumers in many towns and visitors to many towns want to go shopping. For the information of members, I will read out the short list of the towns in Western Australia that have some level of deregulation—some have weeknight trading and some have Sunday trading. It is interesting, and I will go through them alphabetically. Albany is right up there; Augusta; Margaret River; Bunbury; Busselton; Dandaragan, which is Jurien; Dardanup; Denmark; Donnybrook; Norseman; Gingin; Harvey; Dongara; Kalgoorlie; and Mandurah. Mandurah people can shop when they want to, but the member for Mandurah voted against Perth people doing it. What a clown! Other towns include Pemberton, Mingenew and, with due respect to my friends on this side, even Narembeen. In Narembeen people can whoop it up after six o'clock and go out shopping. It is alive in Narembeen! They can live in Narembeen! Well done Narembeen! Closer to home, the people in Northam can go out and shop. The people in Northampton can live it up. Even at Horrocks Beach people can go shopping. People in Mt Barker can go shopping. But, gee whiz, people cannot in Joondalup and they cannot in Perth. For goodness sake, join the twenty-first century and help people. For goodness sake, trust people to make up their minds. Members opposite are dinosaurs and they are in the Dark Ages. They are totally out of touch. The member for Albany waves a dummy around. I suggest that he walk down the main street of Albany and ask people whether they like deregulated shopping hours, because they have them.