

Speaker; Mr Eric Ripper; Mr Chris Tallentire; Mr Colin Barnett; Mr Bill Marmion; Mr John Kobelke; Mr Mark McGowan; Mr Rob Johnson; Mr Troy Buswell; Mr Christian Porter; Mr Brendon Grylls; Ms Adele Carles

MARGARET RIVER BUSHFIRES — MINISTER FOR ENVIRONMENT — NO CONFIDENCE

Matter of Public Interest

THE SPEAKER (Mr G.A. Woodhams): Members, today I received within the prescribed time a letter from the Leader of the Opposition in the following terms —

That the House —

Expresses no confidence in the Minister for Environment given the events of the Margaret River bushfires.

That matter appears to me to be in order. If at least five members stand and support the matter being discussed, and there are, the matter can proceed.

[At least five members rose in their places.]

MR E.S. RIPPER (Belmont — Leader of the Opposition) [3.09 pm]: I move —

That the house expresses no confidence in the Minister for Environment given the events of the Margaret River bushfires.

A no-confidence motion in a minister is a very serious matter. It is a matter of applying political consequences for past mistakes, but it is also an expression of the view of the house about the future. On this occasion, with this minister, the expression “lack of confidence” has real resonance with community opinion. Out there, amongst Western Australians, there is no confidence that this is the right minister to preside over an important government agency.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: I would like to be able to hear the Leader of the Opposition’s perspective on this. I do not need anybody else’s perspective at this stage; nobody else’s perspective, just the Leader of the Opposition’s

Mr E.S. RIPPER: There is a real lack of confidence in our community that this is the right minister to preside over an important government agency, ahead of a very dangerous fire season.

Let us remember what has actually happened. Let us strip away all the jargon and all the spin and come down to what has actually happened. The government lit a fire that burnt down about 40 houses. That is the summary of what has happened. The minister has been so hypnotised by the government’s spin doctors that when that proposition was put to him on radio this morning, he could not even concede that this prescribed burn was a mistake. It burnt down 40 houses, and he says, “Let’s wait for the inquiry.” That is a minister completely beguiled by the spin that the government spin doctors have put to him.

The government’s spin has not stopped there. Last week, the government pulled out all stops to make sure that the coverage on Thursday night specified that the burn was lit on 6 September. Well, something was lit on 6 September, but the Department of Environment and Conservation was out there lighting fires on Sunday, 20 November, and Monday, 21 November. So, the department was dropping incendiaries at a time when the weather forecasts for the three days following the Monday events were for maximum temperatures of 33, 36 and 36 degrees; moreover, strong northerly winds were forecast. That is the nub of the issue; the government lit a fire in dangerous circumstances on the Monday and, later that week, 40 houses were burnt down as a result of that government action. As a talkback caller said, “Why didn’t they mop up the existing fire on Monday? Why did they light more fires on the Monday?”

There has been further government spin. The government is basically saying that with prescribed burns there are risks, and stuff happens. That is what the government is saying—stuff happens! Well, if we accept the government at its word, then we are going to look at losing 120-odd houses every year, because that has been the record this year. If the government’s excuse is just “stuff happens”, then our community has to prepare for 120 houses to be lost every year; that is not an acceptable government response.

The minister has been an advocate of prescribed burns, he has been a promoter of prescribed burns, he has been a booster for the prescribed burning program, and he has come into the house and boasted about the prescribed burning program. That, of course, has sent a message to his department. There may not be a direct memorandum from him instructing his department about the level of the prescribed burn program, but there certainly has been a degree of at least indirect political pressure on the Department of Environment and Conservation to get on with the prescribed burning program. There cannot be any other set of circumstances when the minister comes into this place and answers dorothy dixer after dorothy dixer at question time, boasting about the prescribed burning program; of course the department would feel under government pressure to get on with that program. That may

Speaker; Mr Eric Ripper; Mr Chris Tallentire; Mr Colin Barnett; Mr Bill Marmion; Mr John Kobelke; Mr Mark McGowan; Mr Rob Johnson; Mr Troy Buswell; Mr Christian Porter; Mr Brendon Grylls; Ms Adele Carles

well have led the department, under this minister's leadership, to take risks that it should not have taken with that program.

There is no evidence in the minister's public comments that he has thought much about the risks or cared much about the risks. If members go over what the minister has said, there does not seem to be any proper discussion of a risk-management policy for prescribed burns. There does not seem to be any discussion of his engagement with the department on that issue, or any discussion of whether or not he has approved the policy, approved elements of it, or asked for amendments. The minister does not seem to have cared about, or considered, the risks of prescribed burning, and he does not seem to care now, which is astounding. We have had this fire that has burnt down 40 houses, and at question time the minister conceded there are going to be more prescribed burns between now and Christmas. The Premier talks about an inquiry. We are not going to get the result from an inquiry until after the bushfire season. Is the minister taking any interim action? No; the minister is not taking any interim action! So, we are going to have more prescribed burns, but we are not going to have any change to the processes that contributed to the burning down of 40 houses last week.

The minister just does not get what it takes to be a minister. Ministers have to actually take responsibility and take charge of the portfolio and manage the department, and the minister is just not doing that. There is no evidence that he discussed the risk-management policy with the department, and there is not even any demonstration from the government that there is a formal policy. I imagine there is, but it is amazing that the minister has not introduced it into the public debate. The minister has serious questions to answer. Is there a risk-management policy? What was the minister's involvement in it? Was the policy followed? Were adequate resources provided for the department?

Then we come to the minister's public communication role. Quite frankly, the minister has been a complete failure in his role as a public communicator on his portfolio. I saw the Premier say on television that ministerial performance at press conferences is not all it takes to be a minister; nevertheless, ministerial ability to communicate is an important part of the job, particularly when issues of public safety are at stake. The minister's performance is destroying public confidence in the prescribed burning program, the minister's performance is destroying public confidence in fire management, and the minister's performance is destroying public confidence in public safety during bushfires at the start of a very dangerous bushfire season. Members of the government know this is the case. They know that the minister's poor communication is actually destroying the government's position on a range of issues, but, more importantly, destroying public confidence, which needs to be sustained on these very important issues. The minister has been confused, complacent, muddled and incompetent; he does not—he cannot—inspire confidence in his ability to carry the state through in this portfolio. The motion is about the bad decisions that have been made and ministerial accountability for those bad decisions, but it is also about heading off more bad decisions and more poor communication in the future.

Earlier this year I talked about the “swamp of incompetence” that has drowned the Minister for Emergency Services. That swamp of incompetence is now engulfing his partner in crime, the Minister for Environment. He is drowning in that swamp of incompetence. What has their strategy been? Their strategy has been to say, “It's operational”, and their strategy has been to blame the public servants. Insofar as I am aware, the only major head of a line agency with operational independence is the Commissioner of Police; the Director General of the Department of Environment and Conservation does not have operational independence. Like any other director general, he is subject to ministerial direction, ministerial accountability, and ministerial control. There is a government strategy to destroy the department to save the minister. It is pretty clear. They are setting up Keiran McNamara to take the fall, just as they made Jo Harrison-Ward in the Fire and Emergency Services Authority take the fall. They are setting up Mr Commins to take the fall in the Department of Environment and Conservation. They will destroy the careers of individual public servants to save the ministerial career of the Minister for Environment.

This is not a junior portfolio; it is a senior portfolio that involves serious risks for the public. Weak ministerial leadership counts. Weak ministerial leadership is a risk to the community. Weak ministerial leadership in this portfolio is a danger to public safety. This minister has to go. The minister should resign or the Premier should dismiss him. This is not just a question of the minister's mistakes, his department's serious error and the damage that has been done to all those lives in Margaret River; this is also about the future and the level of public confidence we in Western Australia might have in that future ahead of a very dangerous season. It is also about standards in the Premier's government. What standards is he going to enforce? What standards of competence is he going to require in his government? He talks about better government and he talks about high standards. Now it is his demand; now it is his turn to act; now it is his turn to show exactly what his standards really are in government.

MR C.J. TALLENTIRE (Gosnells) [3.21 pm]: I rise to support this motion of no confidence in the Minister for Environment. There is no doubt that prescribed burning is an essential part of keeping the Western Australian

Extract from *Hansard*

[ASSEMBLY — Tuesday, 29 November 2011]

p9983d-9995a

Speaker; Mr Eric Ripper; Mr Chris Tallentire; Mr Colin Barnett; Mr Bill Marmion; Mr John Kobelke; Mr Mark McGowan; Mr Rob Johnson; Mr Troy Buswell; Mr Christian Porter; Mr Brendon Grylls; Ms Adele Carles

community fire safe. It is essential that the community has confidence in the state's prescribed burning program. I am concerned that this minister does not understand the critical nature of timing when it comes to the good use of prescribed burning. This minister does not ask the necessary questions of his agency to make sure that fire plans are properly designed and are going to be safe for our community.

The minister needs to address a key issue. When he was considering events around the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting, did he say to his agency that it must not be involved in prescribed burns in the lead-up to CHOGM? I await the minister's answer to that question. Was he or his agency involved in stopping prescribed burning during CHOGM?

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Members!

Mr C.J. TALLENTIRE: I take it from the minister's silence —

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: I provide instruction to the member for Gosnells that if you are seeking an answer, you will get interjections. I say to those interjecting that I am interested in hearing from the member for Gosnells. I want to hear what he is saying. I do not want to hear interjections.

Mr C.J. TALLENTIRE: I think from the minister's silence it is obvious that an increased risk was brought about because we did not use the ideal prescribed burning opportunity that occurred in October. Instead, the program was deferred and DEC had to start re-igniting fires in late November, in late spring, at a time of very high fire risk, when the potential for fires to get out of control is extremely heightened. That was the problem. Prescribed burning was going on not only at Margaret River but also at Denmark, which also got out of control. A prescribed burn near Nannup also got out of control. They were other prescribed burns at a time of year when the risk is greatly heightened, yet we were stretching firefighting resources right across the state—resources that should have been involved in prescribed burning much earlier in the season.

We have a minister who failed to ask the necessary questions about staffing and competency and of the training that people have been involved in. We have a minister who is prepared to accept that things such as the burning history might be irrelevant. He does not ask questions about the vegetation. I am not saying the minister should pore over maps and ask questions about when particular blocks will be burnt and seek very minute details. I am saying that we need a minister who refers to the general policies such as the Department of Environment and Conservation's policy 19 and asks whether it is the correct process. We need a minister who refers to documents that relate to the interagency agreements, particularly the agreement between DEC and FESA.

As I was saying before, there is a question mark over the missed opportunity around CHOGM. Is it the case that DEC actually failed to honour its commitments under its fire management policy 19? It failed to respect the requirement to liaise with other agencies; it failed to consider other events in the community; and it failed to consider the fact that prescribed burns must be managed to reduce the risk of smoke that causes detrimental impacts on populations here and in other sensitive areas. It failed. If the minister is saying that there was no consultation with other agencies, he is acknowledging in fact that the agency did not honour the commitments of its own policies.

I return to the issue of CHOGM. Talkback callers phoned in to say that they had heard there had been a ban on prescribed burning during CHOGM. We also have the data from the Department of Environment and Conservation's own website on air quality monitoring, which shows that particulate levels over Busselton and Bunbury were at a very reduced level during CHOGM. That means that no prescribed burning was going on over that time, so I want to hear from the minister why there was no prescribed burning during CHOGM. Was it the case that this minister, too weak to stand up to other agencies and too weak to press the need for the prioritisation of prescribed burning, let things go and missed a perfect opportunity, which meant that our burning had to be done at the very dangerous time of late spring?

MR C.J. BARNETT (Cottesloe — Premier) [3.26 pm]: I want to make a number of comments about what was clearly a very serious fire in the Margaret River area. As members know, the fire burnt out more than 3 000 hectares. It was a large fire with a perimeter of 42 kilometres and a long, exposed flank of some 20 kilometres, any part of which could have broken out at any moment. The damage is well known: 32 homes, nine chalets and six sheds or out buildings were destroyed and a further 19 buildings, 17 of which were homes, were damaged.

I restate from the government our sympathy to those who lost their homes and to those who saw severe damage to their homes. I visited the area on Thursday around midday. At that stage the fire was still raging and it was obvious to anyone that it was in an extremely precarious position. The prognosis by late afternoon was that, had there been a wind change from the north west to the south west, the whole western flank of Margaret River itself

Speaker; Mr Eric Ripper; Mr Chris Tallentire; Mr Colin Barnett; Mr Bill Marmion; Mr John Kobelke; Mr Mark McGowan; Mr Rob Johnson; Mr Troy Buswell; Mr Christian Porter; Mr Brendon Grylls; Ms Adele Carles

could have been exposed to fire; the fire might have even come into the town and potentially up to a further 500 properties were at risk. That was the reality on the Thursday. Anyone in the district would have been aware that the winds were 40 to 45 kilometres an hour, gusting to more than 60 kilometres an hour. Indeed, the wind was so strong that not just the tents but the transportable sheds that were being used for the command centre were almost lifting off the ground. It was an extremely precarious situation and an extreme weather condition.

I also want to take this opportunity to once more express our gratitude to the firefighters involved. More than 1 170 personnel were directly engaged in fighting the fire from DEC, FESA, local government, local brigades and volunteers. In addition, large numbers of police were blocking roads to ensure that people did not place themselves or anyone else at risk. The Department for Child Protection, the Red Cross and the like, were also involved. Also some 383 vehicles, fire fighting appliances, water bombers, fixed aircraft and helicopters were deployed. An enormous deployment of resources was brought together, in my view, very, very quickly. It was almost a military operation.

On the Thursday afternoon, along with the member for Vasse, I attended and spoke at the community gathering at which I estimate 400 or 500 people were present. People were clearly in a state of shock. They were distressed and tearful; they were frightened—not only those who had lost their homes or did not know whether their homes had been lost, but those who had been evacuated and knew that their homes, properties and maybe pets and animals were at risk. I am sure there was anger, and there was certainly some anger in phone calls to the media, but I must say that I detected no anger at that meeting. I spoke to a large number of people and no-one expressed anger. They were in a situation that you would expect. They were very forthcoming in their praise and appreciation for the firefighters. At that stage, over 400 firefighters were in the field physically fighting the fire. It is probably not much comfort at all to those who have lost their homes, but the fact is that the firefighters, arguably, saved up to 500 homes in that fire. That was a remarkable achievement, and they deserve our gratitude and appreciation.

The government has acted to provide assistance and will continue to do so. Immediately \$3 000 was —

Ms M.M. Quirk interjected.

Mr C.J. BARNETT: So ungracious! Immediately \$3 000 was made available for anyone who had lost their home and \$1 000 for those who had experienced damage. That was money simply for clothing, temporary accommodation, food and whatever they required on the spot, bearing in mind that people had fled, in many cases, with just the clothes on their backs. The Department for Child Protection is also providing assistance and continues to do so with shelter, clothes, food and counselling, particularly as many people come to the realisation of the extent of the losses they have experienced.

Yesterday I declared the area a natural disaster. That will immediately start the process of support and assistance, both through the commonwealth and state under the Western Australian Natural Disaster Relief and Recovery Arrangements, and this morning the government made a \$500 000 donation to the Lord Mayor's Disaster Relief Fund. We will continue to work with the community to make sure that all community support is available to them.

Mr E.S. Ripper: If the government lit the fire that burnt down the houses, you will have to pay compensation.

Mr C.J. BARNETT: It is clear that the cause of the fire was embers that came from the prescribed burn within the Leeuwin–Naturaliste National Park. How that happened will be determined. That particular prescribed burning had been going on since 6 September. It was not concluded and there was a need, in the view of those in charge of the operation, to try to destabilise and contain the fire and prevent an outbreak. Unfortunately, it went wrong—it went badly wrong and the result was the devastating fire that we saw.

There needs to be, and there will be, an investigation into how this occurred, whether errors were made, how they came to be made—if that is the case—and how the fire was managed. I would like to assure the house that this investigation will be independent and thorough and will get underway as soon as possible.

Mr E.S. Ripper: Is Mr Keelty going to do it?

Mr C.J. BARNETT: I will provide details when the terms of reference, and the person or powers used to conduct that inquiry, are determined. That is something that is being addressed today.

Mr E.S. Ripper: When are we likely to hear that?

Mr C.J. BARNETT: If I will be allowed to continue, Mr Speaker. I will provide further details in the next few days on that investigation.

As I said, clearly something went wrong with this prescribed burn, and that will be examined. The investigation that will be undertaken will not be an inquiry into prescribed burning as such; it will be an investigation into this

Speaker; Mr Eric Ripper; Mr Chris Tallentire; Mr Colin Barnett; Mr Bill Marmion; Mr John Kobelke; Mr Mark McGowan; Mr Rob Johnson; Mr Troy Buswell; Mr Christian Porter; Mr Brendon Grylls; Ms Adele Carles

fire and the circumstances that led to it, and the management of the fire. It remains essential that prescribed burning continues to be used as a prime method of prevention of fire.

Mr E.S. Ripper: It has taken you a while to get to the defence of the minister

Mr C.J. BARNETT: I have been going for a few minutes.

There will no doubt be other issues that may not directly relate to the investigation that will come from this fire and will follow from previous fires. There will be issues about the appropriateness of subdivisions in heavily treed areas. That will have to come up. Local governments—I am not blaming local governments—have approved subdivisions, and people choose that lifestyle. If members look—as I and many others have done—at the aerial photographs of that area, not only were there very small clearings around many of the houses, but also trees actually overhanging the houses. When we have a wall of flame of 30 feet, clearly that was not going to be possible. Also, there are issues of how to get safely in and out of an area, such as some of the coastal towns, with single tracks leading into houses; it is not reasonable to expect fire crews in an erratic and violent fire to head down single tracks to try to preserve and protect property.

Mr E.S. Ripper: We must have thousands of houses like that.

Mr C.J. BARNETT: I am sure we do. Obviously, information will come forward on the weather forecasts and the advice given to the DEC crews at the time —

Mr M.P. Whitely: What about the CHOGM question?

Mr C.J. BARNETT: I will get to the CHOGM question. On the issue of clearing around homes, the responsibility of government, firefighting agencies, local government and homeowners themselves, again the Keely report titled “A Shared Responsibility” is appropriate.

With respect to the issue of ministerial responsibility, this fire has occurred under a Liberal–National government. As a government, we accept responsibility. We are the government. We have a responsibility. I accept the responsibility as Premier. The Minister for Environment has stated publicly that he accepts responsibility for his agency, as does the Minister for Emergency Services and any other area of government responsibility that comes in. But accepting ministerial responsibility is accepting one’s role as a minister. It is not to say that, in any sense, the minister is directly liable, culpable or at fault. That is not what the Westminster system is about. It is accepting ministerial responsibility to acknowledge that something has happened and that something has gone wrong, and to accept that we take responsibility now to deal with it. That is what ministerial responsibility is about. Interestingly enough, while the Leader of the Opposition and elements of the media try to stir it up and take some sort of political advantage, the people of Western Australia understand that. They intuitively, instinctively understand that. They know a minister is not, in a sense, at fault or guilty of starting a fire. They understand that, and the Leader of the Opposition demeans public debate and patronises the public of Western Australia when he says that. Ministerial responsibility is accepting that we are the people, if you like, where the buck stops—a term that the minister used.

Mr E.S. Ripper: The twenty-first century definition of ministerial responsibility!

Mr C.J. BARNETT: Look at your record! I am not going to do this, but the Leader of the Opposition should look at his record and his repeated failure to accept ministerial responsibility. There has been repeated failure by the Leader of the Opposition as a former minister, and by the member for Girrawheen and others. They did not do what the Minister for Environment did. The minister stood up and said, “I am the minister. I accept ministerial responsibility”, as I have said as Premier. Something that was quite noticeable in the Labor years was that members opposite invariably failed to do so. You failed to do so repeatedly, so do not come in here in a self-righteous, pious way when, in government, you repeatedly failed to do what I have done and what the Minister for Environment has done.

We do accept responsibility; and we do accept responsibility to have an independent and thorough investigation that can get underway immediately. We will not try to apportion blame and to blame a minister, a department or an individual, or call for someone’s head to roll. What we will do is the appropriate thing: we will get to the facts and we will find out exactly what happened in this situation. That is what ministerial responsibility is about.

For the Leader of the Opposition, someone who is an experienced member of Parliament who has held senior office in this state and who has a responsibility as the Leader of the Opposition, to be on the radio and in the Parliament today saying this government lit a fire and burnt down 40 homes—talk about political expediency and inappropriate language! It is an appalling approach to take.

Several members interjected.

Speaker; Mr Eric Ripper; Mr Chris Tallentire; Mr Colin Barnett; Mr Bill Marmion; Mr John Kobelke; Mr Mark McGowan; Mr Rob Johnson; Mr Troy Buswell; Mr Christian Porter; Mr Brendon Grylls; Ms Adele Carles

The SPEAKER: I remind everybody in this house that we have a very serious motion in front of us, and I expect every member in this place not to treat it lightly and to recognise the sensitivity around this particular issue at this moment for many people.

Mr C.J. BARNETT: The public, and particularly those affected by the fire, although they have huge damage, loss of property, and although there was a vehicle accident in the Nannup fire, in the Margaret River fire there was fortunately no accident and no loss of life, which could easily have been the case. People know how close they came to that situation. They also know that something went wrong with the prescribed burn. They live in an environment where prescribed burning takes place, in the south west. The vast majority of them know that it is essential. Some are totally opposed to prescribed burning; that is their point of view, but I do not suspect they are in any way in the majority or that it is a widespread view. People know that prescribed burns will go wrong. I do not excuse what happened in this case; this went badly wrong and caused widespread damage to property. The public of Western Australia do not expect members of Parliament—to whom they look for leadership in handling a situation—to come in with cheap one-liners, accusations and calls for heads to roll. The public expects us to deal with the problems seriously and properly and the government is doing that.

Ms M.M. Quirk interjected.

Mr C.J. BARNETT: The member for Girrawheen interrupts. If ever a minister failed in responsibility, it was the member for Girrawheen with the death of Mr Ward. Do not come in and lecture us on ministerial responsibility. I will not go back into that history, but the public of Western Australia expects us to deal with this. It is my responsibility, along with the ministers concerned, to ensure that the investigation is done well and that it is independent, thorough and timely. We will do that.

In response to some of the comments made by the member for Gosnells, I would guess that the member for Gosnells does not believe in prescribed burning. He did not share that with us.

Several members interjected.

Mr C.J. BARNETT: I do not know whether he does or not.

Mr E.S. Ripper: You just made that up as well.

Mr C.J. BARNETT: I said that I do not know whether he believes in it or not. Perhaps he can tell us whether he believes in prescribed burning.

Mr C.J. Tallentire: I just said yes.

Mr C.J. BARNETT: Okay, he does. All right.

Several members interjected.

Mr P. Papalia interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Warnbro, I formally call you to order for the third time today.

Mr C.J. BARNETT: The contribution of the member for Gosnells was to somehow blame the fire on the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting. I remember CHOGM pretty well. To blame the —

Mr E.S. Ripper interjected.

Mr C.J. BARNETT: Just be quiet! Why the member would raise CHOGM is a bit astounding, but —

Mr W.J. Johnston interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Cannington, I formally call you to order for the second time today. Premier, I think you are endeavouring to answer some questions.

Mr C.J. BARNETT: I was trying to address the CHOGM point that the member for Gosnells raised. If we think back to CHOGM, we remember that there was very heavy rain during the early part of that week. In fact, I was a bit worried about the garden party, to be honest.

Mr C.J. Tallentire: Not in Margaret River!

The SPEAKER: Thank you, members!

Mr C.J. BARNETT: There was heavy rain through that week —

Mr C.J. Tallentire: In Perth!

Mr C.J. BARNETT: Please listen. If someone were to ask me the rhetorical question, “Would we have prescribed burning in the Perth hills during CHOGM when we have 53 world leaders, 6 000 visitors and international television coverage?”, the answer would be, “No, we would not”. As if we would have had fires

Speaker; Mr Eric Ripper; Mr Chris Tallentire; Mr Colin Barnett; Mr Bill Marmion; Mr John Kobelke; Mr Mark McGowan; Mr Rob Johnson; Mr Troy Buswell; Mr Christian Porter; Mr Brendon Grylls; Ms Adele Carles

and smoke across Perth as we hosted the biggest event in the state's history since the Commonwealth Games! As prescribed burning was not conducted through CHOGM, that is somehow the cause of the fire! It is an absurd point of view. I conclude with this comment —

Mr M. McGowan: Defend your minister.

Mr C.J. BARNETT: I have not heard from the member for Rockingham yet. I want to say this very clearly: the Minister for Environment has my full confidence. He is doing his job. He has accepted responsibility as a minister, which I expected and which he did immediately. He will work with me and the Minister for Emergency Services to get to the bottom of this issue. If we need to make policy changes, we will make them. We will deal with the issue. We will not come in here and point the finger at department heads or public servants or ministers or whatever else; we will deal with the issue.

Mr E.S. Ripper interjected.

Mr C.J. BARNETT: The Leader of the Opposition will find that I defended them, which he failed to do as a minister. The Leader of the Opposition always likes to rewrite history. I remind the house—I will conclude with this—that when the Leader of the Opposition was a minister and Deputy Premier, he chased out these public servants: Paul Albert, Alan Bansemer, Peter Browne, Mike Harris, Paul Schapper, Andrew Chuk, Derek Carew-Hopkins, Roger Payne and David Eiszele. That was just the Leader of the Opposition's list. Do not come in here and point to anyone else for blaming public servants.

MR W.R. MARMION (Nedlands — Minister for Environment) [3.44 pm]: I begin by acknowledging that the fires in Margaret River were a very tragic accident and had a devastating impact on the community of Margaret River. For that I take full responsibility and I am truly sorry for the impact it has had on all the people down at Margaret River. I went down to Margaret River on Friday and attended a community meeting. I estimate that more than 1 000 people were at the community meeting. The meeting was very well run by the incident controller and the shire president. I listened to all the questions of the people from the community. They were concerned. They want to get their lives back on track and we have to focus on that now. My interest at the moment is to assist all those people who have been impacted by the fire to help them to get their lives back on track.

An investigation will be undertaken into what caused the fire. We all want to know a bit more detail about that; I certainly do. I would like to offer my sincere appreciation to all those firefighters, the men and women, the people from the Department of Environment and Conservation, the Fire and Emergency Services Authority and the Forest Products Commission, the volunteer fire brigades and all the volunteers. In fact, the lady behind the hotdog stand on Friday morning had not slept; she had been working all day Thursday and through the night. She typifies the community of Margaret River. Everyone in Margaret River was fantastic. They worked as a terrific community and they got behind all those people who were impacted by the fire. I inform the house that I understand that two DEC staff with roles in the incident management lost their homes, yet they stayed on during the fire to try to put it out. That shows not only the tremendous commitment of the people down at Margaret River and all the volunteer firefighters, but also the dedication of DEC staff.

I have been advised that although the weather is conducive to the mop-up work and the danger has subsided, severe and catastrophic fire conditions have been predicted for later this week in the Pilbara, the Gascoyne and down in the south west division. Once again we might have to call on our volunteer firefighters to put out the fires. The latest update is that it is not all back to normal at Margaret River. To show respect to the privacy of residents, access to the Prevelly and Gnarabup settlements is open only to local residents. The Premier outlined the number of houses, sheds and chalets that have been impacted by the fire. Fifty crew members from DEC, FESA and the brigades are still down there to do the recovery work. The Premier outlined the recovery package that we have put in place, so I will not go through that. Recovery grants of up to \$15 000 are available to primary producers and small businesses. A one-stop shop has been set up by the Department for Communities. That is very important for those people who have been affected and need some assistance. I understand it has worked very well and continues to operate. We are now focusing on the local recovery. The local government, the Shire of Augusta–Margaret River, will lead the recovery effort. We, the state government, will provide all the support that they need.

I will briefly report on the fire. I mentioned it in question time, so I will put on the record the advice I have. Obviously, I sought advice from the department about the burn, so I will put on the record what it has advised me. The prescribed burn of about 127 hectares was commenced on 6 September 2011. Further work on establishing a burn perimeter was carried out on 10 and 11 November. The first core ignition occurred on 15 November with a subsequent core ignition on 16 November, which largely completed the burn except for approximately 50 hectares of unburnt vegetation patches that continued to sustain fire activity. I am advised that

Speaker; Mr Eric Ripper; Mr Chris Tallentire; Mr Colin Barnett; Mr Bill Marmion; Mr John Kobelke; Mr Mark McGowan; Mr Rob Johnson; Mr Troy Buswell; Mr Christian Porter; Mr Brendon Grylls; Ms Adele Carles

an attempt was made to burn out these patches on 20 November, but that this failed, and that an attempt was made again on Monday, 21 November. This is standard practice, as the best way to arrest fire activity is to remove the fuel upon which it is burning. That is normal practice.

On the advice provided to DEC by the Bureau of Meteorology on the afternoon of 20 November, which helped inform the burn decision made on the morning of 21 November, the forecast wind strengths were substantially less than those experienced on Wednesday, 23 November. I am advised that the Bureau of Meteorology has acknowledged this point. The DEC fire experts also advise me that had the fire not been introduced to the burn on 21 November, it is possible that a similar escape could have occurred as a result of the residual fire activity from 16 November, particularly given the warm, dry and windy conditions that eventuated. This is not an excuse, but an explanation and obviously further investigation and analysis will be undertaken.

I will conclude by again thanking all the firefighters for working hard to put out the fire.

MR J.C. KOBELKE (Balcatta) [3.51 pm]: A no-confidence motion in a minister is a very serious matter. We can see in the evidence of the 40 properties destroyed and the real angst in the community that this Minister for Environment has failed. I find it most interesting that the Premier in rising to speak in the minister's defence, spoke for 16 minutes. The Premier said that he had full confidence in the minister—and practically nothing else. Nothing else could he say in support of his minister! Basically, the Premier was confirming that this minister does not have the confidence of the Premier, and he certainly does not have the confidence of this side of the house. The Premier has condemned the minister with his very, very faint praise. In fact, it was no praise, just a statement of confidence without any facts to support it.

One would think that if the Premier had confidence in his minister, he would display evidence that the minister was across some of the details in his portfolio. But the Premier did not touch on any of that because this minister has shown that he is not across the details in his portfolio. Asked a question earlier today about whether he had read the fire management plans for prescribed burns, the minister could not give an answer. He either had not read it or could not remember having read it. He could not even provide detail particular to the problem facing the state and now being addressed by the house. Of course, the Premier could not praise the minister for knowing what he is doing, because there is no evidence of that!

Again, if the Premier had confidence in this minister, he would have been able to give examples of the leadership that he had shown somehow during these events. The Premier is already on the record on television a couple of days ago saying that the minister clearly has no leadership with the media. The Premier admitted that in front of all the cameras.

Mr C.J. Barnett: I did not say that at all. You just made that up.

Mr J.C. KOBELKE: He clearly admitted it, by the very words he said.

And when we turn to the issue of prescribed burns, the fire, and the catastrophic effects in Margaret River, and again the minister is asked, "Are you taking any action on prescribed burns between now and the end of the fire season?", his response was, "Oh, that's too hard." This minister cannot even exercise the leadership to suggest that some extra controls and some extra oversight are needed, until the report comes back. No leadership there! As the Leader of the Opposition said, "Just let it roll. These things happen. If it happens again, we'll say we're sorry." There has been no leadership from this minister to do something about prescribed burns right now when we are already into summer.

Could the Premier say something positive about the minister in the fact that he could reflect accurately and honestly on what has happened? Again, the Premier said nothing about that because the Premier will not vouch for the honesty or accuracy of the minister in whom he says he has full confidence. Of course there are plenty of examples of that. I had to go only to last Thursday's *Hansard* in which the Minister for Environment responded to a dorothy dixer, a prepared answer that should therefore have been checked so that the minister knew what he was saying was hopefully true. The minister stated —

... the fire was started from a bushfire as a result of an escaped controlled burn from the Leeuwin-Naturaliste National Park that was initiated on 6 September. I am advised that the remaining unburnt pocket of bush within the burnt area, as I mentioned before, in the national park caught alight, and embers fanned by strong winds escaped the containment lines and caused the fire to spread.

The minister is saying, in a prepared answer to a dorothy dixer, that the fire lit on 6 September was the fire that escaped. Now that is not true, is it, minister?

Mr W.R. Marmion: It started on 6 September.

Mr J.C. KOBELKE: The minister is saying that the fire lit on 6 September is the fire that escaped.

Extract from *Hansard*

[ASSEMBLY — Tuesday, 29 November 2011]

p9983d-9995a

Speaker; Mr Eric Ripper; Mr Chris Tallentire; Mr Colin Barnett; Mr Bill Marmion; Mr John Kobelke; Mr Mark McGowan; Mr Rob Johnson; Mr Troy Buswell; Mr Christian Porter; Mr Brendon Grylls; Ms Adele Carles

Mr T.R. Buswell: That is what he said today. Turn your ears on!

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Thank you, members!

Mr J.C. KOBELKE: Is the minister saying that the fire that escaped is the fire that was lit on 6 September?

Mr T.R. Buswell: Read the *Hansard*.

Mr J.C. KOBELKE: The minister—in his first response he agreed but has now been told by the Premier not to say anything because the Premier does not want him to dig a deeper hole for himself—has been shown to have misled the house.

A government member: Rubbish!

Mr J.C. KOBELKE: He has been shown to have misled the house because we now know that the fire that escaped was lit on 20 or more likely 21 November. Why did the minister have to put an absolutely untrue story before the house; a story that the Premier has repeated outside in television interviews? Why did they create this false impression by saying things that are factually incorrect?

Mr T.R. Buswell: It is not incorrect.

Mr J.C. KOBELKE: It was incorrect and they know it! The reason they created this false story is that the weather forecast on Monday, 21 November showed that the temperature was going to go up into the 30s and that there were going to be strong north easterly to northerly winds. Anyone who has lived in Western Australia for more than a couple of years knows of the potential for catastrophic fire given strong north easterly to northerly winds with temperatures in the 30s. Someone had at least told the minister that and he had to make up a story so that the pressure would not come straight back on him with the question, “Why did you allow them to start prescribed burns under climatic conditions that gave every chance of ending up with a catastrophe as we have in Margaret River?”

We see a minister who is incompetent, who cannot tell the truth, who is not across the portfolio, who does not have the confidence of the community and who should not have the confidence of this house. When voting, members opposite should keep in mind that they know in their hearts that they have no confidence in this minister.

Several members interjected.

Mr J.C. KOBELKE: When members vote, their vote can reflect what they know and believe or they can join the lie and vote to support this minister.

MR M. MCGOWAN (Rockingham) [3.58 pm]: I rise to support the motion. At the outset, I want again to put on the record our support for the firefighters and volunteers who —

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Thank you, members!

Mr M. McGOWAN: — have been involved in—Mr Speaker!

The SPEAKER: Take a seat. I have given only one person in this place the call and that is the member for Rockingham. I have not given anybody else the call. There is time remaining: get to your feet! At this moment, I just want to hear from the member for Rockingham.

Mr M. McGOWAN: Mr Speaker, I want to thank the firefighters and volunteers who have been involved in dealing with this matter, in particular the Department of Environment and Conservation volunteers and workers who have been dealing with the consequences of this fire. However, that does not —

Mr T.R. Buswell interjected.

The SPEAKER: I have provided instruction previously, member for Vasse, and I am formally going to call you to order for the first time today.

Mr M. McGOWAN: That does not take away from the fact that in the Minister for Environment we have a hapless and a hopeless minister who is not up to the job he is required to perform, and everyone in the house knows that. Everyone in the house knows that! We all know that he is a nice man. Everyone knows that he is a very nice man—probably the nicest person in the cabinet. But we also know that being the minister for a senior agency like this agency, with these sorts of responsibilities, is beyond him. Members need no further evidence of that than his performance last week. Last Wednesday and last Thursday, the minister remained in this house and debated some of those matters that were minor in comparison with what was going on.

Speaker; Mr Eric Ripper; Mr Chris Tallentire; Mr Colin Barnett; Mr Bill Marmion; Mr John Kobelke; Mr Mark McGowan; Mr Rob Johnson; Mr Troy Buswell; Mr Christian Porter; Mr Brendon Grylls; Ms Adele Carles

Mr C.J. Barnett interjected.

Mr M. McGOWAN: No, let me make my speech. The Premier made his speech and he did not take interjections.

We saw no greater evidence of this minister's incapacity to do his job and his failure to lead in his portfolio than the fact that he remained in this house to deal with those more minor issues compared with the great issue in Western Australia at that time; namely, that a community was burning down in the south west because of the actions of the department for which he is responsible. I will go further than that. Not only was he in here dealing with grievances and a private member's container deposit legislation, I yesterday received a letter sent to me from the Minister for Environment, which is dated last Thursday. The letter invites me and my family to visit Perth Zoo. On the occasion when Prevelly was burning down, this minister was in this house signing letters inviting members to go and visit Perth Zoo!

Mr B.J. Grylls interjected.

The SPEAKER: Minister for Regional Development, I call you to order for the first time today.

Mr M. McGOWAN: This minister is the Christine Nixon of the Western Australian Parliament. When things are tough, and when things are required to be done, he is not on the job and he is not doing his job. That is obvious to everyone in the house. I will go further than that. The minister needs to answer not only the questions of the Leader of the Opposition and the member for Gosnells, but also further questions about the resourcing of his department. Is it the case that the government has had requests for additional resources for the minister's department—that is, an additional 60 staff—to deal with firefighting matters throughout Western Australia because of the build-up of fuels around the state? Is it the case that the department has asked for more resources, and that those resources have not been agreed to? Is that the case? The minister needs to answer whether he, as part of the government, has been responsible for starving the department of the resources it needs in order to deal with —

Mr C.C. Porter interjected.

Mr M. McGOWAN: Please be quiet, Treasurer.

Has the minister been responsible for starving the department of resources in order to deal with the important matter of fire prevention and firefighting in Western Australia?

It is more than that. It is a reflection on the Premier that he retains in his cabinet a minister of this calibre. It would not be appropriate if he were to sack the head of the department, Keiran McNamara. The Premier needs to deal with the minister and not ascribe responsibility for his performance to others, as he did in the case of Jo Harrison-Ward, in the case of Kim Taylor and in the case of Susan Barrera.

I want to address the minister's capabilities to communicate in his portfolio. If he is going to be a minister and he is going to lead, he has to get out there and be able to communicate. I want to go over a few of the things the minister has said in recent days that indicate his complete incapacity to communicate his message on behalf of the government and his incapacity to communicate his role as Minister for Environment. What he said last week was appallingly insensitive. He said, "I'm happy to apologise for anyone who feels they need an apology." On the same day, in answering questions in relation to the same matter, he said —

Look, I'll answer the question if I how I feel like to answer the answer...

That was his response to some of the questions. Then there was his commentary on Monday of this week —

Obviously the fact that I'm not answering the question is something that I need to follow up further.

During a disaster in which people's houses were burning down, we have a minister who cannot provide the most simple answers to straightforward questions. We have serious questions about the resourcing of his agency: what resourcing has been asked for, and what is being provided? It is also the fact that, when required, the minister was not out there leading and doing the job as required. He was in here dealing with far less significant matters and signing letters inviting people to Perth Zoo.

MR R.F. JOHNSON (Hillarys — Minister for Emergency Services) [4.04 pm]: Let me make it perfectly clear to start with that it was the Premier's decision for the Premier himself and the local member to travel down to Margaret River on Thursday. It was his decision for only those two people to leave Parliament and go down there. Let me just make that clear.

Mr R.H. Cook interjected.

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: Mr Speaker, I did not interject on anybody.

Speaker; Mr Eric Ripper; Mr Chris Tallentire; Mr Colin Barnett; Mr Bill Marmion; Mr John Kobelke; Mr Mark McGowan; Mr Rob Johnson; Mr Troy Buswell; Mr Christian Porter; Mr Brendon Grylls; Ms Adele Carles

The SPEAKER: Member for Kwinana!

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: I find it absolute hypocrisy. While the fire was still not under control and it still was not contained, the Leader of the Opposition was out there, sniffing blood, spouting venom, demanding the resignation of my very good colleague the Minister for Environment. That is what he was doing. I say to the Leader of the Opposition, “God said unto them, ‘Come unto me with clean hands.’” Let me tell the Leader of the Opposition that he does not have clean hands; he has dirty hands.

I ask him to remember when he was in government when he had a whole ministry of people who, under his rules today, should have been sacked, but none of them was. Remember black Wednesday? It was 18 February 2004. It sent the whole state into darkness. He was the minister. He would not accept it—even though he was warned by his agencies that that was likely to happen. He was in denial. That is what happened. When his very good friend and colleague in the upper house was education minister, the Corruption and Crime Commission report revealed that allegations of sexual abuse against state schoolteachers were not being properly investigated by the department. Hon Ljiljanna Ravlich said that she knew nothing about it, yet Paul Albert, the then director general of the department, openly admitted that he had informed her three times. Did that minister resign? No—never, never, never.

The member for Midland is not here, so I will not pick on her, but she should have resigned under the Leader of the Opposition’s new rules.

The member for Girrawheen was responsible for an agency that allowed a prisoner to be transferred in a substandard vehicle. That prisoner tragically died. I have said before publicly that I do not think she should have resigned over that. Under the Leader of the Opposition’s new rules, she should have resigned, but we did not call for her resignation at the time because we did not believe that she was responsible for that. I will come back to the Leader of the Opposition. I think he was responsible, because he was the tight-fisted Treasurer who refused her application for funding for new vehicles. In effect, the Leader of the Opposition let that prisoner be transferred in a substandard vehicle where he consequently lost his life. The Leader of the Opposition comes in here, in the height of hypocrisy, with his new-found standards.

I think the Premier outlined ministerial responsibility quite adequately. Mistakes will always happen. Certainly in relation to operational issues and public servants who work in these agencies, there will always be mistakes. But we do not demand that the minister should resign every time a mistake happens. There would never be any ministers left.

Mr F.M. Logan interjected.

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: You were dreadful!

The SPEAKER: Members have done fairly well for the majority of the time. This is a serious issue we are dealing with. The substance of the matter of public importance is very serious. The subject to which it relates is equally serious. I would hope that members in this place treat it with respect. I give the call again to the Minister for Emergency Services.

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: I will just finish with one quick comment. It is a tragic circumstance that I hate referring to. It was when the member for Mandurah was the Minister for Environment. I just have to say the word “Boorabbin”. Did any of us demand the member’s resignation? No, we did not.

MR T.R. BUSWELL (Vasse — Minister for Transport) [4.09 pm]: As there is not a lot of time left, I will make a couple of quick comments as the local member. Firstly, the Minister for Environment has my full support. I was in Margaret River last week. I am not aware that one member of the Labor Party has visited Margaret River. I am not aware, Leader of the Opposition, that one member of the Labor Party has gone and met people who have lost their homes. I am not aware that one member of the Labor Party has met the local council to understand the work it did.

Last Thursday when we were down there, the town was under threat. People had lost their homes. People who were concerned about the safety of others were interested in protecting their town and supporting the people who had lost their homes. They were not interested in a political witch-hunt. If I went down there today, I would find that those people are now interested in support and recovery, and they rightly want some answers. The only people in this state who want a political witch-hunt around this issue are the people who sit opposite, not the people in that community. I think the Leader of the Opposition needs to remember that real people have been hurt incredibly by what has happened down there. I read the *Hansard* of last Thursday. The flames were still leaping and homes were still being lost, yet the Leader of the Opposition was in this place last Thursday taking part in a pathetic muckraking episode. The Leader of the Opposition should be embarrassed. If he had any

Speaker; Mr Eric Ripper; Mr Chris Tallentire; Mr Colin Barnett; Mr Bill Marmion; Mr John Kobelke; Mr Mark McGowan; Mr Rob Johnson; Mr Troy Buswell; Mr Christian Porter; Mr Brendon Grylls; Ms Adele Carles

concern, he would have got off his backside and gone down there to understand the issues those people are facing and the trauma that that community has gone through. He is a disgrace!

MR C.C. PORTER (Bateman — Attorney General) [4.11 pm]: Today the member for Balcatta called for the resignation of the minister because of circumstances in which he considered there was some form of breach of ministerial responsibility. This is what the member for Balcatta said in debate about the now shadow Treasurer after six escapees hijacked cars along the main street of St Georges Terrace —

The minister has accepted responsibility and has put in place an inquiry to address the key issues. The minister has expressed her real concern about what happened and said that we need to get to the bottom of this. There needs to be a clear understanding about why this occurred, not to lay blame, but so that steps can be taken to make sure it does not happen again. That is the appropriate action to take, ...

People had their cars hijacked while they were sitting in them! On the main street of this town, six prisoners hijacked people's cars and took them down the road. What we have here is one of the most gross double standards we could possibly imagine. It is no wonder that many people who observe Parliament think it is a joke when members opposite devalue the currency of something as important as this.

MR B.J. GRYLLS (Central Wheatbelt — Leader of the National Party) [4.12 pm]: As the Leader of the Nationals, we, too, stand to support the Minister for Environment. This debate says more about an opposition that needs anything to cling onto after a disastrous political year. How dare members opposite trample on the disaster down in Margaret River to try to gain a cheap political point! This government knows how to run issues, and we will run this one like we have all the others.

MS A.S. CARLES (Fremantle) [4.12 pm]: Department of Environment and Conservation officers lit the fire that has caused enormous damage. DEC officers have made mistakes and errors of judgement. Brad Commins, a DEC officer involved in approving the Margaret River burn, was previously criticised by the independent Western Australian State Coroner over his role in three bushfire deaths in 2007. WA State Coroner Alastair Hope found that Mr Commins and two other DEC officers failed to consider key weather information when they approved the reopening of a road when a bushfire was burning in the Goldfields region. During the inquest into these deaths, Mr Hope found that this constituted extreme incompetence. After voluntarily stepping down, Mr Commins was reinstated by the department's director general, Keiran McNamara, in 2009. Why the director general would disregard the independent coroner's findings of extreme incompetence is a very serious matter. The director general's comments about the Margaret River fires yesterday have also raised serious alarm bells for me. The director general has refused to concede that DEC officers made a mistake despite the loss of 40 properties. He said on ABC radio yesterday that the decision was the right one in the circumstances of last Monday. This is quite an extraordinary statement to make, given the weather forecast available on Monday, 21 November for the coming weeks.

I would like to see the Minister for Environment take strong action against the director general. In my view, the director general should be stood down pending the outcome of the investigation. However, the minister has repeated his support for the director general and this, in my view, is a fatal mistake by the minister. There are big problems at DEC. There is a dysfunctional culture there that needs reforming. I fear that lessons will not be learned from this terrible mistake. In fact, how can lessons be learned when the director general says that no mistake was made? Ministerial responsibility means that the buck stops with the minister. DEC officers have made mistakes; they have made significant errors of judgement. The minister must take responsibility for these mistakes and ensure that these mistakes are not repeated, yet today he said that he will take no interim action before the outcome of the inquiry. So we are heading into a serious bushfire season with the minister supporting the director general and the director general saying that no mistakes were made in Margaret River. How can the public have any confidence that these mistakes will not be repeated? For these reasons, I will support the opposition's motion today.

MR E.S. RIPPER (Belmont — Leader of the Opposition) [4.15 pm] — in reply: We have had a hopeless defence from a hapless minister, and we have had a non-defence from an uncommitted Premier. I was going to say that the Premier had damned the minister with faint praise, but there was no praise at all, so that is an impossible remark to make. We have seen a complete failure of those on the government side to come to grips with the issue. We on this side raised some serious issues. We raised questions about the risk management policy. What has the government done about the risk management policy in the past? What will the government do about the risk management policy in the future? There was no answer. The member for Gosnells asked a question that the government could have dispatched quite easily if it were not true—that is, whether the prescribed burning in Margaret River was suspended during the CHOGM period. The Premier's answer gave credence to that particular notion that we did not want smoke over the metropolitan area during the Queen's

Extract from *Hansard*
[ASSEMBLY — Tuesday, 29 November 2011]
p9983d-9995a

Speaker; Mr Eric Ripper; Mr Chris Tallentire; Mr Colin Barnett; Mr Bill Marmion; Mr John Kobelke; Mr Mark McGowan; Mr Rob Johnson; Mr Troy Buswell; Mr Christian Porter; Mr Brendon Grylls; Ms Adele Carles

visit. Maybe that is an issue. Maybe, to protect the Queen from smoke, we have burnt down 40 homes in Margaret River.

Question put and a division taken with the following result —

Ayes (26)

Ms L.L. Baker
Dr A.D. Buti
Ms A.S. Carles
Mr R.H. Cook
Ms J.M. Freeman
Mr J.N. Hyde
Mr W.J. Johnston

Mr J.C. Kobelke
Mr F.M. Logan
Mr M. McGowan
Mrs C.A. Martin
Mr M.P. Murray
Mr A.P. O’Gorman
Mr P. Papalia

Mr J.R. Quigley
Ms M.M. Quirk
Mr E.S. Ripper
Mrs M.H. Roberts
Mr T.G. Stephens
Mr C.J. Tallentire
Mr P.C. Tinley

Mr A.J. Waddell
Mr P.B. Watson
Mr M.P. Whitely
Mr B.S. Wyatt
Mr D.A. Templeman (*Teller*)

Noes (31)

Mr P. Abetz
Mr F.A. Alban
Mr C.J. Barnett
Mr I.C. Blayney
Mr J.J.M. Bowler
Mr I.M. Britza
Mr T.R. Buswell
Mr G.M. Castrilli

Mr V.A. Catania
Dr E. Constable
Mr M.J. Cowper
Mr J.H.D. Day
Mr J.M. Francis
Mr B.J. Grylls
Dr K.D. Hames
Mrs L.M. Harvey

Mr A.P. Jacob
Dr G.G. Jacobs
Mr R.F. Johnson
Mr A. Krsticevic
Mr J.E. McGrath
Mr W.R. Marmion
Mr P.T. Miles
Ms A.R. Mitchell

Dr M.D. Nahan
Mr C.C. Porter
Mr D.T. Redman
Mr M.W. Sutherland
Mr T.K. Waldron
Dr J.M. Woollard
Mr A.J. Simpson (*Teller*)

Question thus negatived.