

ROAD TRAFFIC AMENDMENT (ALCOHOL AND DRUG RELATED OFFENCES) BILL 2010

Second Reading

Resumed from an earlier stage of the sitting.

MR W.J. JOHNSTON (Cannington) [2.54 pm]: Before the interruption for member's statements, I was discussing road safety for the drivers of large-mass vehicles. I had referred to some of the safety elements for professional drivers and I highlighted the sad circumstances of the death of a truck driver in Wiluna. I recall that I was drawing the attention of the house to the fact that the trucking companies have the responsibility to ensure that the workplace is proper and safe, even if that workplace is a truck. I was also pointing out that the driver was going to a mine owned by the Newmont Mining Corporation. I believe Newmont had contracted Toll Group, which is a multinational trucking company, to do the logistics and that Toll had outsourced that work to a small contractor and that the small contractor then hired an individual driver, who may have been employed on a subcontract basis. Members can see that multilevel contracting is involved in this. I am sure there will be further investigations and a court will make a determination, but it seems clear to me that this driver was not appropriately trained. Many experienced drivers in the industry have said that when the deceased driver wanted to turn his vehicle around on a dirt road section of Gunbarrel Highway, he should have unhitched the prime mover because he then could have turned the truck around rather than try to turn a three-trailer road train around on that small road, which led to him getting stuck. Clearly he was not trained properly. As I pointed out, it appears from the media reports that he did not have an emergency position indicating radio beacon, which he should have had, nor did he have a satellite phone, which he also should have had. These are the issues that the Transport Workers Union in particular has been campaigning on. I would be interested to know what consultation the minister has had on this bill. I am sure that he will let us know in his reply to the second reading debate what the Transport Workers Union said about the bill.

I understand that the minister will table some amendments. I have a copy of the explanatory memorandum of the amendments. One of those amendments goes to the issue of exempting emergency service volunteers—I am not sure of their exact title, but I am sure the minister would know—from the operations of the proposed amendments to the Road Traffic Act. I had a quick chat to an adviser at the back of the chamber while another member was on his feet talking about the bill and I found out that the details of the arrangements will be included in regulations. I draw the minister's attention to a report of the Joint Standing Committee on Delegated Legislation tabled this morning and the observations made by members on both sides that it is the job of this chamber to make detailed laws and that we should not allow subsidiary instruments to set too much of the detail of legislation because that is an abdication of the responsibility of the chamber. The members who spoke to the report earlier today observed that the regulation power is being used too much and that legislation is not receiving the appropriate level of scrutiny. People end up in difficulty with that type of legislation because in 20 or 30 years they forget what the original legislation was about. I would, therefore, be interested to know from the minister why it is intended that these classes of people will be prescribed by regulation. It appears that it would be quite easy to include these people in the legislation itself, and we then would not need to have this delegated process.

I always find it interesting when people come into my office to talk about issues of concern to them. I have talked about the fact that professional drivers have come into my office to talk about issues related to their work. People have come into my office to talk to me about other road traffic issues. One issue that is of concern is the removal of registration stickers from vehicles. A person may buy a new car and believe that the car has 12 months' registration when it actually has only six months' registration. The daughter of one of my constituents bought a new car from a dealer and drove it to the south west of the state, and because there was no registration sticker on the car, she did not know that the registration had expired, and she ended up being prosecuted for driving an unlicensed vehicle. These are the sorts of things that can happen.

The question about how people comply with the law is very important. It is also about standards. We can see the level of standards of this government when it brings into the house at the last moment a series of detailed amendments to legislation. The member for Girrawheen raised that matter in her contribution. When we look at the Minister for Transport and his level of standards, as we saw on display again in question time today, and when we read these acts of Parliament and listen to these ministers, we can see that there is a beam that goes through the determination of this government in the way it behaves. Liberal Party members often say that the Minister for Transport is one of their best performers, and they always hold him up as being one of their members who makes the best contribution, but then we see him involved in personal abuse. I think that is extraordinary. It is an extraordinary example of the standards set by this government, as we have seen in this legislation that is before us today. Personal abuse is the way that the Minister for Transport approaches the Parliament, endorsed by —

Point of Order

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: Madam Acting Speaker, the comments from the member for Cannington have nothing to do with the bill that is before this house. He is using this opportunity simply to make a personal attack on one of my ministerial colleagues. I ask you to refer him back to the bill that is before the house.

Mr W.J. JOHNSTON: Madam Acting Speaker, I would like to draw your attention to the words that I was using. I was explaining the fact that the government has brought in legislation with amendments that were delivered to the opposition only today, and I was drawing an appropriate analogy with the standards of the government. I was just using that as an analogy with the standards of the government, because that is directly related to the question of the presentation of the amendments to the opposition today.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Ms A.R. Mitchell): Thank you, member. I do suggest that you refrain and keep to the wording of the second reading speech.

Debate Resumed

Mr W.J. JOHNSTON: Thank you very much, Madam Acting Speaker. I will make sure that I do that.

The standards of this government are on clear display in the behaviour that it demonstrates. In America, some people in business have a theory that people's personal relationships are reflected in their behaviour towards the community; so people who are prepared to break and breach and cheat on their most personal connections will do the same to the entire community.

Several members interjected.

Mr W.J. JOHNSTON: I have no problem with people's personal behaviour. Even though that American approach to management is an interesting one, I do not think it is relevant. What I do think is relevant is the question of hypocrisy. We are discussing here the behaviour of the government in presenting very detailed amendments to its own bill, moments before the debate is to occur in this house. That is the sort of behaviour we are talking about. That is the sort of attitude that is reflected here. Let us say this is a hypothetical. Let us say we have a minister who has on their website that they are motivated by a passion for the family unit. Let us make the assumption that we have a minister who has on their website that they are motivated by a passion —

Point of Order

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: Madam Acting Speaker, I draw your attention again to the comments of the member for Cannington. The member for Cannington is not talking about the bill before the house. We have not even reached the consideration in detail stage yet. The member for Cannington is simply going all over the place, and I ask that he be brought back to the bill before the house.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Member for Cannington, would you keep your speech to the second reading speech, please.

Debate Resumed

Mr W.J. JOHNSTON: Thank you very much, Madam Acting Speaker. I will do exactly that.

I am very pleased that the Leader of the House has made a change from his ordinary practice and is in the chamber listening to the debate, because I know that he does not like to do that. So I welcome him here to join the rest of us in the chamber to participate in this debate. That is a very important contribution for the minister to make to us in this chamber.

Mr R.F. Johnson: What a stupid comment! You make some really crass comments. No wonder no-one wants to sit next to you!

Mr W.J. JOHNSTON: The minister interjects that no-one wants to sit next to me. But one thing we all know is that there is not one Liberal who would sit in front of him! We know what he did when he was in opposition! The knife was in the back at every opportunity! We remember exactly what he did. The minister should not forget, when he raises the question that he just raised by his interjection about people's personal behaviour—he has raised it with me—that we know about him! Members should just do a word search for the minister's name on the ABC website and see the information that they will get about how the minister was so very trustworthy and was able to deliver for his leader. We all know what I am talking about, minister, on the steps of the Parliament, here, when there was a visiting Chinese delegation. We all know what the minister was doing with the journalists. We all know what happened on that day. So do not go down that track, minister!

As I say, these are important issues for professional drivers in this state.

[Member's time extended.]

Mr W.J. JOHNSTON: We will need to look at these amendments when we get to consideration in detail, None of these amendments was referred to by the minister in his second reading speech, so we are not sure how they

will all fit together. These amendments may well be something that we need to consider and weigh as being worthwhile for the community in this state.

Imagine if a minister had on their website that they were motivated by a passion for the family unit. We would have to look at the hypocrisy if the minister was not in fact showing that behaviour in their own genuine life. All the ministers on the other side who get up and hurl personal abuse at people on this side of the chamber should look in the mirror before they make those sorts of comments. People on this side of the chamber need to be treated with proper respect. Tabling detailed amendments minutes before a debate starts is not an example of showing proper respect to members on this side of the chamber. In reviewing those amendments that the minister was not able to organise to have included in the bill when it was originally tabled in the chamber, the minister should in his second reading reply explain to us what organisations were involved in the consultation process. Is it intended by these amendments to provide an exemption for a volunteer who is driving his personal car from his home to the SES unit, or is it intended to provide an exemption only while the person is driving the SES vehicle? Will a professional firefighter be included in the exemption that is proposed, and will that be acted upon in the same way? Will a police officer also be included in the exemption that is proposed? As I understand it from the minister's interjection on the member for Girrawheen, these amendments were called for by FESA. Does FESA have any particular view about having people with a blood alcohol content of over .02 operating firefighting equipment in an emergency situation? Is that something that has been considered; and, if so, what issues are involved in that? If the exemption is to apply to professional firefighters, does that mean that FESA is happy to have professional firefighters with a blood alcohol content over .02 fighting fires professionally? It would be interesting to know these things. Therefore, I would appreciate the Minister for Police addressing those issues in his reply.

The Labor Party supports the original unamended legislation. As the member for Girrawheen explained in her contribution to the second reading debate, the Labor Party is yet to make any formal decision on these brand-new amendments that were brought to us with no notice and that the minister was unable to make any proper comments on. When we judge those amendments, we of course have to judge them on the basis of the behaviour of the Liberal Party and the Liberal government—whether it is being honest or hypocritical in its behaviour, whether it is being honest with people of the state and whether it is being honest with all the important connections that it has. We, like everyone else in the community, look at the Liberal government and question this continued hypocrisy that it demonstrates in so many areas. Therefore, we will be interested to see how it behaves. The Minister for Police was happy to try to criticise me in his interjections across the chamber and by way of his points of order. I make the point that anybody who comes into this chamber and sees the appalling behaviour of the government in question time, they see that the best person and most capable minister on the other side of the chamber, the Minister for Transport, sets a very low bar. I have not even raised the question of the member for Vasse's behaviour in this chamber on that famous occasion when he squirrel-gripped a member of the Liberal Party shadow front bench. I have not even talked about that. There is a lot of material here.

Mr R.F. Johnson: You're a grub!

Mr W.J. JOHNSTON: The minister says that I am a grub. Let us have a look at what happened in question time today.

Withdrawal of Remark

MR M. McGOWAN: Clearly, the term used by the Leader of the House is unparliamentary. Using the term "grub" to describe another member in this house is not appropriate and the remark should be withdrawn.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Ms A.R. Mitchell): It is probably not the best use of words, Minister for Police. Could you withdraw the remark please?

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: I withdraw the remark.

Debate Resumed

The ACTING SPEAKER: I ask the member for Cannington once again to keep his words appropriate to the second reading debate.

Mr W.J. JOHNSTON: I will make sure that I do that.

In conclusion, when the best on the other side of the chamber is the member for Vasse, we know the trouble that the government is having. We will be interested to see how the Minister for Police; Emergency Services performs. He does not do a good job in the chamber. We had the extraordinary situation today in which the house had to be suspended because the minister at the table, the Minister for Police; Emergency Services and Leader of the House, could not arrange debate in the chamber. That is the standard that the government is

setting. Therefore, we will be interested to see whether the minister is capable of handling this bill, because we know that he has not done so well in the other ones.

MR R.F. JOHNSON (Hillarys — Minister for Police) [3.14 pm] — in reply: I certainly intend to respond to the comments. I say at the outset that I am staggered at the incompetency of the shadow Minister for Police and Road Safety. I am not staggered by the member for Cannington; I expect it from him. The amendments I am suggesting are very simple and if the opposition does not have the competence to be able to deal with these amendments, then I say, “Shame on you.” The government wants to get this legislation through the Parliament —

Ms M.M. Quirk: We have had no opportunity to do that.

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: I will tell members what the amendments are and I will let them judge whether or not they think that those two members who have been on their feet are capable of dealing with very responsible amendments.

Ms M.M. Quirk: Did you not say to me on Tuesday that it would be a second reading only? You are a liar.

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: It is all over there. I had a request from the member for Girrawheen on Tuesday, “Please don’t bring legislation on today, I’m not ready for it”; I said, “Okay, no, I won’t. I’ll leave it.”

Ms M.M. Quirk: I was ready to go yesterday, you didn’t bring it on yesterday, and you fibbed. You fibbed because you said it was only going to be the second reading this week. It was on the book and you are a liar.

Mrs C.A. Martin: You’ve been telling porkies in the chamber; that’s really bad.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Member for Girrawheen and Member for Kimberley!

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: Welcome back, member for Kimberley nice to see you back.

Ms M.M. Quirk: You have been careless with the truth, minister. Did you not say that it would be a second reading only?

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: I will not be careless with the truth in the way you are. You and the truth are becoming more and more strangers and I find that most upsetting.

Ms M.M. Quirk: Did you not say to me it will only be second reading this week.

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: You have had your say. Now listen to something. Just listen to something.

The ACTING SPEAKER: That is enough! We would like to complete this reply to the second reading.

Mrs C.A. Martin: He started it though.

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: Don’t get nuts. Don’t get called to order member for Kimberley, please.

Ms M.M. Quirk: Just explain the amendments to us, without your advisors. See if you can tell us what they are.

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: I will tell the house what they are. The truth is this—

Ms M.M. Quirk: Explain the amendments, without your advisors, I challenge you.

Mrs C.A. Martin interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Member for Kimberley, I call you to order for the second time. Member for Girrawheen I call you to order for the first time.

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: I just want to remind the opposition—

Several members interjected.

Ms M.M. Quirk: Explain the amendments, minister.

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: You made your speech, I will give mine. The member for Girrawheen spoke about areas that had nothing to do with the bill, about the badge she was wearing, about a very serious issue, I accept, but it had nothing to do with the bill. She abused the process of this Parliament when she did that.

Point of Order

Mr W.J. JOHNSTON: The Minister for Police is reflecting on the Presiding Officer of this Parliament by saying that the member for Girrawheen was not speaking in accordance with standing orders. It is the job of the presiding officer of the Parliament to maintain order. The minister is therefore casting aspersions on the quality of the chairing.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Member for Cannington, I suggest you take your seat.

Debate Resumed

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: I remind members on both sides of this house that I have been around a long time and I can tell them what the practice of the house is and how different governments and ministers operate whether they are Labor, Liberal or National.

Ms M.M. Quirk: Tell that to the member for Jandakot.

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: Why don't you just be quiet!

Over the last seven and a half years, when we had a disastrous Labor government, it brought in amendments day after day, with no consultation. It would not adjourn the debate; it would just bring the amendments in at the table of the house. I had the decency to give the amendments to the member for Girrawheen, who I credit with a fair bit of commonsense and intelligence normally—she is a lawyer for goodness sake—this morning, it was very simple.

Mrs C.A. Martin interjected.

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: I agree.

Now she obviously does not have a clue what the amendments are and neither does the member for Cannington.

Ms M.M. Quirk: Explain them to me now.

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: Why don't you just be quiet.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Minister, can I also suggest that you speak in your reply to the second reading debate.

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: I certainly am. I want to remind members that they have asked me to explain what the amendments are. The bill is very simple. It will increase the fines and penalties for those people who are caught drink or drug-driving. It is very simple, and, I would assume, has the support of everybody, but not from the opposition now judging from the noise coming from members opposite because we have a couple of little amendments that we want to put in. Let me tell members what the amendments are. I introduced the legislation before Christmas so we have had a long time to look at it. I was approached by the Fire and Emergency Services Authority who brought it to my attention that requiring a zero blood alcohol content for volunteer firefighters, our State Emergency Services volunteers and people of that ilk who have to respond to emergencies, could be problematic. Because of the weight of the vehicles that they would be driving —

Ms M.M. Quirk: What weight are they minister?

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: They are anything over 22.5 tonnes. Everything up to that weight is not a problem; they are the normal rules for everybody. But we are talking about a huge piece of equipment on the road, and we have said many times that the heavier the equipment and the faster it goes, the more crash impact it will have; it is very simple.

Ms M.M. Quirk: But apparently fire trucks are different; is that right?

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: Under the proposed legislation, our volunteers who are called to respond to an emergency and have to get into a volunteer fire truck—or even one of the other trucks—that are over that weight were going to have to have a zero blood alcohol reading. If they are responding to a fire, they could be going from Mandurah to Roleystone to assist the Roleystone firefighters, and under the proposed legislation—which nobody really thought about, to be honest—they would have to have a zero blood alcohol content, and that would cause us to lose many of our volunteers. They turn out any day of the week when called on, be it Christmas Day, Boxing Day or whatever, and they might be having a barbeque with their family, and it would not be fair for them to be suddenly caught in the trap of not having a zero blood alcohol content when they are responding to a fire. We believe that when they are doing that, they should actually be dealt with like anybody else. Anybody who drives a fire engine, a police car, an ambulance, a taxi or a bus must abide by the parameters set by those organisations. But the emergency workers who respond to fires would leave the emergency service; they would give up being volunteers if they could not have a drink and then get in their fire truck and drive to assist others in the fighting of a fire. They must not drive with a blood alcohol level of .05 per cent or above, because that would be dangerous. But the concession we are making is to allow them to have a blood alcohol level of up to .05; they will be allowed to have a blood alcohol level of .02. We do not want to deter our citizens from becoming volunteers and doing the wonderful job they do, so we need to put in place an exemption.

Ms M.M. Quirk: Did you talk to anyone other than the Fire and Emergency Services Authority, minister?

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: I have spoken to volunteers.

Ms M.M. Quirk: About this issue?

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: Yes.

Ms M.M. Quirk: So who have you spoken to of the volunteers?

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: Look, I am not going to give the member the names of people I speak to!

Ms M.M. Quirk: Well, was it the bush fire brigade or the fire and rescue volunteers?

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: I am not going to tell the member whom I have spoken to; suffice to say, I have spoken to volunteers.

Ms M.M. Quirk: No, I just want to know which umbrella groups you've spoken to.

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: I am not giving the member names; okay?

Ms M.M. Quirk: So it is just FESA's opinion?

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: I am not giving you names.

Dr A.D. Buti: You asked us for names last week!

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: And the opposition would not give them to me!

Dr A.D. Buti: That's right!

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: Exactly! Exactly!

Ms M.M. Quirk: No, I am asking for the names of the organisations you have spoken to.

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: The exemption will basically relate to the driving of buses, and vehicles with a gross combination mass of more than 22.5 tonnes in the course of responding to an incident, which, I think, is very fair, and it is what is done at the moment. We are saying, "Carry on as you are; you mustn't go over .05, otherwise you'll commit an offence", but we will do what we would have done under the proposed legislation—that is, enforce a zero blood alcohol content. That is one of the amendments.

We also thought that it was probably a bit unfair, because the legislation covers taxidriviers, omnibus drivers, and people who make their living that way, because a lot of taxidriviers drive their taxis for their own personal use. We have simply said that if they are driving a taxi for their personal use and are not carrying passengers, they will be exempt from the zero blood alcohol content reading. That is a perfectly good, perfectly sensible amendment, and I am staggered that the opposition needs two weeks to decide whether to agree with it.

Ms M.M. Quirk: I don't on that one; we're happy with that one! We had a briefing on that one.

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: It is very simple. I would have thought it would have been competent enough to deal with it on the table of the house —

Ms M.M. Quirk: That's not a problem amendment!

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: — by asking questions and hearing the government's answers—and it would have had that time, but no, no, no; it cannot do that.

Ms M.M. Quirk: No; that one we could deal with; all right?

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: Let me respond to the other questions that the member put to me.

The member for Girrawheen mentioned repeat drink-driving and alcohol interlocks. I have to say, that was the former government's legislation. The original concept came when the former government was in office.

Ms M.M. Quirk: Towards Zero is yours.

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: When the former government was in power in 2004, the concept came in —

Ms M.M. Quirk: All right; when is it coming in? How are you going with it?

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: —and years later, it had done nothing—very good! Very good!

Ms M.M. Quirk: When are we going to see it?

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: Very soon; very soon!

Ms M.M. Quirk: What's very soon?

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: I hope to bring it in certainly within the next few months.

Ms M.M. Quirk: Two years ago you said it was a matter of highest government priority.

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: The former government did nothing, and we are doing a lot. It is all being drafted at the moment, and the drafting is virtually finished.

Ms M.M. Quirk: Excellent!

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: There is no question that it will be a great thing to have. Indeed, the drafting has been given a high priority; it will not be long before it gets to this place. My hope is that we get it all finalised through these houses in the second half of this year.

I think there was a question about alcohol offences being subject to a chain of responsibility. My advice is that in other jurisdictions, alcohol offences are not subject to —

Ms M.M. Quirk: But this legislation covers drug-driving, doesn't it? Yes?

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: — a chain of responsibility.

Ms M.M. Quirk: No; I meant drug-driving.

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: It is my advice that that comes under heavy vehicle mass loading and dimension offences.

Ms M.M. Quirk: Yes, and our covers inducing drug use.

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: I do not know which member mentioned it, but truck drivers currently commit an offence if proscribed illicit drugs—including amphetamines—are present in the blood, and our bill does not change that at all. It does not change it.

The member for Girrawheen was going on about speed and red-light cameras. In relation to Main Roads Western Australia's midyear review, my advisers have confirmed that I was correct when I said that the reduction is due to the new implementation, because there were a few technical problems, and the training in going from the old wet-film processing and cameras to the new digital cameras and processing. While that was happening, of course, there was a drop in revenue.

Ms M.M. Quirk: So it is only a temporary thing, and next year it should go up to what was predicted in the forward estimates?

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: We do not know whether it will go up quite as high as had been predicted. How long is a piece of string? We do not know.

The member questioned the Fire and Emergency Services Authority exemption and said that she wondered how often this would really be an issue. She said that one would hope police would not be conducting random breath testing in an emergency zone—I could not agree more! I do not think, for one minute, that they would. The amendment is about balancing the road safety benefits of zero BAC against the public policy, and there is a need for an adequate emergency response capability. I think everybody would agree with that. I do not see a problem with that. I am trying to provide our volunteers with some reassurance, and that will enable them to continue to serve the community without the fear of penalty for having a social drink; I class a social drink as having a BAC of less than .05.

The classes of volunteer need to be prescribed in regulations to ensure that appropriate classes of person are not inadvertently omitted. The list compiled for the explanatory memorandum certainly required inclusion.

Ms M.M. Quirk: What does that mean, sorry, minister?

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: Sorry?

Ms M.M. Quirk: I don't understand what that means.

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: It means that we never quite know which class of volunteer we are going to have in the future, and rather than having to bring the legislation back to Parliament every time to amend it, it will be much simpler, more efficient, and more professional to simply do it by regulation. Regulations can still be disallowed in both houses of Parliament, so they will still be open to parliamentary scrutiny. Because of the length of time it takes to get some legislation through this and the other house when, quite frankly, it is very simple stuff, as we have seen today—and as we have seen tempers flare up, do we want that every time we amend some legislation?—it is often simpler and more responsible to do it by regulation.

That is the situation. The time is 3.30 pm, and, quite frankly, I have been advised by the manager of opposition business that if I progress this into consideration in detail, all hell will break loose and we will see all sorts of nonsense, once again, from members of the opposition. So, I will probably not go into consideration in detail today; I will give the member for Girrawheen and the member for Cannington —

Ms M.M. Quirk: Time to consult interest groups.

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: — two weeks to work out some very simple amendments. That is, two weeks to come to their senses and to see whether they are capable of dealing with the amendments that are before the house at the

moment, which were on the notice paper last night and on which they obviously had the explanatory memorandum this morning.

Ms M.M. Quirk: There are seven pages.

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: I am staggered that members have had so much trouble understanding these amendments. It is not so much a case of being able to understand them adequately. Today we have seen, not so much the member for Girrawheen, but the member for Cannington abuse his position in this Parliament by making some outrageous comments that have nothing whatsoever to do with the bill. I do not want to waste the time of this house or the time of my advisers, who have been here nearly all day today. The main purpose for them being here was to be available when we went into consideration in detail. Both members opposite have insulted my advisers with their behaviour, and I am sure that they will remember that.

Mr W.J. Johnston interjected.

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: I have no intention of listening to the member for Cannington again. I think he is an extremely nasty person. Most of his colleagues think the same thing about him; they cannot stand him. He is a Judas to his leader. He was talking about knives in the back. That is exactly what he did to his leader, and that is why he will get nowhere.

Mr W.J. Johnston interjected.

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: He can dish it out, but he cannot take it; he never could. This is absolute grubbiness at its lowest level. I do not know of anything lower than somebody who behaves in that manner, and I am sure that most of my colleagues and, indeed, most members opposite would agree with me. I have not actually mentioned any member.

Point of Order

Mr W.J. JOHNSTON: I was not carefully listening to the minister, but I thought he was referring to the Minister for Transport in very derogatory terms.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Ms A.R. Mitchell): Member for Cannington, would you take your seat.

Debate Resumed

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: With those words of conviviality and good heartedness —

Mr M. McGowan: Conciliation.

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: Yes, conciliation between certain members. I do not think it will ever happen with one member. I normally have a very high opinion of the member for Girrawheen, because I think she has had a difficult time trying to manage her portfolio, while other people interfere with her portfolio and try to take the ground from under her. I would much prefer to deal with the member for Girrawheen than any other opposition member on police matters, except maybe the member for Balcatta. I respect his knowledge and experience in police matters.

Mr M. McGowan: You realise that you are now filibustering your own bill.

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: Yes, I know. I am about to sit down. I just want to put on the record that certain members of the opposition are so hopeless that they cannot understand very simple amendments so that we can pass legislation in Parliament. I will treat them like kiddies and give them two weeks to get around these very simple amendments, and I will bring the bill back on in two weeks. I commend the bill to the house.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.