

Coalition fails in lack of cohesion

It is a pity the Coalition couldn't get its act together to properly negotiate on behalf of business as the Government endeavoured to have its environmental laws passed in the Senate.

It is clear that the Government's preferred position was to conclude the negotiations with the Liberals rather than the Greens. Despite having business heavyweights urging the Liberals to achieve specific amendments, the Nationals threw in some last-minute objections which stalled the Coalition negotiations.

At least the Greens have finally matured sufficiently to conclude a deal which did not incorporate all of their demands. They have always previously worked on the basis of all or nothing. Until now they have achieved the latter. In particular they sabotaged reasonable environmental laws in the Rudd years because they couldn't get everything they wanted. Business would have preferred the Coalition to be more prepared to negotiate properly but they couldn't agree on a final deal and even discussed deferring the legislation until April next year. Eventually the Government lost patience with them.

We must all hope that the final law works to the benefit of business and the environment.
Ian McMullan, Narrogin

Up goes the rent

Following the latest inflation figures release, the situation was hammered home to me when one of my pensioner neighbours called to say they had just been advised their rent was rising by \$120 a week in January. Can we now call on Anthony Albanese and Jim the cashier to look at an increase of fortnightly pensions by \$240 to



Greens leader Larissa Waters

help all renting pensioners? Somehow I can't see it happening.

Geoff Vickers, Morley

Circuit-breaker needed

I'm sorry, but I just don't get the interest rate/inflation dog chasing its tail.

To beat inflation, the Reserve Bank board pushes up money borrowing rates and we, the homeowners, wear the addition in our monthly payments. From there, I get the impression the cost of goods and services also go up, so the providers can make ends meet and/or make a profit in their business, or else go broke. So the objective is to cool the buyers' market — I believe.

But then to add insult to injury, the price of utilities goes up, annually. Inevitably our buying power goes down and we retract back into our impoverished shells to contemplate how we will survive and enjoy life, if that's still possible. What do we do next? We go on a rampage for a pay increase so we can make ends meet. That hammers the business owners and so they push their prices up to make their ends meet and perhaps make some money on the side, if they're lucky. Alternatively, they cut their costs and lay off staff, who then become the responsibility of the Federal and State governments. That

extra burden has to be funded somehow and so, another increase in the cost of utilities.

To demonstrate, I built a house in 2010. The construction of a 4x2 modest-sized residence was about \$230k. To build the same house now costs an estimated \$475k — an eye-watering double!

How do we break out of this vicious cycle, does anyone really have the answers? What's the point, if by 2040 we will be paying \$50 for an ice-cream, but earning \$400,000 as a labourer?

Bob Grigoroff, Piara Waters

Someone signs it off

In Question Time in Parliament the other day the Minister for Finance, Katy Gallagher, told Parliament she had met department heads and asked them to look at their spending and decide if what they spend is really necessary. I do wonder if that meeting included her boss who, in the past three years, has squandered a lot of taxpayers' money, the latest of which was bringing his whole Cabinet to a meeting in Perth. Was that really necessary? We're all aware of the Bureau of Meteorology website disaster. Was that really necessary? Perhaps, instead of department heads, Gallagher might need to look at whoever is approving this spending.

Steve Laidler, Brabham

A darker side

In response to Soofi Hakim's letter on the burqa being a sign of modesty, I would like her to remember the women of Afghanistan and Iran. They wear the burqa in fear of their lives. If they don't, they will be beaten in the street or killed by the state-sanctioned police enforcers. This type of clothing is used as a means of control to make women literally invisible and irrelevant.

B. Gaby, Karrinyup

More costly mistake

So, Roger the Dodger says Joondalup councillor Nige Jones' strip club beer doesn't pass the pub test. Pot, kettle? Perth Park jumps immediately to mind at hundreds of millions of taxpayer dollars. Nige has resigned over an error of his own making.

Will we hear of similar personal pub test failure action from the Premier? Not holding my breath.

Dave Davies, Broadwater

Visual pollution

Be careful what you wish for, Denise Miley (*Letters*, 25/11). On a recent visit to Melbourne, I found the Sidney Myer Music Bowl area surrounded by an ugly fence. Very disappointing for this tourist, and I'm sure for many others, too.

Mark Gloyn, Swan View

Engineering nightmare

With the amount of uncontrollable differential settlement likely to be experienced with the construction of a raceway at Burswood, the track would likely soon become unsafe for use.

Better get your geo-techs on it, Rita, and break into your piggy bank because to construct a raceway to standards that can cope with the expected differential settlement will be very expensive. Oh, no charge for the advice.

Dai Davies, Wanneroo

Technique wanting

The preparation of the wicket produced by the curator can't be blamed for the Test match concluding inside two days (*Letters*, 27/11).

It should be remembered England won the toss and batted and there didn't seem to be any issues with the wicket when Travis Head and Marnus Labuschagne were batting in the second innings.

In fact they scored at will against reportedly some of the