

CHILD SEXUAL OFFENDER — SENTENCE — IAN THORNTON

817. Mr P.A. KATSAMBANIS to the Attorney General:

I have a supplementary question. Given the Attorney General's failure to appeal the release of Edward Latimer, can he confirm that he will be appealing the sentence of child sex offender Ian Thornton —

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: I will listen to your question and I will make a ruling on it. It has to be something to do with the first question.

Mr P.A. KATSAMBANIS: It is about Mr Thornton.

The SPEAKER: It is a different one.

Mr S.K. L'Estrange: No, he said "Latimer".

Mr P.A. KATSAMBANIS: Given the Attorney General's failure to appeal the release of Edward Latimer, can he confirm that he will be appealing the sentence of child sex offender Ian Thornton after the magistrate failed to lock him up for his breach?

The SPEAKER: I said that I would hear the rest of the question. I do not need the member for Churchlands to tell me that he has the right answer. I will check his credentials later but I do not think he is a lawyer. That is a proper question.

Mr J.R. QUIGLEY: Under Labor laws, Latimer is in prison. He is not out; he is in prison. Under the Liberal Party's laws, anyone who breached could merely be charged by summons and posted a summons and maybe some weeks later have to appear in court in answer to a summons. When we sought to change these laws from opposition, the Liberal Party opposed these laws. When we got into government, we did two things. As the Premier has already pointed out, we reversed the onus of proof so these people had to establish, on the balance of probabilities, that they would comply with the orders; and, secondly, we made it a requirement that for every breach there will be an arrest and a presentation before the court. This is quite different from the slack system that the previous government made the public suffer and endure for the eight years of its government.

As to Thornton's case, I give the same answer. When I have read the transcript and discussed it with the Director of Public Prosecutions, I will give the member an answer.