

POLICE AND CORRECTIVE SERVICES

Statement

HON ROBIN SCOTT (Mining and Pastoral) [5.30 pm]: I would like to use my member's statement to thank the honourable members who contributed to my non-government business motion today and also to let members know why the motion was so important to me. I have good friends who are policemen. Some are working and some are now retired. I also have friends who are prison officers, one of whom works in Casuarina Prison, known as the "big house". These guys are all big, burly men who can handle themselves in any situation, but they are not allowed to fight back when some fool is swinging at them, spitting, yelling abuse and insulting their families in the foulest language. These big men take it on the chin and do their best not to retaliate. We need to show them that we support and respect them, which I am sure 99 per cent of the public does.

I turn to the members who contributed to the debate. Hon Colin Tincknell has worked for three decades with remote Aborigines. He has a wealth of experience. I thank him for his contribution. Hon Charles Smith, a former police officer, again, has a wealth of experience. He spoke about the constant crime in his electorate, young gangs walking the streets, part-time police stations and the cutting of police budgets. It is great to have support from him, as someone who knows the business. Everything Hon Nick Goiran said was true. That is why government members started yelling and trying to drown him out. I thank him for his contribution and support. I am glad that Hon Martin Aldridge waved the flag for small-town police stations. They all go above and beyond their duties. I can only share his grief at trying to get answers from the government. I thank the honourable member for his support. I thank Hon Darren West for supporting our police force. As a regional member, he is well aware of the heavy lifting that country cops do. Hon Michael Mischin, the shadow Attorney General, is experienced in law and the various government departments and in explaining the accountability of these departments and, of course, our police and prison officers. His observations over the years are very pertinent to today's world. I thank the honourable member for his contribution, even though it was cut short.

Last but not least, I turn to Hon Alannah MacTiernan. The honourable member was quick to defend the ABC. I would ask her to get the ABC *Fact Check* to prove me either right or wrong; it could do that in no time at all. The honourable member stated that the police still have an attitude against Aboriginals. I do not believe that was a tick for our policewomen and policemen. The honourable member praised the Commissioner of Police, who apologised for all the atrocities of the past. Well, honourable member, your great leader, Kevin Rudd, apologised already for all of us. Then I was accused of distorting reality. Honourable member, I am not that smart. I am a mine site electrician. I would find it very difficult to distort anything; it is just not in my DNA. I have not been in politics long enough to learn how to be cunning and deceitful. I admired the honourable member right up until she spoke on the gold industry tax, nearly three years ago. I then realised that she could talk about absolutely anything, yet know nothing about the subject. Today, like with the gold tax issue, the minister proved to me that her knowledge of the police force is limited. Black lives do matter—all lives matter. To me, the honourable member has just become a piece of furniture in this chamber, so I am looking forward to next March when hopefully we will have a verge pick-up.

The PRESIDENT: Order! Member, you started off so well. You really need to have a look at the standing orders when you start to make reflections upon a member that are perhaps inappropriate and derogatory. That is not the practice in this house, so I think you need to give thought to that, and I might very well give the minister the call. I understand she wants to make a statement.

Hon ROBIN SCOTT: Thank you, Madam President.

Statement

HON ALANNAH MacTIERNAN (North Metropolitan — Minister for Regional Development) [5.35 pm]: Once again, totally on cue with his normal performances, the member who has just spoken has completely and utterly distorted the contribution I made. Indeed, I started off by saying that when I first saw that motion moved this morning, I was very pleased it had been moved, because I absolutely understand how many decent police officers—policemen and policewomen—in Australia, the United Kingdom and the United States must be travelling with a very heavy heart, as they were proud of the work that they did, yet the conduct of some of them was bringing them all into disrepute. That was very much the theme of my presentation. But I went on—I did—to challenge the assumption of the member for the Mining and Pastoral Region, who represents many, many Aboriginal people. Indeed, I believe the electorate has the most significant percentage of Aboriginal people in the state, certainly the Kimberley. I thought he had really misrepresented them to say that there was not a legitimate issue and that the Aboriginal people of this state were not coming at this from a deep-felt place, but they were just being whipped up into a fury by the ABC, and that is why they were taking Black Lives Matter —

Hon Robin Scott: They were!

The PRESIDENT: Order!

Hon ALANNAH MacTIERNAN: I do not know how many Aboriginal people you have actually met and spoken to. I can tell you that I have been working with Aboriginal people across this state for over 40 years!

Hon Robin Scott interjected.

The PRESIDENT: Member, you will sit down and you will be quiet. Minister, you will stop yelling. I can hear you very clearly in a normal tone, thank you.

Hon ALANNAH MacTIERNAN: Thank you very much, Madam President.

I am not going to sit here and allow the Aboriginal population and the Aboriginal people of this state who got up as part of the Black Lives Matter movement to be accused of being whipped up into this state by the ABC. The fundamental point I was making was that this is not just an issue about the conduct of some police or police culture; it is a bigger issue. If the member listened to the speeches that were being made by the Aboriginal people of this state about this whole issue of black lives matter, it goes far deeper than claims about the conduct of some police officers. It really is about how we as a community have moved to resolve the very deep-felt trauma that has gone on for many generations in the black and white relationships of this state. Like many other members here, I absolutely understand that the police face a very, very difficult issue. I went out of my way to talk about how I have seen many Aboriginal people who have developed very, very deep relationships with particular police officers—and I went on to commend the work and the leadership that has been shown by the Commissioner of Police, Chris Dawson. I do not think that we can allow this member to continue to denigrate Aboriginal people in this place.

Point of Order

Hon COLIN TINCKNELL: The honourable minister has denigrated the member and changed what he said during his speech. During his speech, the honourable member gave facts and figures about wrongful reports on the ABC. He clearly made a point of that. He is being ostracised and spoken down to in a way that is very unfair, Madam President.

The PRESIDENT: There is no point of order. Things got very heated—no, minister, we will move on.