

CRIMINAL CODE AMENDMENT (PREVENTION OF LAWFUL ACTIVITY) BILL 2015

179. Mr J. NORBERGER to the Minister for Police:

Can the minister please explain how this government is supporting Western Australia and its economy with the introduction of the Criminal Code Amendment (Prevention of Lawful Activity) Bill 2015?

Mrs L.M. HARVEY replied:

I thank the member for Joondalup for this question. There has been some lively debate and a lot of media commentary about this very simple piece of legislation, the Criminal Code Amendment (Prevention of Lawful Activity) Bill 2015, the government has introduced into Parliament; indeed, it seems to have captivated our colleagues in the other place for the better part of the week.

Dr A.D. Buti interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Armadale, I call you to order for the first time.

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: Why is this legislation necessary? The legislation is necessary because we on this side of the house recognise that the future development of this state's vast resources creates jobs and that those jobs are vital to the future development of our economy. What happens —

Mr W.J. Johnston interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Cannington!

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: When we have developments such as James Price Point, we want to develop —

Ms R. Saffioti: Did it?

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Cannington, I call you to order for the second time. Member for West Swan, I call you to order for the second time.

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: For once in her life, the member for West Swan actually raises a pertinent interjection. She is right, Mr Speaker. The proponents at James Price Point freely acknowledge that the actions of the protesters up there formed a key part of their decision-making process to discontinue that project. Why did that happen? That happened because the protesters would lock themselves —

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: We are getting a wall of noise again, members.

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: Protesters locked themselves onto devices by securing their thumbs inside those devices that blocked the road. That resulted in over \$1 million in police resources being spent and 140 police officers being required to manage those protesters. Specialist teams of people had to be taken up there to extract the protesters from the devices that they had locked themselves onto. What those people did in engaging in that activity was to prevent local people from Broome—all those construction workers and exploration workers—going about their jobs, their employment. They could not progress and proceed with a full day's work for a fair day's pay because of the actions of those protesters.

Mr B.S. Wyatt interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Victoria Park, I call you to order for the first time.

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: That is why this legislation is before Parliament.

Mr B.S. Wyatt: You do understand why it's not being built?

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: The member needs to know that what those protesters were doing —

Mr B.S. Wyatt interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Victoria Park, I call you to order for the second time.

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: Those protesters at that site not only prevented the machinery, equipment and workers accessing the site, but also spat on the Aboriginal workers going to site. They spat on the people who were in favour of that proposal going ahead. They are the radical extremist fringe of protest. We on this side of the house —

Mr B.S. Wyatt interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Victoria Park!

Mr B.S. Wyatt interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Victoria Park, I call you to order for the third time.

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: We actually agree with the Leader of the Opposition's comments today that democratic protest is a hallmark of a free liberal society.

Several members interjected.

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: It is, but not when people lock themselves onto devices and prevent lawful activity on and access to those sites.

Ms R. Saffioti interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for West Swan, I call you to order now for the third time.

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: This is not about normal protest. This is not about standardised protest. This is about the dangerous activity of radical protesters. They are people who would see fit to lock themselves onto the Premier's residence and prevent his family from leaving their home.

Several members interjected.

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: Would that be acceptable to opposition members? Would they accept that activity? That is what this legislation is designed to correct. We will make it an offence.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Right.

Mr P.C. Tinley interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Willagee, I call you to order for the first time.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Willagee, I call you to order for the second time. Premier, I call you to order for the first time. Member for Victoria Park, I do not want to hear from you again. Wind this up, please, minister.

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: I would love to wind up my answer. What the legislation does is make it illegal for someone to manufacture, possess or use a lock-on device. The reason we are introducing that —

Point of Order

Mr W.J. JOHNSTON: The minister is giving her opinion on what the legislation means. She is not entitled to give an opinion in question time.

The SPEAKER: That is not a point of order.

Questions without Notice Resumed

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: I am just about done. The reason we are bringing this legislation forward is that we do not engage in rhetoric about being a government that supports jobs.

Mr P.C. Tinley interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Willagee, I call you to order for the third time. Minister, can you wind this up.

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: We support the forest industry, we support the cattle industry and we support resource development projects. This legislation is necessary to ensure that all those people engaged in those activities, all those people employed, can lawfully go about their job.

Dr A.D. Buti interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Armadale, I call you to order for the second time.