

BAIL ACT — COMMISSIONER OF POLICE'S COMMENTS

**582. Mrs M.H. ROBERTS to the Minister for Police:**

Back in February, in an article in *The West Australian*, the Commissioner of Police called for changes to the Bail Act 1982 to help reduce crime rates.

- (1) Has the minister discussed the changes to the Bail Act the commissioner would like to see put in place to drive crime down?
- (2) If so, what changes was he calling for?

**Mrs L.M. HARVEY replied:**

- (1)–(2) A review of the Bail Act was conducted some time ago. Legislation should be shortly read into the Legislative Council with changes to the Bail Act. We have recently announced that we will be looking to implement changes to the Bail Act specifically with respect to offenders against children. We think we need to revisit the bail conditions for people who offend sexually against children, and we were talking about that last week.

*Point of Order*

**Mrs M.H. ROBERTS:** I am well aware of the proposals that are before the house with respect to the Bail Act. I am specifically asking the minister about those changes, not included in Hon Michael Mischin's bills, that the commissioner was asking for in February, and that the minister said were not a priority for the government. What are those changes, and how did he think they were going to drive down crime?

*Questions without Notice Resumed*

**Mrs L.M. HARVEY:** As I was saying, we are implementing some changes to the Bail Act, and the Attorney General is progressing those changes to do with those offenders who offend sexually against children. I am not sure which specific comments the member is referring to, but some of the discussions I have had with the commissioner and police officers about the Bail Act and bail conditions indicate that they would like to see more serious consequences for offenders who are bailed into the community and breach bail—in areas such as curfews. With respect to the specifics the member is talking about, there has been some discussions with my cabinet colleagues —

**Mrs M.H. Roberts:** You do not know what changes the commissioner wants to the Bail Act.

**The SPEAKER:** Member!

**Mrs L.M. HARVEY:** The commissioner has flagged with me a range of changes to the Bail Act, and there has been further consultation with Western Australia Police. When I am ready to announce those changes to the Bail Act, I will bring the legislation to Parliament. The opposition will be fully informed, and we will offer a full briefing to members opposite, and I hope they avail themselves of the opportunity to understand what we believe is necessary.