

WEAPONS — ILLEGAL CARRIAGE AND USE

124. Mrs L.M. HARVEY to the Minister for Police:

Members in the electorate of Scarborough are very concerned about the growing use and carriage of illegal weapons, particularly in entertainment areas.

Ms M.M. Quirk: Too little, too late.

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: Can the minister give the house some indication of what the government is going to do to combat this trend?

Mr R.F. JOHNSON replied:

I thank the member for Scarborough for a very well-thought-out question. I also highlight the fact that the shadow Minister for Police, who prefers to be known as my stalker, has just said, “Too little, too late.” It is very interesting that, in seven and a half years, the Labor government did nothing about the increasing violence in Western Australia, about the increasing number of people carrying weapons or about juveniles being able to buy weapons over the counter. The former government did nothing until about three weeks ago when I made a public comment that I would introduce a bill into Parliament after properly drafting legislation so that a comprehensive bill would be introduced. Is it not interesting that two weeks after I made that announcement the member for Girrawheen—my shadow, or stalker as she prefers to be known—cobbled together a bill and introduced it just over a week ago in a last ditch attempt to make out that her party is tough on law and order.

Ms M.M. Quirk interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order, member for Girrawheen!

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: The public of Western Australia voted with their feet on election day because they were sick to death of the weak on crime and weak on law and order approach of the previous Labor government. Fortunately, Western Australia has a very good government now. Part of the legislation that will be introduced will be handled by me.

Ms M.M. Quirk: When?

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: I will answer the question. Part of the legislation will be handled by me and part of it will be handled by the Attorney General.

Mr E.S. Ripper: It is his fault, is it?

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: No; we are working together. We work as a very good team because we both have a tough on crime and tough on criminals approach. That is a very different approach from that of the previous Labor government. It is very different from the approach taken by the member for Girrawheen when she was in government. Under our legislation the police will have the authority to automatically stop and search people in entertainment precincts. They will be able to use metal detectors.

Ms M.M. Quirk: Snap.

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: The member for Girrawheen is about two weeks too late to say snap. When the question was being asked, she said, “Too little, too late.” I say to her that her legislation is definitely too little, too late. When the house resumes in the new year we will deliver very comprehensive legislation. It will be far better than the two or three scraps of paper that the member for Girrawheen introduced on behalf of the Labor Party last week as a last resort. We will do it, and we will do it properly.