

POLICE — HOME INVASION LAWS

140. Mr I.C. BLAYNEY to the Minister for Police:

Firstly, I thank the minister for attending a community forum in Geraldton last Saturday. Can the minister please update the house on how the government's tough new laws on home invasion have been received in the community?

Mrs L.M. HARVEY replied:

I thank the member for Geraldton for the invitation to visit his electorate and attend a community forum, which was very well patronised by citizens of his electorate. It is fair to say that the people who attended the community forum on Saturday were thoroughly sick and tired of the slap-on-the-wrist approach that they perceived has prevailed around the issue of recidivist home burglars. They were very relieved to hear that the government has new legislation in train to address that issue. I think the member for Geraldton will agree that the prevailing theme of the community forum was that a number of people who attended that community forum had had their houses broken into more than once and many of them had seen the perpetrators of those burglaries go to court and they had been unhappy with the consequences of the actions —

[Interruption from the gallery.]

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: They have been most unhappy with what they perceive to be a gap between the consequences for these actions and the community's expectations. One of the comments made was that they were thoroughly sick of hearing about maximum sentences; they want minimum mandatory sentencing for repeat home burglars, and they were most relieved that the government is going to provide their community with some relief from the activities of these prolific recidivist home burglar offenders.

I really enjoyed meeting the member for Geraldton's constituents, and I particularly enjoyed the fact that they believed that our legislation was playing directly into their primary concern, and their primary concern was that they wanted to feel safe and to be safe in their own homes. They spoke very highly of the support they had received from police —

Ms M.M. Quirk interjected.

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: I think it is really interesting; I know people over there do not like it, and I will be interested to hear whether the Labor Party is going to support our mandatory minimum penalties for repeat home burglars.

Ms M.M. Quirk interjected.

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: The member for Girrawheen might want to talk to the occupants of the 420 dwellings that have been burgled in her electorate in the last 12 months.

Several members interjected.

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: She might want to tell them —

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Members! Member for Girrawheen, I call you to order for the first time. Minister, I want you to direct your answer through the Chair.

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: I am pleased to do so, Mr Speaker. My —

Ms M.M. Quirk: You say you'll do it, but you don't actually do it.

The SPEAKER: Member for Girrawheen!

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: I look forward to the member for Girrawheen standing in the chamber to support our mandatory minimum penalties for repeat home burglars, and our mandatory minimum penalties for violent home invaders.

Mr J.R. Quigley interjected.

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

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: I think it is most interesting that the member for Butler chooses to interject on me because he was standing up to say what a shocking thing it is going to be to see mandatory minimum penalties for repeat burglars and for violent home invaders.

Mr B.S. Wyatt interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Victoria Park!

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: Perhaps the member for lawyers over there, the member for Butler, might like to go to the 1 820 victims of home burglaries in his electorate over the past three years and explain to them why mandatory minimum penalties are not going to be a good solution.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Victoria Park, I call you to order for the third time; member for Butler, for the second time. My advice to you today is: do not tempt fate. Okay?

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: There have been more than 1 000 victims of home burglary in the member for Victoria Park's electorate over the last year—1 114 homes have been broken into in his electorate. We know —

Several members interjected.

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

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: There were 907 homes broken into in the member for Armadale's electorate over the last financial year. We are offering a solution, and our solution will make the work of our police officers worthwhile.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Armadale, I call you to order for the second time. Minister, I think you have made your point. Direct your answer through the Chair.

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: To wrap up, our police officers are out there. We are recruiting 550 additional police —

Several members interjected.

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

Mr P. Papalia interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Warnbro, I call you to order for the first time. Minister, direct your answer through the Chair, and bring it to a conclusion, please.

Mr P.C. Tinley interjected.

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

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: We have made our commitment. We are on track to deliver 550 additional police and police auxiliary officers. Part of that commitment is about training an additional 200 detectives to put into volume crime teams to round up these prolific offenders and bring them before the courts. As a result of the legislation that we have introduced to this Parliament, when the police round up these people and take them to court, they know that they will be put away and sentenced for a mandatory minimum term of two years. That gives the police great comfort that they can go about their duties and know that their work is worthwhile because they see a result when these people go behind bars. I can go out there hand on heart into communities such as the member for Geraldton's and say —

Dr A.D. Buti interjected.

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

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: We have a solution to put on the table when the Labor opposition had no solution whatsoever except to oppose our solution. The member for Butler should go to work in Labor's policy vacuum and come up with something else. We think we have something that will work, and I look forward to the support of those opposite as I bring it to the chamber.