

MINISTER FOR POLICE AND EMERGENCY SERVICES - ASSOCIATION WITH ADAM SPAGNOLO

**10. Mr M.J. BIRNEY to the Minister for Police and Emergency Services:**

Mr Speaker, before I ask my question, it was remiss of me when asking my first question not to congratulate the member for Willagee on his ascendancy to the premiership. On behalf of the state opposition, I do so now: Premier, I wish you a happy, healthy and short premiership.

**Mr A.J. Carpenter:** Thanks very much.

**Mr M.J. BIRNEY:** Given that the Minister for Police and Emergency Services' long-time friend, associate and political ally Mr Adam Spagnolo has now been charged by police with corruption, and given that the minister is the Minister for Police, will he continue his association and friendship with Mr Spagnolo, or will he now dissociate himself altogether from this individual?

**Mr J.B. D'ORAZIO replied:**

I thank the Leader of the Opposition. Let us put this into context. Prior to the incident for which Mr Spagnolo has been charged, he was a former deputy mayor, a former mayor and a long-time councillor of the City of Stirling and was very well respected. A large number of members on the other side of the house as well as on this side of the house would have had dealings with him in all sorts of capacities. From the day that he was charged and it was reported on the television news, I have not had any dealings with him or spoken to him, and I have no intention of having any contact with him. The problem with this situation is that we need to be very careful to allow this individual the right to be assumed innocent. We need to allow this matter to go to court. I do not want to say anything that could prejudice the outcome -

**Mr M.J. Birney:** Why won't you associate with him if you think he might be innocent?

**Mr J.B. D'ORAZIO:** I have just finished saying that I have not spoken to him since the -

**Mr M.J. Birney:** You said you have no intention of speaking to him.

**Mr J.B. D'ORAZIO:** Let me finish. There is no reason for me to have any relationship with this person. I am happy for him to go through the normal process that the Leader of the Opposition and I would expect to go through if he or I were facing the charge. As I said, I have not spoken to this individual since the matters became public. However, we must remember that a lot of us in this house had dealings with him in the past.