

FIREARMS AMENDMENT BILL 2021

74. Mr S.A. MILLMAN to the Minister for Police:

I refer to the McGowan Labor government's commitment to cracking down on bikies and serious organised crime figures and getting guns out of the hands of criminals.

- (1) Can the minister outline to the house how the government's Firearms Amendment Bill 2021 will target those involved in gun crime and the illegal gun trade?
- (2) Can the minister advise the house whether he is aware of anyone who does not support these efforts to target organised crime and is instead undermining the hard work of dedicated police officers?

Mr P. PAPALIA replied:

I thank the member for his question.

- (1)–(2) We have introduced laws to reform the Firearms Act to target organised crime and other serious criminals. Amongst the reforms in this legislation is the creation of firearms prohibition orders to specifically target outlaw motorcycle gang members, terrorists and serious domestic violence offenders. Those are the three types of people who I have stated in my second reading speech that will be subject to the firearms prohibition orders that we are creating with this legislation. We are also focusing on the illegal manufacturing of firearms, including 3D printing of firearms, to stop criminals being able to make firearms illegally. We are increasing the penalties for certain firearm offences relating to stolen firearms, which is frequently how criminals get hold of weapons, and firing a gun in a way that will cause fear in the public, which regularly happens at the hands of bikies, outlaw motorcycle gangs and other criminals. Finally, we are including a permanent firearms amnesty in the legislation to encourage people to hand in firearms that are sitting around waiting to be stolen by criminals. That is the objective of this legislation. It is pretty simple. They are very clear points. The very clear focus is on stopping criminals from getting their hands on firearms.

To address the second part of the member's question, I was very disturbed to hear a contribution by the Nationals WA last night in this place. One of the most vocal National Party members, the member for North West Central, came into this place and accused the police of absolute corrupt practice. Under the cover of parliamentary privilege, he accused the Western Australia Police Force of corrupt practice with this legislation. I will quote what the member said. I took notes at the time, while I was sitting here. He said —

We have seen the police use legislation to their own advantage to target those law-abiding citizens who are licensed gun holders in my community. I know they have been targeted by the police using an interpretation of the legislation to benefit their cause. I do not know what that cause is.

I do not know who he is talking about but I suspect he is defending the bikies. Is he saying that the Western Australia Police Force is using the law to target bikies and he is standing up for them? The National Party came in here today and tried to paper over that contribution that was made last night. It was shocking. It was disgraceful. He went on to accuse the police of incompetence. I took notes again. This is in relation to the enduring amnesty part of this legislation, which will enable people to walk into a police station with their firearm and not be accused of breaking the law as they are handing it in in the event that it is not licensed or there is some other issue.

The member for North West Central said —

Will they go into the police station and present this firearm and the police will go, "What do you want me to do with that? I do not know much about guns"?

He then said —

That is what will happen.

He attacked his local Carnarvon police officers by saying they are incompetent and incapable of dealing with the firearms amnesty. For his information, during the 2017 national amnesty, 1 242 firearms were surrendered in Western Australia without any difficulty. The police seemed to know what to do with them. More recently, between 1 July and 31 December last year, after we announced another amnesty, 901 firearms in Western Australia were handed in to police, who were not incompetent and were fully capable of dealing with them and knew what to do with the guns. They included 71 handguns, 165 shotguns, 665 rifles and parts, and 29 240 rounds of ammunition. The member for North West Central belled the cat.

Point of Order

Mr R.S. LOVE: This diatribe by the police minister is actually what he should be doing in his second reading reply. This is ridiculous.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: There is no point of order. Sit down, Deputy Leader of the Opposition. Carry on, minister.

Questions without Notice Resumed

Mr P. PAPALIA: The Leader and Deputy Leader of the Nationals WA cannot come into this place and claim to support this legislation yet have one of their members attack and undermine it the night before and suggest that the police are both corrupt and incompetent in introducing this legislation. That is not acceptable. The Leader of the Nationals has to show some leadership.

Point of Order

Mr R.S. LOVE: The minister is engaging in debate with members of the Nationals and is not answering the question.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: There is no point of order, Deputy Leader of the Opposition. Carry on, minister.

Questions without Notice Resumed

Mr P. PAPALIA: There needs to be leadership, Leader of the Nationals. I know that the member for North West Central is really difficult to understand and comprehend and that it is hard to work out where he is coming from, but in this case I think I know where he is coming from because he also referred in his speech to having received correspondence from the Shooting Industry Foundation of Australia. Many of our backbenchers may be familiar with that organisation because they have probably received correspondence from it. It is not a Western Australian organisation. It is an east coast organisation. It is a well-funded industry group that claims peak body status, but it is not a peak body for Western Australia. It has no standing in this discussion and has no care for Western Australia or for the community safety of Western Australia. As revealed in a *Four Corners* report in 2018, the Shooting Industry Foundation of Australia's corporate members have bankrolled activities with more than \$1.2 million since late 2014. Its members are directors of local firms, NIOA, which calls itself Australia's largest privately owned supplier of small arms and ammunition, Raytrade, outdoor sporting agencies and the Australian offshoots of international gun manufactures Winchester and Beretta. For the information of members, Bob Katter's son-in-law —

Point of Order

Ms M.J. DAVIES: I am very happy to listen to the minister provide this information in his second reading reply, but this is question time and it is an opportunity for the opposition. This is an abuse of question time.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: There is no point of order, but the minister will conclude his comments.

Questions without Notice Resumed

Mr P. PAPALIA: I will finish up, Deputy Speaker.

Bob Katter's son-in-law is the owner of NIOA. The Nationals seems to be particularly favourable to this group, which is not Western Australian, and its objectives, which undoubtedly appear to be undermining any gun reform anywhere in the nation. The Leader of the Nationals needs to consider what she is doing. She cannot say one thing here and have her members undermining this legislation out there in the community.