

BROOME — VIOLENCE AND ANTISOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

877. Ms J. FARRER to the Premier:

I refer to the violence in Broome on the weekend involving up to 150 people in which police were assaulted, police vehicles were damaged, and a woman was run over by a police vehicle.

- (1) Is it acceptable that Broome residents and business owners are living in fear due to violence and antisocial behaviour caused by people passing through the town in search of alcohol, medical services or to visit family?
- (2) Why did the Premier reject my call in August to set up a task force to find a site for a shelter for people from remote communities visiting Broome?
- (3) Following the violence in Broome on the weekend, will the Premier review his decision not to set up a task force?

Mr C.J. BARNETT replied:

- (1)–(3) The violence that took place in Broome is unacceptable, as is violence in other parts of the Kimberley. I think Balgo has almost been in a state of civil war for the last few months. My understanding of a shelter for people coming into Broome—I may be wrong on this; maybe the member can correct me—is that Broome did not agree to that. I understand that Broome actually rejected the offer that the government had made, and therefore my understanding—again, it is not my portfolio—is it is being developed in Derby.

Mr M. McGowan interjected.

Mr C.J. BARNETT: The Leader of the Opposition did not ask the question!

Mr M. McGowan: I know the answer.

Mr C.J. BARNETT: It is a very serious issue.

Ms M.M. Quirk: That is why you're ignoring it!

Mr C.J. BARNETT: This government is doing anything but. It is probably the most serious and also most complex social issue that Western Australia faces. It is of great concern that, if anything, there has been an increase in violence, antisocial behaviour and the like. I support the development of a facility along the lines that has been developed in Kalgoorlie, which has been very successful. I saw that as it was being completed. I understand that one is being developed in Derby. It is a pity that Broome did not endorse it.

Mr M. McGowan: I wrote to you with the suggestion—you rejected it!

The SPEAKER: Leader of the Opposition, I call you to order for the first time.

Mr C.J. BARNETT: I am advised it took something like three years to find a location in Broome, and it could not be found. After three years of endeavour by this government to find a suitable location in Broome, we could not find one. I will say this: it is incumbent upon local governments, in areas where these issues are occurring in significant numbers, to work cooperatively with the state government. I am disappointed about that and I know the member for Kimberley is disappointed too, but that money, to the best of my knowledge, has been transferred to the Derby facility. If Broome comes to the party, we will certainly look at doing something in Broome.