

VIOLENCE RESTRAINING ORDERS — OMBUDSMAN REPORT

**993. Ms S.F. McGURK to the Premier:**

I have a supplementary question. I repeat to the Premier that in 93 per cent of cases in which the Department for Child Protection and Family Support identified violence as an issue, the department did not proceed with further action. Why does this government treat family and domestic violence as such a low priority?

**Mr C.J. BARNETT replied:**

The final comment was both totally inappropriate and totally wrong.

Several members interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Members!

**Mr C.J. BARNETT:** This government, along with governments around Australia, is making a concerted effort on domestic violence. While members opposite might say the department may —

Several members interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Member for Midland, I call you to order for the first time!

**Mr C.J. BARNETT:** One of the issues is that until recently, police probably tended to ignore domestic violence. Police, with that department, now take action. I visited a police station only —

Several members interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Member for Girrawheen, I call you to order for the first time. Member for Midland, I do not want to hear again from you on this.

**Mr C.J. BARNETT:** At the police station I visited about a month ago, the comments from the sergeant in charge were basically that such a high proportion of their work now is related to drugs and domestic violence—a change that has taken place in the past few years. That is not to suggest that domestic violence did not happen 10 years ago—of course it did—but now the police and authorities are dealing with it. Although members opposite imply somehow that the government has been negligent, do they know how many of those cases were referred to police? I suspect that the serious ones are now being referred to police, whereas under the watch of members opposite—if they want to be political—they were not.