

METHAMPHETAMINE

14. Dr A.D. BUTI to the Minister for Police:

I refer to the methamphetamine crisis that continues to grip our state. What will this government do differently to address this scourge, crack down on dealers and help those people addicted to this insidious drug?

Mrs M.H. ROBERTS replied:

I thank the member for Armadale for asking this question and raising this issue. The member has a record in this place of raising really important community issues and there is no more important issue in the community, here and now, than the meth crisis it faces. Sadly, after eight and a half years of a Liberal–National government, we find ourselves in the position in which Western Australia has the highest rate of methamphetamine use in the country. This is a tragedy for Western Australia and Western Australians. It has a far-reaching impact on many lives and families in our community. It is a drug like no other. It drives crime within the community. It drives theft and home burglaries as people steal to get money to purchase drugs. It also drives assaults and domestic assaults. It even drives attempts at murder and other harm in the community.

Mrs L.M. Harvey: What are you going to do about it?

Mrs M.H. ROBERTS: Is it not a bit interesting that the member for Scarborough asks what we are going to do about it? We are not going to sit on our hands like the previous government did for eight and a half years. We are not going to do nothing. We are not going to let the funding run out on 30 June. The funding for the previous government's meth effort will cease on 30 June this year. That is why we are funding border force and that is why we are putting an additional 100 officers there. Today we will announce, and I will introduce, amendments to the Misuse of Drugs Act to deal with methamphetamine traffickers in the community. Those people who deal in and traffic methamphetamine in quantities of 28 grams or more will face life in prison. We are upping the penalty from a 25-year penalty to a life penalty. We are upping the penalty of a fine from \$100 000 to unlimited. We are putting on notice those people who trade in this drug that if they traffic methamphetamine in this state, they will face life in jail. We are also putting on notice those people who want to trade in this drug and traffic it through our communities on those known drug routes that we will have a 100-strong meth border force that will tackle them and catch them and charge them with this crime. Once those people are charged and convicted, they will face that life penalty. This drug has been and continues to be a scourge in this community.

Mrs L.M. Harvey interjected.

The SPEAKER: Deputy Leader of the Opposition!

Mrs M.H. ROBERTS: According to the member for Scarborough, there is no problem; they sorted it apparently! Tell that to the police officers who are dealing with the meth addicts who are out of control in our lockups! Tell that to the emergency health workers who are putting up with them in the emergency departments at our hospitals on a daily basis. You failed, member for Scarborough! Your government failed! You had eight and a half years, yet we have the highest use of methamphetamine of any state in the country. That has not changed. Take responsibility for that! Unlike you people, who had eight and a half years, we have a comprehensive plan. Part of it is upping the penalties, part of it is catching more offenders and other parts of it deal with rehabilitation.

Dr M.D. Nahan interjected.

The SPEAKER: Leader of the Opposition!

Mrs M.H. ROBERTS: The Leader of the Opposition should bury his head in shame!

The SPEAKER: I call the Leader of the Opposition to order for the second time. It is obviously not getting through.

Mrs M.H. ROBERTS: The Leader of the Opposition in particular should bury his head in shame because he was the Treasurer who defunded the meth funds from 30 June this year. We will not let that happen.