

TAXATION REFORM PACKAGE, GOVERNMENT AGENCIES

3. Mr BLOFFWITCH to the Premier:

The Federal Government's tax reform package has now been implemented. How has the implementation of the new tax system been progressed by state government agencies?

Mr COURT replied:

The new taxation system came into effect on 1 July. Most of the government agencies have reported that they have been able to put all the proper systems in place but that there have been some teething problems. For example, some agencies have had rounding-up problems with their systems and others have experienced difficulties accessing the Australian Taxation Office software for electronic reporting. Those issues are being progressively resolved. The Australian Taxation Office has been working cooperatively with those government agencies. There are no major concerns. I have no doubt that the private sector is also facing similar issues. The feedback from the small business sector is that some businesses are having difficulties because they did not have the systems in place prior to 30 June.

The Labor Party has been very quiet about the goods and services tax. We had a scare campaign in the lead-up to 30 June involving shock and horror, which was quite dishonest. The Leader of the Opposition sent out pamphlets saying that he had never been a supporter of the GST, which we all know is not true. The back of the pamphlet shows that it was authorised by Mr Halden. I am not at all surprised that Labor does not worry too much. The gentleman was described as having a glittering indifference to the truth. I hope Labor's campaign between now and the next election is a little better organised than that.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr COURT: The truth came out about the Labor Party's position on GST.

All the blame was heaped on Mr Della Bosca. I assure members that Labor Premiers who attend meetings of Premiers and Treasurers express disappointment that the tax package was not implemented in the form in which it was presented at the federal election; that is, including the food component. State Labor Premiers have just woken up to the fact that any so-called roll back will reduce revenue to the States, which consequently will be disadvantaged. Members opposite have gone quiet on the GST. When the truth came out about the Labor Party's position, it highlighted that it is policy bereft. Labor members had to run around to find new issues on which to talk. Frankly, the scare campaign backfired on them.

POLICE, ROYAL COMMISSION INTO CORRUPTION

2. Dr GALLOP to the Premier:

Given the continuing evidence of serious police corruption in Western Australia, why does the Premier consistently oppose the establishment of a royal commission? We need a royal commission and we need it now, Premier!

Mr COURT replied:

This Parliament put in place a very powerful and well-resourced Anti-Corruption Commission. We have said as a Government that if the ACC or the Commissioner of Police were to recommend a royal commission, we would act immediately. We have implemented major changes in both the culture and operations within our Police Service, and we are proud of the professional way in which our police carry out their responsibilities. This Government has done, and will continue to do, everything in its power to ensure that corruption is exposed. This Government inherited a Police Service that was demoralised, underfunded and not in good shape, and it has changed that service into the most professional Police Service in this country. We have nearly doubled the Police budget, and last week I opened the twenty-seventh new police station in this State during the time of this Government. Also, more than \$100m worth of new technology is being rolled out to support our Police Service. The Government is proud of what it has done with the Police Service, and proud of the great majority of people serving in it. The Government would act immediately if the ACC were to recommend the establishment of a royal commission.

Mr Kobelke: You're ducking the issue! You're soft on corruption. You duck the issue every time!

Mr COURT: Nothing could be further from the truth.