

LAW AND ORDER - CRIME FIGURES

**722. Mr P.D. OMODEI to the Minister for Police and Emergency Services:**

I refer to the minister's comment in Parliament last night that -

This government is delivering front-line policing in this state and that is the reason that all the major crime figures are decreasing.

Given that the Office of Crime Prevention report "turning the corner 2007", which the minister personally released, states that assaults are up six per cent, sexual assault is up 10 per cent, robbery is up 10 per cent, burglary is up 0.7 per cent, motor vehicle theft is up three per cent and theft is up four per cent, and given that the WA Police annual report shows that crime is on the rise -

- (1) Do we have a story on our hands that the police minister has blatantly misled the people of Western Australia on soaring rates of crime?
- (2) Will the minister apologise to the people of Western Australia for his misleading comments?

**Mr J.C. KOBELKE replied:**

I thank the Leader of the Opposition for his dorothy dixer. I very much appreciate it.

- (1)-(2) Again, the Leader of the Opposition does not understand the facts, and he is possibly seeking to misrepresent them.

**Mr P.D. Omodei:** What - the WA Police annual report and your own report, "turning the corner 2007"?

**Mr J.C. KOBELKE:** I will answer the Leader of the Opposition's question. The "turning the corner 2007" report uses offences per 100 000 of population. Of course, population growth is in the order of two per cent per annum. Therefore, if the rate of offences is stable, the actual number will go up. The police report uses actual numbers; the "turning the corner 2007" report uses offences per 100 000 of population and shows whether the rate is stable or whether there has been a decline.

This government took a stand and put in place laws to tackle domestic violence. The former government did nothing about it. Domestic violence was given full rein when members opposite were in government - absolutely. In 2004, under this government, the law was changed so that the police are required to investigate and take action. Therefore, the number of assaults relating to domestic issues has increased. However, as we well know, there is a very low level of reporting. When it comes to car theft and home break-ins, people report; otherwise, they cannot claim on their insurance. When it comes to sexual assaults and family violence, very few people report to the police. We have found that due to more proactive policing following the changes to the law, there has been quite a huge increase in reports of assault and sexual violence relating to the family. However, the reporting of non-family violence and assaults has flatlined; it has not increased. That clearly shows that the changes to the law and more proactive policing -

Several members interjected.

**Mr J.C. KOBELKE:** The Leader of the Opposition cannot accept the facts and a rational answer. The Leader of the Opposition wants to find bad news wherever he can. As if there is not enough bad news in his own party, he has to go out and see where he can find it elsewhere.