

CANNABIS CONTROL BILL 2003

644. Mr R.F. JOHNSON to the Premier:

I refer the Premier to his statement in this House on 20 March 2003 that he was proud of his Government's cannabis policy.

- (1) Why has the Premier not been present in this House for a single minute of the 16 hours of debate so far on the Cannabis Control Bill 2003, not even to attend divisions?
- (2) Will the Premier undertake to be present in this House to listen to the concerns of the community during the remainder of debate on this legislation?
- (3) If not, will he admit that he is ashamed of this legislation, which will be exploited by drug dealers and will increase the availability of a dangerous drug to our young people?

Dr G.I. GALLOP replied:

- (1)-(3) I enjoy participating in the debates of this Parliament, but there are times when it is very difficult, particularly when the Opposition is running the sorts of arguments it is running in Western Australia today. The Opposition is running a set of arguments based upon one proposition, and one proposition only, and that is to create fear in the community. The proposals in our legislation are supported by the police, the Community Drug Summit and sensible Western Australians who want the law to act properly. As Premier of this State I have many responsibilities, one of which is to make sure that our legislation gets through the Parliament as quickly as possible so we can have good rather than bad law operating in Western Australia.