

BROTHELS IN SUBURBS

502. Mr P.D. OMODEI to the Premier:

Yesterday, the Premier said that his proposed prostitution laws would give local government the opportunity to regulate where brothels will go, and that, in his own electorate, he had no problem with the City of Melville making decisions on brothel locations based solely on planning decisions. I ask: is it not the case that under the Premier's legislation, the State Administrative Tribunal can override the decisions of local government and put brothels in suburbs such as Willagee, against the wishes of the community?

Mr A.J. CARPENTER replied:

Let me answer the question this way: I quite like the game of wedge politics; I think I am as good at it as anyone on the other side. Yesterday, the shadow Minister for Police made a statement in this chamber that he would close every brothel in Western Australia. Let us have that on the record now from the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr R.F. Johnson: I was asked what I would do if I was the police minister. I would close them all. I tell the truth in this place.

Mr A.J. CARPENTER: We can all play this game. I will back myself every day. Let us hear from the Leader of the Opposition. Does he agree with his police spokesman that every brothel in the state should be closed?

Mr P.D. Omodei: Let me ask you the question again. You have got a habit of not answering questions, Premier. Just in case you have not noticed, I actually asked you the question, so it is your right now to answer it if you can.

Mr A.J. CARPENTER: There is nothing precluding my responding with a question of my own, my friend. Show me the standing order that says I cannot respond with a question. Will the Leader of the Opposition, if he gets the opportunity, close every brothel in the state of Western Australia? If the answer is no, what does that say about his position? For example, let us hear him tell the Parliament whether, if he gets the opportunity, he will close the brothels in Kalgoorlie. Will the Leader of the Opposition - yes or no? It is a simple yes or no. If the Leader of the Opposition gets the opportunity, will he close the brothels in Kalgoorlie?

Mr P.D. Omodei: Why don't you sit down and let me get up and answer it for 10 minutes? I do not think the Deputy Speaker will allow me to give the proper answer. If you want to ask me the question, why don't you ask me the question?

Mr A.J. CARPENTER: If the answer is no, what does that say about the consistency of the opposition's position? The Leader of the Opposition is going to continue to allow brothels to operate. Of course he is. Is he going to allow the brothels in Kalgoorlie to remain open?

Mr P.D. Omodei: Let the record show that the Premier cannot answer my question.

Mr A.J. CARPENTER: The record can show what it likes. I answered the very same question yesterday. The legislation will be abided by. However, tell me, for the purposes of consistency -

Mr P.D. Omodei: I want to know what you are going to do about it. If there is a brothel in your electorate, what will you do about it?

Mr J.N. Hyde interjected.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, member for Perth!

Mr A.J. CARPENTER: I get the sneaking suspicion that the Leader of the Opposition does not want to respond to the question.