



Police Federation
of Australia

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29 July 2004

Hon Bronwyn Bishop
Chair
House of Representatives Standing Committee
on Legal and Constitutional Affairs
657 Pittwater Road
DEE WHY NSW 2099

RE: Inquiry into Crime in the Community: victims, offenders & fear of crime

Dear Mrs Bishop

I write with grave concern over reports that the above inquiry is to be terminated and a final report produced without the Police Federation of Australia (PFA) having been called to appear before the committee.

You would be aware that in August 2002 the PFA, an organization representing Australia's 50,000 police officers, made a detailed 12 page submission to your inquiry. That submission was based on a range of issues including the affects of drugs on crime, funding of policing agencies, overseas research into crime prevention, concerns regarding private policing, concerns about the lack of consistency in legislation between jurisdictions and the proposed development of a national crime fighting model which became the Australian Crime Commission.

Much of the work and recommendations we made were based on successful overseas models, particularly the United States and their Community Oriented Policing Program (COPS). I am advised that you attended the US Department of Justice, who administer the COPS program in the US, following the receipt of our submission.

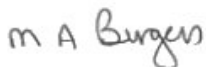
The recently released Federal Government policy "National Community Crime Prevention Program", was premised on the ability of local communities to "recognize local crime problems and to pursue effective, locally organized, crime prevention initiatives". The Prime Minister's own Press Release recognizes that the Program will support "innovative crime prevention projects".

The PFA's submission to your committee called for the establishment of a federally funded "Innovations Grants Program" for programs aimed at local crime reduction with a coordinated approach with local police and their local communities.

An article for news limited by Michael Harvey on 7 May 2004 argued that the National Crime Prevention Program "follows the work of a parliamentary committee, chaired by former minister Bronwyn Bishop, which investigated ways of involving all levels of government in the fight against crime". I would have thought that if your committee was investigating ways of involving all levels of Government in the fight against crime your committee might have called an organization that represents Australia's police and one that had made a submission to your inquiry on exactly those issues to appear before it.

Unfortunately that has not been case and it therefore leaves one to wonder what your committee was really trying to achieve. Many others have suggested the motives. Your recent actions give some substance to those suggestions.

Sincerely yours



Mark Burgess
Chief Executive Officer

cc. Mr John Murphy (Deputy Chair)
The Hon Alan Cadman
The Hon Duncan Kerr
Mr Robert McClelland
Ms Sophie Panopoulos
The Hon Con Sciacca
The Hon Alex Somlay
Dr Mal Washer