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The Advertiser

Guilty MP should resign immediately

A LONG and tortuous legal process has enveloped the child pornography charges against former Labor Upper House leader Bernard Finnigan.

Finnigan, 42, has fought fiercely against the allegations since he was first charged in April, 2011.

The case took another twist yesterday afternoon when District Court Judge Steven Millstead found Finnigan guilty of one count of accessing child pornography, while clearing him of a second charge of attempting to access child pornography.

His lawyers successfully stalled an argument about the recording of a conviction until Finnigan faces sentencing submissions at the end of the month.

However, the independent Upper House member's political career looks likely to end on Tuesday. Attorney-General John Rau yesterday foreshadowed a vote to sack him next week, saying most South Australians would not expect him to remain in Parliament.

Finnigan has been found guilty of a serious crime. South Australians know all

too well the sick industry that has sprung up around child pornography to feed deviant minds.

Given the nature of the charge, the decision to delay the recording of a conviction is highly unusual and rare. This leaves open the question of why it has been done in this high-profile case, even though it has happened in lower courts for lesser crimes, such as driving offences and small-scale drug dealing.

It is incumbent upon the Director of Public Prosecutions to explain why his staff did not insist upon the usual course being followed. The more open and transparent our justice system is, the better. An explanation would help the public to understand that this was not a case of a special favour for a member of parliament.

The Finnigan case shows nobody is above the law. The MP was acting police minister when arrested. He is now shunned and disgraced.

Finnigan yesterday said he was considering his future. The only right course is to quit Parliament immediately.

A solemn silence

COMMEMORATIONS of Australian sacrifices during World War I have been particularly poignant this year because of the Gallipoli centenary.

On Anzac Day, we marked the 100th anniversary of the landings at Gallipoli, from which sprung the annual remembrance of Australians who died in wars, conflicts and peace-keeping operations.

Today, at 11am, people around the world will remember when the guns of the Western Front fell silent almost 100 years ago, in 1918, to end World War I.

The conflict left many

millions of people dead – up to one-third without no known grave.

Armistice Day – first observed in 1919 – became Remembrance Day after WWII. In 1997, a proclamation was issued formally urging all Australians to observe a minute's silence at 11am on November 11 annually, to remember those who have fallen.

Our national character has, to a significant extent, been defined by honouring the courage, sacrifice, loyalty and mateship of those who have served.

Once again, we pause for a minute at 11am to remember them. Lest we forget.

Compo let-down

CHANGES introduced by the Government affecting police officers receiving ongoing compensation for injuries sustained in the line of duty are nothing less than abhorrent (*The Advertiser*, 6/11/15).

Police and all emergency personnel should be given the same consideration as those serving in our armed forces.

How any government could consider their occupations remotely related to those of non-emergency personnel is unbelievable.

All employed South Australians have been let down by a compensation scheme that was introduced to ensure injured workers were protected and provided with an opportunity to not only return to work but continue working – but none more so than those who put their lives at risk for others.

TREVOR HARRISON,
Normanville.

On the flip side

I'M sure that any MP treated like policeman Brett Gibbons would squeeze the system until they feel fairly treated.

IVAN MARCHANT,
Pooraka.

Unfair scheme

CONGRATULATIONS to Mark Carroll and the Police Association of SA on drawing to the attention of the SA community and hopefully the SA Government the unfairness of the Return To Work scheme.

The "draconian, detrimental and unfair" results of the scheme are not confined to our police officers and will impact on all injured workers.

Other examples of workers who are at risk of injuries and consequences similar to those referred to in the article (*The Advertiser*, 6/11/15) include nurses, ambulance officers, firefighters and security guards.

All of these occupations will come into contact with illegal activities that could result in injury.

The guidelines have no regard for the effects of the injury on the individual and this results in unfair treatment.

The solution is that we need a test that does not rely on per-



centage scores only to determine who is a seriously injured worker.

I propose a test that looks also at an assessment of the effects of the injury on the quality of life of the injured worker which includes a careful assessment of the occupational, social, domestic, financial (including medical costs) and psychological effects of the injury. In states where this exists it is called a narrative test.

As our Government has been elected to govern for everyone, I urge the Parliament to address this very real and serious issue for the benefit of all injured workers.

PATRICK BOYLEN, SA
President, Australian
Lawyers Alliance.

It's a crime

PICK up the drunk, disorderly and human garbage in general. Offer condolences to relatives of fatal crash victims after delivering the grim news.

Listen to victims of crime. Investigate crime. Charge perpetrators of crime. Expect to be fully compensated when they too fall victim to crime.

JAN DOOLEY, Wayville.

Feel the pinch

IT seems incredible that our police are now to be targeted by this disgraceful Government in relation to injuries on duty.

One can only feel outrage at the disregard for our police who have been injured undertaking this vitally important job.

The two police officers who have suffered horrific injuries

while protecting the public must get our full and unconditional support.

I'd suggest that if police want the Government to come to its senses that they refuse to pinch people unless they cause danger on the road.

Since this Government is motivated by money over fairness to our police officers, they should be made to feel the squeeze.

It is a glaring sign of the total political duds that we have in this state that the Opposition so quickly sided with the Government on this issue.

OWEN GODFREY, No
Speed Camera\$ Party,
Adelaide.

Failing us

PREMIER Jay Weatherill expects SAPOL officers to risk health and livelihood to safeguard our community but considers supporting them when injured should be limited. It beggars belief.

The Federal Government is equally lacking in support of armed forces veterans returning injured, both physically and mentally.

Clinicians in our hospital emergency departments and ambulance officers also at high risk due to drug, alcohol and long waiting times, all with this similar risk.

It is not good enough.

It is not Australian. Fail.

Does the 30 per cent injury include any psychological injury? It seems not. Government aware of mental-health issues? Fail again ...

TERRY HIGGINBOTTOM,
Adelaide.

Fix this mess

SO our police heroes do not qualify for future compensation as a result of injuries incurred in the course of duty.

It was also recently reported that government officials – federal, state and local – were rotting some entertainment "privileges". Surely not.

There are few issues that the electorate agrees with, one being our love and respect for our valiant police force.

So, Jay Weatherill, fix it now.

PATRICK O'BRIEN,
Somerton Park.

Just the facts

YOUR editorial "Don't play politics with law and order" (*The Advertiser*, 9/11/15) outlined the valuable contribution by South Australia Police. But before claiming that we need a further 300 officers, your readers should consider a number of simple facts.

First, SA continues to enjoy the highest ratio of police to population of any state in Australia. Second, that ratio is about 20 per cent higher than it was just a decade ago. Third, it is the highest that it has ever been in the history of the state.

The debate should be about the best ways to enhance police recruitment, retention, training and effectiveness.

RICK SARRE, Law School,
University of South
Australia.

Dressed down

THOSE taking part in an Anzac parade wear civilian clothes or perhaps part of their former uniform. None of them wear their bowls' club gear, their service club jackets or the like. Nor does a soldier play cricket in his army uniform.

Why then would police officers consider it appropriate to wear their daily uniform in a gay and lesbian parade?

KEN GRUNDY,
Naracoorte.

March out of step

READERS may be rather perplexed to learn about uniformed police participating in a forthcoming homosexual march (*The Advertiser*, 5/11/15).

Such "out and proud" ambition does not sit comfortably with the official police promise to serve "without favour or affection". Indeed, uniforms are for the purpose of uniformity.

The political proclivities of each officer should be veiled behind the uniform, the badge and the pledge.

DAVID D'LIMA, Sturt.

TEXT TALK

TO solve tax bracket creep just lift brackets.
K. HARDY, Seacliff Heights.

BOTH Housing Trust homes next to my partner are vacant. Good, long-term neighbours on one side left and Trust are doing up the home now it's empty. Tenant on the other side has been in jail for three months and considered

a "dangerous criminal" by the police. This is across the road from a primary school.
SHARON.

PLEASE tell me why my tax dollars are paying for Syrians while wealthy Arab countries are not pulling their weight? Who's the sucker now?
ROBERT, Gawler.