

WE DISAGREE

Attorney-General Christian Porter says we need to be careful before rushing into new legislation to keep violent criminals in jail longer because such laws might "compromise the fundamental protections our legal system accords to any individual" (Violent criminals could be kept in jail longer, 16/4).

That sounds strange coming from Mr Porter given that he openly supports measures such as the confiscation of legitimately obtained assets under drug confiscation laws, the forfeiture of motor vehicles where the owner has committed no offence, the abolition of preliminary hearings and the removal of the principle of double jeopardy.

He also introduced mandatory sentencing for various types of assaults, which denies a citizen the most fundamental right to be sentenced according to his or her individual offence and their personal circumstances.

Coupled with the fact that he is currently proposing laws which will substantially derogate from the right to silence and seriously restrict the right to freedom of association, one could be forgiven for thinking that most of the time-honoured protections under our legal system have already gone, either with his blessing or directly under his hand.

**Tom Percy, national director,
Australian Lawyers' Alliance.**