



Speech by

**SHAUN NELSON**

**MEMBER FOR TABLELANDS**

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Hansard 10 November 1998

**QUEENSLAND POLICE SERVICE**

**Mr NELSON** (Tablelands—ONP) (11.35 p.m.): Along with some longstanding members of the police community, tonight I watched in horror and dismay as the Police Minister blatantly went out after a few coppers who had had a joke. It is a longstanding tradition in the Australian culture, which I stand here and proudly defend, that whenever the going gets tough and whenever things get hard, Australians have a bit of a joke. Australians were known for their humour on the Western Front in World War I. They were known for their humour in New Guinea.

**Mr MICKEL:** Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. The people of Logan would find it absolutely offensive that this suburb is being dumped on by——

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order! There is no point of order.

**Mr NELSON:** Australians have long been known for their sense of humour. On the fields in Flanders they were known for making sometimes quite macabre statements in their attempts at humour, as most people do when they are under pressure. A lot of people on the other side of the House have probably never been under pressure. I would ask the Police Minister to haul himself out one night and do a 4 till midnight shift on the streets of Woodridge. My father worked in the Woodridge station for quite some time. I heard some absolute horror stories.

I once watched a good movie called *A Few Good Men*. A speech given right at the end really hits the nail on the head. It was said, "If you don't like the democracy I am providing, pick up a gun and go and stand post and do a bit of time on the wall." The thin blue line that stands between us and anarchy needs our total, honest and unabated support. I thought we had had enough of ripping our Police Service apart. Every single member of this House should be grateful to those men who go out there and risk their lives.

Senator O'Chee whinged and bitched about how he should get his \$1.4m. My father, who has given 18 years of good service to this State, put his life on the line time and time again and received commendations and awards, will be lucky to get \$300,000. Not once has he stood up and groaned, made a complaint or showed any sort of self-interest. He served his State as a police officer, manning those walls that stand between us and utter anarchy.

Of all people, the Police Minister should have stepped in, taken a leading role and said, "This is obviously not a good situation, but these people are doing a hard job in difficult circumstances." A lot of members in this House would have no idea of that whatsoever—except for my good friend from Caboolture and my good friend from Ipswich West, who have done a bit of service in their time.

I watched my father slave for 18 years defending people, watching houses at night and putting his life on the line time and time again. This so-called Police Minister should have got up and said——

**Mr Sullivan** interjected.

**Mr NELSON:** The member should not talk about my father. I will talk about my father; he has no right to. He is not even close. He does not even have the right to class himself in the same league as my father. The police officers of this State, the bravest men and women we have in this State at the moment, are being ripped apart for a little bit of work humour. In this House we are always joking and having a go at each other. Australians are known for their humour.

**Mr Reeves** interjected.

**Mr NELSON:** The member for Mansfield would have no idea. He has probably never done a hard day's work in his life. The simple fact is——

**Mr REEVES:** I rise to a point of order. I find that——

**Mr NELSON:** If the member finds that offensive, I withdraw. He cannot handle the truth.

**Mr REEVES:** I rise to a point of order. I find offensive the remark that I cannot handle the truth, and I ask that it be withdrawn.

**Mr NELSON:** I withdraw. The simple fact is that the Police Minister should have some guts and stand up for the coppers who are out there on the streets looking after him. I know that they would stand up for him time and time again. The simple fact is that we have no leadership in this State. I will stand up and defend the police officers of this State if no-one else will. They were indulging in a little bit of humour, like all Australians do in hard times, and if they get crucified for that——

**Mr Mickel** interjected.

**Mr NELSON:** The member for Logan is making offensive statements about my Army service. I have served this country as a soldier. The Premier of this State, during a speech in Atherton, told me that this sort of stuff would not happen. Do I go back to the people of Atherton and say that it does happen?

Time expired.

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