



Speech by

Mr T. SULLIVAN

MEMBER FOR CHERMSIDE

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LOGAN POLICE EMAIL

Mr SULLIVAN (Chermside—ALP) (10.15 a.m.): On Tuesday, in the Adjournment debate, the member for Tablelands "watched in horror and dismay as the Police Minister blatantly went out after a few coppers who had had a joke". The member for Tablelands said that it had been a longstanding tradition in the Australian culture to have a bit of a joke and instanced the Western Front during World War I. What he said was partly true: we do use humour when we are in a distressing situation to relieve pressure. Humour can fall into two categories: where we make fun of ourselves and our own group by highlighting our own inadequacies or the foibles of our mates. The other type is when you rubbish your enemy. This occurred in World War I where jokes about Johnny Turk were designed to make fun of and put down the enemy.

If the email circulated by a Logan police officer had been of the first type of humour, it could have been funny. It would have been interesting to see how they laughed if they had written about events such as boxing, where the event was restricted to police sergeants—drunken police sergeants—bashing new female recruits or where the 50-metre walk had to be cancelled because the police would not get up off their backsides. But, in fact, that is not what occurred. The police email made fun of the people whom they are there to serve. This is the key difference between laughing with and laughing at someone. It is the difference between a joke and an insult. If we look at other groups, do we see nurses having fun by rubbing themselves or rubbing the patients who are sick? It is the difference between teachers mocking their own inadequacies and making fun of students with learning difficulties. It is the difference between us as politicians rubbing ourselves and hurling some insults or making fun of our constituents or groups whom we are supposed to serve. That is the difference.

It is unfortunate that on a few occasions we have seen the member for Tablelands use police and military service as a shield behind which to hide as he puts forward his arguments in the Chamber. Perhaps the member for Tablelands needs to have a bit more experience in the broader world and recognise that there are other perspectives from which to view life. One way would be to listen more and talk less. And he talks about the difficulties——

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The honourable's time has expired.
