



Speech by

Mr M. HORAN

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ESCAPES FROM CORRECTIONAL CENTRES

Mr HORAN (Toowoomba South—NPA) (10.17 a.m.): When the Minister for Police and Corrective Services moved to change the corrective services system from a system operating under a board to a system of a department, he gave as one of his main reasons that he wanted to have his hands on the levers. Since he has had his hands on the levers, escapes from correctional centres have become ridiculously easy in Queensland. On top of that, a pall of belligerence hangs over the Department of Corrective Services.

One has only to look at the ridiculous ease with which those prisoners drove out of the Stuart Prison Farm in Townsville in a four-wheel drive. They had a full tank of fuel and the keys and away they went to far-north Queensland. Just this weekend, a prisoner in far-north Queensland gained access to a motorbike, gained access to the keys, and away he went. The ridiculous ease with which prisoners are escaping is worrying everybody in north Queensland. We saw the escape from the Princess Alexandra Hospital when a prisoner was being taken from the hospital to the secure unit. One wonders why a doctor was not taken to the secure unit at the hospital. That is the way it is supposed to happen. But even though that prisoner was handcuffed, he still got away. He ducked to one side of a trolley that was going down an alleyway, and away he went.

The ridiculous ease with which prisoners escape continues with the prisoner who got onto the roof of the Arthur Gorrie Reception Centre. They were trying to work out how he got there and why he got there. Meanwhile the Minister said, "Security is not compromised." He should look at what happened in Sydney with that helicopter and how easy it would be to pluck a prisoner off a roof. They do not know how that fellow got up there. We have the ridiculous ease with which keys were stolen at a major high-security prison in Brisbane. The list goes on and on.

But more than that, whilst the Minister's hands are on the levers, there have been reports of an incident in regional Queensland. A reporter was abused and told not to ring at that time of the night. Whilst the Minister has had his hands on the levers, there has been non-reporting of incidents, including a computer break-down and a prisoner overdosing.

Time expired.
