



Speech by

DAVID DALGLEISH

MEMBER FOR HERVEY BAY

Hansard 16 May 2000

INSPECTOR CHURCHILL; SERGEANT SIDEY

Mr DALGLEISH (Hervey Bay—CCAQ) (7.03 p.m.): Inspector Mal Churchill and Sergeant Chris Sidey are well-respected members of our community and role models for those who have the privilege of meeting them. These senior officers are never too busy to give anyone the time of day. It does not matter what standing one has in life; they treat everyone with respect and courtesy.

Inspector Churchill's position calls for some difficult decisions, and I believe that Inspector Churchill always makes the best decisions, given all the information at hand. Some of these decisions may not seem so right from the outside, but given all the facts, I have complete faith in the outcome of his work.

I have had many years of professional communications with Sergeant Sidey also. Sergeant Sidey has demonstrated the same loyalty and commitment to his position as Inspector Churchill. It is inconceivable to me that they are under threat of transfer from this community, which admires and respects them in every way. They make a difference. I have no doubt that their absence would also make a difference, but it will have a devastating effect on our community.

There are always people who try to pull down the good ones. Yet 99% of this community, I am certain, will do everything in its power to ensure that Inspector Churchill and Sergeant Sidey remain in the Hervey Bay/Maryborough area. These two traditional police officers have demonstrated their willingness to work above and beyond the call of duty. Mr Deputy Speaker, I ask you and the Minister for Police and Corrective Services: is this the appropriate way to thank them?

At a time when Hervey Bay is in desperate need of additional police officers, transferring these two members of the police force out of the area could only place additional strain on our police department, which is already understaffed, as the Minister for Police would be well aware from my previous representations requesting additional police officers to our rapidly expanding region. It would appear that these officers are already suffering at the hands of the Courier-Mail and the trial by media.

I can say this: the report in the Courier-Mail was only one column of slanderous comments on these two officers of the law. If the Courier-Mail were to produce the good stories about these two officers, they would fill the newspaper. For example, the local media, print and electronic, in Hervey Bay and Maryborough is fully supportive of the community's stand to keep Inspector Churchill and Sergeant Sidey in our region. Should Inspector Churchill have to transfer, he will be faced with a decision as to whether to pursue his career in the police force in exchange for his wonderful wife and family.
