



Speech by

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MEMBER FOR WOODRIDGE

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PROPERTY CRIME

Mr KAISER (Woodridge—ALP) (6.31 p.m.): Mr Speaker, here is a riddle for you: how do you know when there is an election coming up in Queensland? The National and Liberal Parties launch a scare campaign on crime. They are recidivists. Over the past decade at every election we do not get from the Nationals and the Liberals policies and substance but a scare campaign.

Who can forget the 1989 State election campaign? The coalition accused Wayne Goss, the then Opposition Leader, of wanting to sell drugs to children. Who can forget that disgraceful television campaign which was launched by the coalition. Whenever the members opposite are on the ropes, they pull out of the bottom drawer a grubby scare campaign on crime, a despicable scare campaign on crime.

Who can forget the 1992 election campaign? The other day the members opposite talked about campaign blunders. Who can forget the blunder of 1992? Do members remember the campaign, "Labor has blood on its hands"? The people of Queensland saw through the coalition and its vote plummeted. It was a grubby, despicable campaign that half the members opposite ended up distancing themselves from. Do members opposite remember it? "Labor has blood on its hands." By the end of the campaign, the members opposite were ducking for cover.

In 1995 the members opposite did it again—this time, disappointingly, with more success. They succeeded in scaring people in the 1995 election campaign because Labor had been in office and the people had had an opportunity to forget the coalition's record. That is why on this occasion the coalition's grubby scare campaign will not work. It has been only a couple of years since the coalition was last in office.

Who can forget what we got when the coalition was last in office? Do members remember its promise in 1995 to hit the ground running? All the coalition did was hit the ground in 1996. Who can forget Mr Borbidge's promise to Queenslanders of "long-term, sustainable reductions in the crime rate"? What was the case two years later? Property crime was up by 14% and violent crime was up by 21%. Who can forget that record? Queenslanders will not. That is why the coalition's grubby scare campaign will not work this time.

Who can forget the coalition's record on prisons? Earlier tonight, we were debating prisons policy. During the coalition's time there were 126 escapes and 55 prison break-outs, 14 of which were from secure custody. Who can forget the Brendon Abbott debacle? Also during the coalition's time, 71 prisoners absconded from community corrections. Queenslanders will not buy the coalition's grubby scare campaign because they can still remember its record and will compare it to the success of this Government's programs.

In the Logan police district, which is in my area, there has been a drop of almost 4% in reported crime rates, a 4.9% drop in property crime, a fall of 12.8% in the number of motor vehicles stolen, an 8.8% drop in the number of homes broken into and a 9.1% drop in the number of armed robberies. That is a tremendous tribute to the police officers of Logan City. That is a tremendous tribute to people such as District Superintendent Alex Irwin; Mike Pearson, who worked very hard in the community to develop a community response to crime; and Maurie Elker, who I had the fortune to go out with in a patrol car on a Friday night not so long ago to see for myself first-hand what police officers in this State do.

However, police cannot achieve those kinds of results without tremendous support from the community and without tremendous support from Government policies— Government policies introduced by this Minister. I refer to some of the innovative policing methods that we have introduced, such as the At Risk Premises project, which directly tackles break and enters and is the result of the efforts of the district operations group, which in my area is a team of 18 police officers who are focused on proactive, highly visible patrols and operations. This special crime fighting team has achieved outstanding clear-up rates in Logan. It is a group that carries out patrols in known hot spots and railway stations such as Station Road, shopping centres and licensed premises. Traders on Station Road like Mr Reg Johns report to me a massive fall in the number of incidents occurring around that area through some of these innovative programs such as the police shopfront that was introduced in the Logan Plaza at Logan City. That shopfront has received two more police this year to double the efforts of police in Logan City.

The result is an improvement in the police to population ratio for the Logan district from one officer for every 766 people at the time that Labor was elected to now one officer for every 652 people. That is a credit to local police, to the community and to this proactive Government that is fighting crime and the causes of crime.

Time expired.
