



Speech by

**JEFF SEENEY**

**MEMBER FOR CALLIDE**

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Hansard 29 May 2001

**MINISTER FOR POLICE AND CORRECTIVE SERVICES**

**Mr SEENEY** (Callide—NPA) (10.21 a.m.): The Queensland community can be justifiably concerned about the administration of the Police and Corrective Services portfolio. Over the past week there was a series of incidents that would indicate that the minister responsible for the administration of this portfolio is clearly out of his depth and floundering.

The prisoner release to work program has become a farce. Prisoners have been released to work at bogus companies so they can commit further crimes, and convicted armed robbers have been released to go shopping and, of course, have betrayed the minister by not coming back. There have been major security breaches such as when a mobile phone was found inside a high-security prison and 17 hand guns were stolen from a suburban police station. Then there was the tragic suicide of a high-profile prisoner on remand for a high-profile extortion case. All of these issues raise questions to which the Minister for Police and Corrective Services should provide answers.

The Queensland community should rightfully expect a competent, responsible minister to provide some answers to the genuine questions that these incidents cause to arise. The current minister is refusing to answer those questions. He is consistently refusing to explain. He is consistently refusing to accept any responsibility. The major focus of any minister's job should be to administer his department in a proactive way to ensure that this type of failure does not occur. Instead the minister's solution has been to announce a series of reviews after each event and expect the people of Queensland to be happy with that.

The Premier has talked about a ministerial reshuffle if some of his ministers do not perform. Can I say to the Premier this morning that the Minister for Police and Corrective Services should be the first that he considers in terms of a ministerial reshuffle. Surely there is enough talent on the backbench of this Labor government to ensure that the portfolio of Police and Corrective Services is administered properly. Queenslanders need to have confidence in their police and prison systems. They need to have confidence that this portfolio will be administered better.

Time expired.

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