



Speech by

**JOHN ENGLISH**

**MEMBER FOR REDLANDS**

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Hansard 8 August 2001

**MINISTER FOR POLICE AND CORRECTIVE SERVICES**

**Mr ENGLISH** (Redlands—ALP) (6.31 p.m.): I am happy to address the motion before the House tonight, because it gives me an opportunity to highlight the achievements of this government and in particular the Minister for Police. It saddens me, however, that opposition members have wasted the time of the House by bringing this politically motivated and completely unfounded motion to the House. We have a Police Minister who will not shirk from his responsibility. He is prepared to stand up and make the tough decisions in the best interests of this state. The budget for 2001-02 shows the commitment by the minister to not only increase funding for the Queensland Police Service but also ensure that the Queensland public receives value for its money.

The commitment of the Beattie Labor government and the Minister for Police and Corrective Services to being tough on crime and tough on the causes of crime has never been more evident than with the largest budget in the Queensland Police Service's history. This budget gives the Police Service \$870 million for operating costs, a massive 8.6 per cent or \$69 million increase, compared to the 2000-01 budget. The budget has also boosted capital spending to \$86 million. The police budget offered many highlights, including 300 additional police, 60 additional civilian positions, the continuation of the service's 10-year Capital Works Program, \$7.5 million to enhance the service's scientific facilities, \$7 million for new computers, \$2.5 million for communication upgrades and enhancements, half a million dollars for forensic science enhancements, and a further half a million dollars to enhance the service's capability in addressing the issue of drugs.

All members of this House would appreciate the importance of police beats and police shopfronts as a visible police presence in their community. The government's commitment to 10 new shopfronts and 10 new police beats in this term is already under way. We will soon see six new neighbourhood police beats in communities, including Holloways Beach, North Ipswich, Redbank-Goodna, Rochedale South, Oxley and Tullawong. I am personally aware that the member for Glass House lobbied heavily to see a new police beat for Tullawong.

**Ms Keech:** That's because she's such a good member.

**Mr ENGLISH:** Yes, she is. There will also be four new police beat shopfronts in Cannon Park, Castletown, Springfield and Morayfield. Let us not forget the substantial construction program for this financial year, which includes new police stations at Calamvale, Fraser Island and Loganholme. Replacement police stations also are under construction at Agnes Waters and Eumundi. As if this was not enough, there is also the government's commitment of achieving a police strength of 9,100 officers by August 2005. The minister has also recently approved the first seven officers of the state flying squad and the first five tactical crime squads in Townsville, Logan-Gold Coast, the Valley, the Sunshine Coast and Cairns. They will be up and running by the end of the year. These squads will provide a real boost to regional police and be an excellent weapon in our fight against crime.

The people of Queensland will clearly benefit from all these initiatives. The Beattie government is committed to being tough on crime and tough on the causes of crime. We have introduced practical crime-fighting measures and implemented a comprehensive range of commonsense crime prevention initiatives. All of my colleagues in the House and the people of Queensland have the utmost confidence in the Minister for Police and condemn the opposition for once again wasting the time of

this House. The opposition would be best suited to sitting down and coming up with some substantial policy directions rather than wasting our time on empty rhetoric.

**Mr Swarten:** As an ex-police officer, you would know that, too.

**Mr ENGLISH:** I do. Just as the opposition is devoid of policy ideas, it is bereft of original ideas concerning criticisms of the police portfolio. It has to rely on the Police Union to generate any interest in police issues. I suppose it makes a change from relying on the *Courier-Mail* for its ideas. The National Party lacks not only ideas but also direction. It is going nowhere. I would suggest that it reshuffles its own frontbench, but unfortunately there is no talent to shuffle.

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