



Speech by

Hon. T. McGRADY

MEMBER FOR MOUNT ISA

Hansard 12 December 2001

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Motor Vehicle Theft

Hon. T. McGRADY (Mount Isa—ALP) (Minister for Police and Corrective Services and Minister Assisting the Premier on the Carpentaria Minerals Province) (9.52 a.m.), by leave: No-one in this House would doubt that motor vehicle theft is affecting many members of our community. I was fortunate to attend the Australian and New Zealand Crime Prevention Ministerial Forum in September, where the full spectre of motor vehicle theft was discussed by all ministers present. We were given a detailed briefing, which described the battle faced by authorities in all states when confronting modern motor vehicle theft, which in recent years has become highly sophisticated and highly organised. The briefing was given by the National Motor Vehicle Theft Reduction Council, which is a national body supported by all Australian governments and by industry.

There is little doubt that motor vehicle theft is a menace to our society and, ultimately, taxpayers bear the brunt through increased insurance premiums. I am pleased to report that all authorities are keen to coordinate our efforts against this type of crime. To this end, the Beattie government has committed a further \$200,000 in annual funding to the National Motor Vehicle Theft Reduction Council. This funding will help assist with many worthwhile projects, including the Immobilise Now campaign, which I launched in Queensland earlier this year. Through this program, Queenslanders are offered engine immobilisers at a reduced price.

National figures suggest around 36 per cent of all vehicles are fitted with engine immobilisers but less than five per cent of immobilised vehicles are stolen—and in these cases it is usually because the thief had access to the original key. Older vehicles are the main target of this program, because vehicles from the 1970s and 1980s are four to seven times more likely to be stolen than vehicles made in the 1990s. This is an excellent example of how the Beattie government is working to attack the causes of crime. This is indeed a positive contribution by both the Beattie government, other state governments and, indeed, the federal government.

Members opposite, particularly the leaders of the National and Liberal Parties, will belittle any positive programs of this government. They obviously see this as their role. But I ask: where are their answers? Where is their positive contribution to the crime prevention debate? I have not heard them utter one word about what they would do to limit property crime.

I would welcome a bipartisan approach needed to combat all crime. I would welcome any change from the empty rhetoric which dominates the comments from the current National Party and Liberal Party leaders. This issue is too important, and I urge all members to work together with their communities and the local police to combat crime.
