



Speech by

LEX BELL, MP

MEMBER FOR SURFERS PARADISE

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SCHOOLIES WEEK TASK FORCE

Mr BELL (Surfers Paradise—Ind) (10.20 a.m.): I really should be using this timeslot to make some very colourful statements about the schoolies task force which has been appointed to investigate schoolies on the Gold Coast. It will consist purely of Labor members who will report in secret, and the report will be excluded from freedom of information. Whilst I might have personal confidence in the members who will comprise that task force, the exclusion of the member for Surfers Paradise and the secrecy will hardly engender public confidence. However, I do not really rise to make that point anymore but to praise the Beattie government and in particular the Minister for Police for his announcement last week of additional police numbers on the Gold Coast, particularly the augmentation of the police numbers who will man the Cavill Mall police post. Others may have lobbied the Police Minister and I did, too, but I must say that I was always well received and I appreciated his courtesy and cooperation. The result is appreciated by the electorate of Surfers Paradise and on their behalf I say, 'Thank you'.

I well recall that when the first police post was to be opened, Councillor Baildon, then the area representative, and I as mayor were in fear and trepidation because the Police Commissioner of the day refused to man it at all. It was only due to the intervention of a rather foresighted Police Minister of that day that the police post was in fact manned. It taught me a valuable lesson—that the Police Minister is not restricted to matters of policy but can actually make a valuable and practical contribution to policing. I say, 'Thank you, Mr Mackenroth' in retrospect. But to the Police Minister today I say, 'Don't stop.' Like little Oliver, we want more.