




Speech By  
**Hon. Jarrod Bleijie**

**MEMBER FOR KAWANA**

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**CRIMINAL LAW AMENDMENT BILL (NO. 2)**

 **Hon. JP BLEIJIE** (Kawana—LNP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice) (9.07 pm), in reply: I thank all honourable members for their contribution to this important debate tonight—once and for all getting the balance right on the scales of justice, putting the rights of the victims back in the equation. We know that for years now victims have been neglected and forgotten by the Labor Party.

When this government was elected we had made numerous commitments with respect to a lot of these issues. Some of them are dealt with in this bill, and I am pleased that we are able to debate them tonight. I refer to the proposed amendments to the Bail Act that members have spoken about. We talk about the Magistrates Court imposing as a condition of bail that the defendant actually participate in a rehabilitation, treatment or other intervention program. If they are ordered to do that by the magistrate and they do not or they breach the bail condition or breach that order then that will be a breach offence. We are actually making it a specific offence of a breach of bail, if they are committed to undertake certain programs or activities.

We are also amending the Corrective Services Act, as members have said, to require all drug traffickers sentenced to immediate imprisonment to serve a minimum non-parole period of 80 per cent of their sentences. I will get to the debate and particularly the opposition's contribution in a minute. In the context of what we have debated this afternoon, after this bill passes the parliament drug traffickers in Queensland will serve at least 80 per cent of the sentence imposed.

We are also amending the Criminal Code to increase the maximum penalty for the offence of wilful damage, in special cases graffiti, from five to seven years. The opposition leader said a bit about that in her contribution, and I note that she has tweeted about that particular issue. I will respond accordingly in a minute.

We are also introducing amendments to the Drugs Misuse Act to increase the maximum penalty for aggravated supply under section 6 where an adult supplies a dangerous drug to a child under 16 years. An offender will be liable for a maximum penalty of life imprisonment for a schedule 1 drug and 25 years in prison for a schedule 2 drug. We are also amending the Penalties and Sentences Act to insert the new mandatory community based order called a graffiti removal order to apply to offenders convicted of a prescribed graffiti offence. That also includes amendments to the Youth Justice Act. So now for the first time there will be, for those convicted of these graffiti offences, a graffiti removal community based order which we are calling the graffiti removal order. This will actually apply to people under the Youth Justice Act, so 12 to 16 year olds will now be forced to go and clean up their mess. Never before have they been forced to clean up their mess or someone else's mess, and we are doing that for adult offenders as well and I will address the debate in terms of that aspect in a minute.

Finally, the bill amends the Victims of Crime Assistance Act by making sure that victim impact statements can be read out in court if it is the desire of the victim. There are two further amendments to this legislation tonight, including the amendment with respect to workers compensation to ensure that Q-Comp has the discretion to allow those self-insured companies—good companies that

currently have approvals through Q-Comp to participate in the self-insured scheme—to continue in special cases. Finally, there is the amendment that I am moving tonight with respect to industrial organisations in Queensland that ensures that those who attempt to break the law in Queensland with respect to political campaigning at the industrial organisation level—if they do not abide by the Queensland law; if they set up dodgy companies, as the Together union has—will be captured as an associated entity, and I think that is probably a good place to start.

**Mr Cripps:** I was wondering how long it was going to take you.

**Mr BLEIJIE:** Well, we are getting there. In terms of the laws with respect to industrial organisations and accountability, integrity and transparency, I note the opposition leader had a lot to say about this particular amendment. The opposition leader will know all too well about the definition of associated entities, because in 2010 and 2011 the Labor Party government at the time introduced reforms to the Electoral Act. In those reforms to the Electoral Act—going from \$3½ million in public funding to \$24 million—the Labor Party also had a little clause in there. It said that if you are a corporation giving to a political party and you are an associated entity—that is, under the corporations legislation an associated entity—then you are considered and deemed one and the same—one person and therefore only giving one donation. However, there was an exemption in that and let us guess who had the exemption. Unions! Trade unions had an exemption! The opposition leader talks a lot about associated entities. They had a bill in this place a few years ago where they were tying up all associated entities' companies but they had an exemption. We are not applying an exemption here. The same law will apply to all industrial organisations.

With respect to this dodgy company arrangement that Alex Scott has set up, let me make a few more comments. There are a few reasons why we are doing this, and I will use the union example here, because the union—the Together union—is the one that set up the dodgy arrangement to filter and siphon the money from the union to a company to then go and do the political campaigning in advertising. Firstly, the member for Woodridge says that there have been no issues with unions in Queensland. I suspect that Bill Ludwig's legal fees of \$50,000 being paid for by union fees and Bill Ludwig signing the cheque to pay his legal fees is a particular issue that Queenslanders would have an interest in. I also think the members of the Bill Ludwig union would have an interest in their hard-earned money and membership dues going to Bill Ludwig's cash account to pay his legal fees tied up of course with the racing board.

In 2013 all honourable members would have got the shock of their lives when only a couple of months ago an ad appeared in the *Courier-Mail* from the Electrical Trades Union with references to Hitler. Queenslanders would not expect this sort of rot to be advertised in 2013, particularly referencing in the same newspaper article Adolf Hitler and Martin Luther King—and of course authorised by Peter Simpson, Secretary of the ETU. I keep this; this is the same copy I had at the time. It is getting a little ripped now because I have shown it a few times at estimates, particularly to the member for Bundamba in estimates. This is the rot that unions are now running in Queensland, as well as the gutter politics we saw at the 2012 state election campaign. And guess where it all comes from? The back houses of the Labor Party and the back houses of the unions! That is one of the reasons why Queensland members of the unions want to have a say in where their money goes, because I would say that if union members of the ETU knew that their secretary was going to put an ad in the paper with references to Adolf Hitler, offending many in our community—hopefully all in our community—they would be ashamed. We gave them the chance to actually have a vote on that and a say on that. Alex Scott and Peter Simpson from the unions do not want their members to have a say so they can keep running rot like this right across Queensland.

It is impeccable timing just as we got to the discussion of the ETU and the grubby, dirty politics that the member for South Brisbane should enter on cue. I would suggest to honourable members that she was sitting up in her office working hard, watching the TV screen and, seeing that I am having a crack at the unions, the defender of the unions had to come down. But then, honourable members, also on cue was the member for Bundamba when I started talking about Peter Simpson. We know the member for Bundamba's strong support for the ETU.

**Mrs Miller:** Absolutely!

**Mr BLEIJIE:** Does the member for Bundamba support these?

**Mrs Miller:** Absolutely! The ETU is very good—

**Mr BLEIJIE:** Does the member for Bundamba support these types of advertisements? Does the member for Bundamba support these types of advertisements?

**Mrs Miller** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Berry): Attorney-General, address your comments through the chair.

**Mr BLEIJIE:** Mr Deputy Speaker, I take the interjection from the member for Bundamba that she fully supports the ETU. Therefore, she is accused of supporting the ETU's advertising campaign with references to Adolf Hitler. That is the grubby, dirty politics that the member for Bundamba is surrounded by. That is the only politics they know—the dirty, grubby politics. But let me say to the member for Bundamba—

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Honourable members!

**Mr BLEIJIE:** I am so grateful that the members for South Brisbane and Bundamba have joined the debate. In terms of the dodgy company that Alex Scott and the Together union set up, let us have a look at another advertisement that appeared in the paper. Here is the advertisement from only a few days ago advertising the big rally out the front tonight. A few of us went out there and had a look. It is always interesting when they are singing *Solidarity Forever*. They were not in tune I might add, but they were singing. I counted about 500 people out the front, if that! This was the union's big storm on Parliament House. This was the union's storm on Parliament House—500 members! If honourable members want the calculation that the union would suggest we believe—the unions will not believe it, but it is the case—I suspect we had about 500 members of the Together union. There are 200,000 public servants in Queensland. Do the equation of 500 Together union members out the front, and that is about a 0.25 per cent of one per cent membership of the union out the front. This was Alex Scott's big opportunity and his big 15 minutes of fame and he ended up getting about 500 people out the front. I get more at an AFL and soccer game in the Kawana electorate on a Saturday or Sunday than the unions had out the front here. More people who turn up to—

**Mr Powell:** AFL and soccer?

**Mr BLEIJIE:** We support all sports in Kawana. With regard to this little advertisement that appeared in the paper in the last few days, let me draw honourable members' attention to the fine print. It says 'Authorised by Alex Scott'—now, generally, it would have 'Together union'—'Working for Queenslanders Ltd'.

This is his dodgy little company that he has set up that his members have no idea how much money goes to. So already the union has set up its company and it is filtering the money through this company. The other day when I walked out of my office I was handed the brochure for the union rally tonight. I said that, unfortunately, I am busy and I cannot go. The brochure also says—

Authorised Alex Scott Working for Queenslanders LTD 27 Peel Street—

And we also know what else is in Peel Street, do we not, colleagues? Yes, the head office of the Labor Party in Queensland. So we have evidence now of Alex Scott and his dodgy company arrangement. This is what we are going to stop. That is why we have introduced the anti-avoidance legislation. Just as the Labor Party made associated entities for electoral donation laws, we, too, will make the unions and their associated entities subject to the laws of Queensland that every other industrial organisation has to abide by.

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Berry): Order! Members to my left!

**Mr BLEIJIE:** I am only warming up, Mr Deputy Speaker. I have another article that I thought the member for Hinchinbrook, the honourable minister, would be interested in, because it is of 8 July and it talks about the AWU. We know that the boss of the AWU is Paul Howes. In this article, which I will table at the end of my speech with highlighted sections for members' reference, of July this year Paul Howes said—and I ask members to remember that he is the boss of the AWU—

I can't see any reason why anyone in the union movement would fear having the same penalties that apply to company directors. If you're a crook, you're a crook.

The article then goes on to state—

Australian Workers' Union—

**Ms Palaszczuk:** Relevance? What's the relevance?

**Mr BLEIJIE:** This is relevant directly to the anti-avoidance legislation. Paul Howes is talking about the coalition's policy on union accountability laws. You cannot get any more relevant to the debate than this. In that article the journalist states—

Australian Workers' Union boss Paul Howes—

**An opposition member** interjected.

**Mr BLEIJIE:** Mr Deputy Speaker, they do not want to hear it. I ask members to believe this—  
has called for tougher penalties for union corruption and criticised—  
the federal Labor—

government for not matching the Coalition's policy to bring the penalty regime for unions in line with corporate law.

He goes on to state—

Mr Howes said the increased penalties for union officials introduced last year by his predecessor and Workplace Relations Minister Bill Shorten did not go far enough.

I quote Paul Howes—

I can't see any reason why anyone in the union movement would fear having the same penalties that apply ... As far as I'm concerned, there's no penalty harsh enough for those who rip off workers and that's what dodgy union officials do.

I am saying to members that a company arrangement set up by Alex Scott is a dodgy union deal from a dodgy union official and nothing less. In this article Paul Howes from the union movement also says—and my honourable colleagues will not believe this one—

I have no issue with the Coalition policy.

He then goes on—

**Ms Trad:** It's your policy.

**Mr BLEIJIE:** I take that interjection from the member for South Brisbane about our policy. Our policy is a copy of the coalition's policy, but our policy is a little tougher. We have the union leader saying that the Labor Party did not go far enough and that it should have copied the coalition's policy. The article goes on—and I will finish on this aspect—

Mr Abbott—

the Leader of the Opposition—

seized on Mr Howes's statement, saying the Rudd government should adopt the Coalition's policy to protect low-paid workers from 'dodgy union bosses'.

'When even Paul Howes is calling for tougher penalties, it shows just how out of touch Kevin Rudd and Bill Shorten are,' he said.

'We should never forget that former HSU national president Michael Williamson became national president of the ALP on Kevin Rudd's watch.'

So we have in Queensland a dodgy union deal, a dodgy company set up. That is why it is important that we get this amendment through with the anti-avoidance legislation. I note that tonight the member for Woodridge, in her woeful contribution, said that the most shameful aspect of this whole bill and the amendments tonight is that the LNP government is going to make the unions abide by the law. If it is okay for every other industrial organisation and if it is okay for every other Queenslanders to abide by the law, so, too, should the unions.

The opposition members in their contributions talked about these amendments to the anti-avoidance legislation and said, 'It's a last-minute, sneaky amendment. We didn't know about it.' I would have thought that, having the most overresourced opposition in Australia's history, they would have seen my press release that was issued this afternoon. As far as I know, press releases are not secret. Press releases go to the world at large. They are on a website. I think we tweet it. I think we Facebook it. So secret was my amendment that I put out a press release. My amendment was so secret I wanted it hushed and have this pass without proper due debate tonight. I put out a press release titled 'Government to end sneaky union scheme'. If the title did not give it away, certainly the following 20 paragraphs would have.

**Mr Powell** interjected.

**Mr BLEIJIE:** I take that interjection from the Minister for Environment. It was a very sneaky press release. We will try to release our press releases not as sneakily the next time. We will send them to only 100,000 people and not 200,000 people.

It is important that we introduce the anti-avoidance legislation because, essentially, Alex Scott is saying that he does not trust his members, who pay their union dues, to have the right to vote on what the union movement spends its money on and on campaigns over \$10,000. In light of this anti-avoidance legislation, any person who is desperate enough not to have their members have a say in how to spend their money is a person worthy of consideration. For someone like Alex Scott of the Together union, who has to rush through a dodgy union deal to set up a company, then questions should be asked of him. We will not let Mr Alex Scott forget about this. We will not let his members forget that he does not want them to have a say in where they spend their money and what they spend their money on. The bosses of unions should be accountable for the dues that are paid by hardworking union members—men and women in Queensland. If they are not going to be

accountable to their membership then they have to be accountable to the Queensland public. That is why we have introduced these tough new measures.

The opposition leader also talked about the statement that I made recently with respect to court ordered parole and suspended sentences. Let me tell the opposition leader a few facts about court ordered parole and suspended sentences. If the opposition leader wants to have a debate about whether the Labor Party in Queensland continues to support the current court ordered parole and suspended sentence regime, then that is a debate that this side of the House is more than willing to have. I can assure the opposition leader that when I announced that the government was considering those laws with respect to court ordered parole and suspended sentences, honourable members were very supportive and the Queensland public was very supportive. When I announced that the government is looking at court ordered parole and suspended sentences, this idea came from Queenslanders. This idea came from victims of crime. For far too long under the Labor Party the scales of justice have been tipped in the offenders' way. We are rebalancing the scales. When we debate laws in this place we will put the victims first and at the forefront every time. We will stick up for the victims.

I mention to the opposition leader the youth justice survey that we released recently and had submissions and feedback on. Some 4,200 victims of crime responded online to that survey. The message is clear: things are not working in Queensland. The Labor way on sentencing regime and the policies of the Labor Party did not work, do not work and the people of Queensland do not want those policies enacted anymore. So if tonight the opposition leader is telling us that she continues to support court ordered parole, if the opposition leader continues to support 300 offenders a month breaching their parole orders, then good on the opposition leader. If the opposition leader is telling us that she supports 40 per cent of those people on court ordered parole not serving any jail time at all, then good luck to her.

I can tell the opposition leader that the Queensland community do not. The Queensland community are sick and tired of 40 per cent of those on court ordered parole not serving any jail time. Queenslanders are sick and tired of offenders walking from the courtroom, thumbing their nose at the law, sticking their finger up at the camera saying, 'I'm out. Thanks a lot.' The victim has to live with that for the rest of their life. That is why on this side of the House the LNP government will always put the rights of the victim ahead of the rights of the offender. We are unapologetic in that regard.

When we talk about these things the Labor Party do not give a position. They do not say they are for it, they do not say they are opposed to it. They are on the fence. They really want to support it because Queenslanders support it, but they cannot bring themselves to say they support the LNP government because the Queensland people support those policies the LNP government are looking at. They cannot bring themselves to do it. When laws come into this place toughening those issues with court ordered parole and suspended sentences, I very much look forward to seeing whether the opposition leader is going to stand up for Queenslanders or stand up for the 300 offenders a month who breach parole and the 40 per cent of those on court ordered parole that serve no jail time at all. Where is the member going to stand?

**Ms Palaszczuk** interjected.

**Mr BLEIJIE:** The opposition leader says, 'Show us the consultation', 'Show us what the Law Society says, the Bar Association, the Chief Justice.' That is three organisations. We are talking to four million Queenslanders. That is who we consult with on these law reform issues. If the government has a policy objective then we will consult with the Chief Justice and the other heads of jurisdictions. In the same breath that the opposition leader talks about separation of powers she says 'But you are not consulting the Chief Justice. If the Chief Justice has not given his blessing for court ordered parole where is the separation of powers?' Where are the days where legislators could walk into this place on behalf of the Queensland people and put in legislation according to what the people of Queensland want? That was not the Labor way. Far too often they have had the ear of the civil libertarians and nothing in Queensland changed for 12 years. We went to the election with a strong commitment and we were elected with a strong mandate to sort these issues out once and for all.

I thought I had heard it all until tonight I heard the opposition leader say that she does not support increasing the penalties for graffiti offences. In fact, she quoted in her speech one of the submissions, which I suggest she then supports, which states, 'It is only some paint on a wall.' That is what the opposition leader said: it is some paint on a wall therefore someone ought not be convicted to serve jail time. Tell that to the victim. Tell that to the business owner.

**Mr Pitt** interjected.

**Ms Palaszczuk** interjected.

**Mr BLEIJIE:** I take note of the laughter from the member for Mulgrave and the opposition leader. Tell it to the wall, they say. I say talk to the business owner who continually has to pay to scrub off the graffiti from the offender week in week out. Talk to the owner of the house that is near a shopping centre that the graffiti offender goes past every Saturday night and sprays the fence. Tell that to the people of Mulgrave, not the wall, member for Mulgrave. Tell that to constituents right across the state who are continually battling with graffiti offenders. We are taking a zero tolerance approach to graffiti in this state.

I note that the Minister for Local Government, David Crisafulli, has been working with local governments in terms of GraffitiSTOP. Local councils understand the cost to the community and the economy of graffiti vandals. We say enough is enough. We are increasing the penalty from five to seven years. We are doing it because we are saying enough is enough and the people of Queensland want us to take a serious and hard line on graffiti offences.

I note the Labor Party said it will not support that provision. Again good luck to the opposition leader selling to her constituents in Inala at the next election that she voted against increasing graffiti offences. The one piece of correspondence many members get all the time is about graffiti offences. When I conduct law and order forums across the state one of the biggest issues raised is graffiti offences and how people are not made to clean up their efforts. We are going to make them go and clean up their graffiti offences. If it is not their offence, not their paint on a wall, it is going to be someone else's paint on a wall. They will have graffiti removal orders made against them. It is about showing the people of Queensland that we are serious about tackling these issues.

I thank the Queensland Homicide Support Victims Group and Ross Thompson. They have advocated for the victim impact statement to be read out in court. This is a provision that I am particularly proud to be introducing. The Queensland Homicide Support Victims Group do an amazing job dealing with the incredible circumstances of loss of a loved one, family or friend to homicide. Ross Thompson and the crew do an amazing job helping people grieve, helping them through the processes and helping in particular if bodies are not found. They help immensely with what victims really need because with a homicide there is the entire family and friend network.

I congratulate Ross Thompson and the Queensland Homicide Support Victims Group which I was pleased to give some extra money to. Out of our \$2 million package we were able to give the Homicide Support Victims Group some extra money to help support victims of crime. That was out of a bundle of about \$2 million that we gave to victims groups. It shows the dedication and commitment of LNP members of this House. When we say we are on the victim's side we mean it. Not only that, we pass laws to assist the victims and we give money to victims support groups.

To the Homicide Support Victims Group I say thank you very much. If it were not for you this legislative change would not be before the House tonight. It is unfortunate that it took years and years to get someone to listen to them and to get this legislative amendment through. I am proud to say that this LNP government under Campbell Newman did it within a year and a half of its first term in office. To the Homicide Support Victims Group I say thank you. We are listening. We are more than happy to talk further about ways that we can assist your organisation, but also ways that we can assist other victims support groups right around Queensland.

I apologise to every other member of the House who contributed to the debate. Time has run out and I have not had a chance to respond, but I do collectively thank all honourable members for their great contributions tonight. Unfortunately time does not permit going into all your contributions. I only got to the opposition leader. These are important reforms. Queenslanders support these reforms. We are serious about tackling these issues. We are getting tough on crime. That is what we had a mandate to do.