




Speech By
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MEMBER FOR KAWANA

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MATTERS OF PUBLIC INTEREST

Minister for Police, Fire and Emergency Services and Minister for Corrective Services

 **Mr BLEIJIE** (Kawana—LNP) (12.16 pm): Serving as a minister of the Crown is a very important position, no matter in what capacity you serve in a ministry. It comes with a great deal of responsibility and respect for the role and in that role one must do the job to the best of their abilities. Unfortunately, in the Queensland parliament we have seen a few ministers but one particularly who has not discharged those roles and responsibilities with what you would expect a minister of the Crown to do, and I am talking about the police minister, the member for Bundamba.

The role of police minister in terms of law and justice in this state is I think one of the most important cabinet roles that one can serve in. There are people every day who are investigated by our Police Service and who are charged with particular offences and they have to have confidence that the person administering the operational matters in the Police Commissioner and the one who bears ultimate responsibility—the police minister—have the competence to deal with policy matters on behalf of the government and matters going forward in the future, particularly with respect to the domestic violence issues that this parliament will be addressing in the not-too-distant future. As I said, it is one of the most important roles a minister can have in terms of law and justice in the state because there is so much at stake with people being investigated and potentially charged with particular offences.

The Police Service is comprised of approximately 14,000 officers across the state, and I pay tribute to the men and women in blue who every day put their lives on the line to protect the citizens of this state. Those officers need to have ultimate confidence that the minister performing the role and responsibility that they serve under is competent to fulfil that role. Unfortunately, time and time again in this state in recent months we have seen the Minister for Police not performing her role effectively as police minister. We now have the lowest morale issue since the Fitzgerald days of the Queensland Police Service and that fault lies at the feet of the police minister.

Government members interjected.

Mr BLEIJIE: I note the members opposite interjecting. If those members opposite want a source other than the shadow police minister, let me give them a couple more sources. Let me tell the members interjecting what other people in Queensland think about the police minister. Their own Premier—their own leader—has not expressed confidence in her own police minister. When the Deputy Premier was asked if she had confidence in the police minister, she could not confirm that she had confidence in the police minister. We saw at the estimates committee hearing that the committee could not disclose whether it had confidence in the police minister.

The Police Union, representing the men and women in blue on the beat, has not expressed confidence in the police minister. In fact, only last week the union president, Ian Leavers, said that staff were dismayed by the changes, which the union claimed would destabilise the organisation, which is

already suffering lower morale than it did during the Fitzgerald inquiry. In terms of the communications centre at Ipswich, Ian Leavers said that Minister Miller is not known for making good decisions. He also said other things, such as that Jo-Ann Miller has no idea about policing. That is a pretty stark comment. We have the Police Union president saying to the public that the police minister has no idea about policing. We saw bungle after bungle. I note that the police minister sitting over there is smiling and smirking. I do not know how she can smile and smirk when the Police Union president says that the Police Service's minister has no idea about policing. Paul Pisasale, the popularly elected mayor of Ipswich, said that the police minister is the worst police minister in the country.

We have a list of bumbles: she contacted a witness during a police investigation; she said that mining camps were Nazi concentration camps; she closed the police communications centre and then said that it was an operational matter—apparently an operational matter that the police minister cannot involve herself in but the Premier can, because the Premier overruled the police minister in closing down the communications centre. Now, we are in a state of flux and do not know what is happening with the Ipswich communications centre. We have seen a high-level security breach for which the LNP did not refer the police minister to the Ethics Committee; her own Labor Party referred her to the Ethics Committee. Of course, the police minister is protected by the CFMEU and the Labor Party. A member of the CFMEU is subject to investigation by her own department.

This issue is about leadership for Premier Palaszczuk. She has not shown leadership by having a minister who has lost the confidence of the Police Service and the Police Union in this state.