




Speech By
Scott Stewart

MEMBER FOR TOWNSVILLE

Record of Proceedings, 14 September 2016

MOTION: CRIME

 **Mr STEWART** (Townsville—ALP) (6.23 pm): I rise to oppose this motion. The former LNP government has no credibility on policing. The Lock it or Lose it campaign that this motion is all about is exactly the same campaign the LNP ran in 2014. Those opposite supported it then but it is not politically convenient for them to support it now. The Palaszczuk government supports our hardworking police officers, along with the measures that were announced today by the Minister Assisting the Premier on North Queensland, the member for Mundingburra.

Again, the LNP has no credibility on law and order issues. It was the Newman-Nicholls government that abolished the positions of 106 senior police officers in Queensland. Getting rid of experienced police officers does not represent a strong choice; it represents a betrayal of the people of Townsville. Tonight the LNP is playing cheap tricks and easy politics—easy politics from the cheap seats.

Throughout the years it has been Labor governments that have introduced or expanded community policing programs such as police beat, police shopfronts and Neighbourhood Watch. It is Labor that has always recognised the value of working with communities. The Minister for Police was upholding this longstanding Labor tradition with his visit to Townsville last week to talk to the community. Labor will continue to work with the community.

Ask any police officer if police alone can prevent crime and the answer will be a resounding no. There is no argument from the Palaszczuk government that the hard work needs to continue, and the hard work will continue. We on this side of the House know that crime prevention is not done only by police. The LNP has embarked on a deliberate fear campaign using crime statistics that have been deliberately cherry-picked for its own political purposes. It smacks of hypocrisy. When in government the LNP refused to release the annual crime statistics. How about that? It refused to let people know what it was doing in their communities. They are *Wizard of Oz* tactics: 'Nothing to see here. Don't look behind the curtain.'

In the interests of integrity and accountability, the Palaszczuk government reinstated the Annual Statistical Review to give Queenslanders a clear picture of what is going on in their communities.

Mr Watts interjected.

Mr STEWART: I take that interjection because I will provide those in a moment. These statistics speak volumes about the efforts of hardworking police in targeting crime and keeping our communities safe. Those opposite are using raw crime data. It is what police call point-in-time data and it does not tell the full story. What is important, police say, is trends over time. I am informed that for the Townsville police division official police crime statistics over the past decade reflect a downward trend in crime. Over the past 10 years in the Townsville police division, overall offences and offences against the person have dropped by around 20 per cent per 100,000 people and property offences have dropped by more than 35 per cent.

The opposition's politically motivated campaign can serve only one purpose: damage. That is all they are good for: damage to Townsville's reputation as a popular tourist destination, damage to local businesses and damage to the local economy. They are the wrecking ball of good policing and good communities like mine of Townsville.

The member for Everton visited Townsville on the same day the Minister for Police came to my city. He was like the wrecking ball in Townsville. The member for Everton is the Miley Cyrus of making a mockery of policing in Townsville. I paraphrase Miley Cyrus when I say that the member for Everton came in like a wrecking ball. For those who have not seen Miley Cyrus's *Wrecking Ball* video, she is sitting naked on a swinging wrecking ball. I will leave the rest up to members' imaginations when it comes to the member for Everton and the Miley Cyrus video—swinging naked on that wrecking ball.

The politically motivated comments of those opposite undermine the efforts of hardworking police in my city of Townsville. It is a direct criticism of those hardworking officers and we will not stand for it.