




Speech By
Scott Stewart

MEMBER FOR TOWNSVILLE

Record of Proceedings, 28 March 2019

JUSTICE LEGISLATION (LINKS TO TERRORIST ACTIVITY) AMENDMENT BILL

 **Mr STEWART** (Townsville—ALP) (12.31 pm): I rise today to give a short contribution to the justice bill that we are debating today. I listened intently to the member for Toowoomba South and his recounting of his experiences. Terrorism is not something new; it has been about for quite some time. I will rattle off a couple of terrorist incidents, and I do not intend to speak at length about them. We remember the Pan AM Flight 103, known as the Lockerbie bombing, in 1988; and the bombing of the World Trade Centre in 1993, and we saw what happened later in history after that. Australians are also caught up in this; we were caught up in the Bali bombings in 2002 when 202 people were killed. We have seen events also on our shores—right here in Queensland in fact. On 29 November 1980, which happened to be the day of the state election, the Iwasaki resort in Keppel—is it in Keppel?

Mrs Lauga interjected.

Mr STEWART: Yes, thank you, member for Keppel. The Iwasaki resort was bombed, leaving a seven-metre-wide crater in a block of holiday units that were under construction at the time. That happened back in 1980 right here in Queensland. Australia has suffered various terrorist attacks since then. Records I have looked at include the 1915 Battle of Broken Hill.

When we talk about terror attacks in Australia and doing everything we can to prevent terror, we find there are many, many cases where terror plots are foiled by the outstanding work that our police do each and every day. I would like to take this opportunity to thank our police, who do an outstanding job, and also all those former police officers in this House for the contribution they have made each and every day in keeping our communities safe. This is just the next step in keeping our community safe. I recognise the young people from our schools present in the gallery today. The legislation that we will vote on in this House today will keep these young people sitting in our gallery safe. We need to make sure that everything we do keeps our future safe.

I will talk very briefly around the work that I do as chair of the Queensland Social Cohesion Implementation Committee. Our work is the early intervention work. We are looking at what we need to do to make sure that young people do not go down the road of radicalisation. It is that early intervention model, setting up a sense of belonging in our community, a real connection back into our community, a sense of identity for these young people, particularly those who are new to our communities or Australian shores. I think the key thing we see when we hear the briefings from the police at these particular meetings is the sharing of intelligence—making sure that police right across our country are sharing the intelligence with each other. This bill brings together that intelligence along with legislation. Now what we are seeing through COAG is that we have consistency in our legislation so that intelligence can be shared consistently across our country.

When I was the chair of the education and Commonwealth Games committee in the previous parliament we also looked at some legislation that gave police more powers to keep people safe that was specifically designed for the Commonwealth Games. There were some concerns around abuse of power, but we saw emphatically that the police did the right thing each and every day. I have to tell

honourable members that those Commonwealth Games were absolutely outstanding. We had people coming to our state from overseas as well as from all over our country knowing they would be safe. That was because we had some of the best laws in place that would ensure their safety was paramount and they could go out and enjoy a great time down on the Gold Coast or in Cairns or Townsville, which were also host cities.

This legislation will not dissuade terrorists from their cause, but it will give police and our justice system more ability to reduce the instances of terrorism. There will be greater consequences across our country. This legislation will give our justice system and our police greater opportunities and greater power to keep these young people sitting in our gallery today safe. I commend the bill to the House.