




Speech By
Michael Healy

MEMBER FOR CAIRNS

Record of Proceedings, 29 November 2022

MATTERS OF PUBLIC INTEREST

Cairns, Youth Crime

 **Mr HEALY** (Cairns—ALP) (2.20 pm): The shadow minister for integrity has no integrity and is deliberately misleading Queenslanders. The data provided by the LNP in Cairns last week relates to unlawful use of motor vehicle offences, not the number of vehicles stolen, which in many cases may involve—

Ms SIMPSON: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly): Can I deal with what I was going to deal with before I take your point of order, please? Member, you have used unparliamentary language. I ask you to withdraw.

Mr HEALY: I withdraw.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Do you still have a point of order?

Ms SIMPSON: I took personal offence and it is untrue. I ask that it be withdrawn. If that is the matter the Deputy Speaker is referring to, thank you.

Mr HEALY: The data provided by the LNP in Cairns last week relates to the unlawful use of motor vehicle offences, not the number of vehicles stolen which, in many cases, involved multiple offenders in single vehicles or multiple offenders committing the same offence in the same vehicle. In other words, the data presented by the LNP is deliberately misleading. Not only is it highly irresponsible but also it reflects a desperation by those opposite. The LNP have been caught out a few times distorting the truth, just like the fibber from Maroochydore on Cairns crime statistic issues.

Ms SIMPSON: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I take personal offence. The matter is untrue and offensive, and I ask that it be withdrawn.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Cairns, the member has taken personal offence. I ask you to withdraw and I note it is unparliamentary language.

Mr HEALY: I withdraw. Just last week, the desperate opposition leader also claimed there has been a decrease in the number of police. The simple facts of the matter are that police numbers are up by 401 since 2020 and that is taking into account natural attrition. In addition, we have had hundreds of graduating police from Brisbane to Townsville just recently, and the minister has made it very clear that there are challenges in relation to jobs and labour. We know that is happening in all sectors, and it is no different for the police, but we continue to aim for the high targets, the unprecedented targets that we have already set. The opposition leader's fondness for untruths reflects his desperation. He is not getting any traction.

In Cairns, it is not unusual to see adult crime statistics conflated into a story about youth crime by the LNP. Make no mistake about it, the data on kids stealing cars is absolutely concerning and unacceptable, but we continue to be honest with our community about that. However, inflated figures incorporating adult offenders into youth crime in Cairns is disingenuous and a disservice to the public,

and reflects the growing desperation of the member for Broadwater for some kind of traction and his out-of-touch, lazy opposition who have not done anything about it. Nobody in Far North Queensland appreciates an LNP politician, with no credibility, flying up from Brisbane, making negative, destructive and inaccurate comments about Cairns and the region. The opposition offer no solutions and prefer to peddle hysteria and fearmongering.

More than two years ago, the LNP's member for Burdekin promised he would deliver their crime plan within six months. It is more than 650 days and there is still no sign of any plan whatsoever—absolutely nothing. They simply prefer to roll grenades down the corridor of government and then drop smoke bombs when asked to show their own plan. They absolutely lack substance.

I can reassure the community of Far North Queensland that I and my fellow state members of parliament, and every member of the Palaszczuk state government, is firmly focused on dealing with the youth crime challenges, and we are being honest with our community about it. In dealing with this matter in an honest way, I personally have sought the facts so as to see what government can do to help fully engage and be truthful with our community. As a member of parliament, I have been the first in 17 years to attend court. I have been to detention centres. I have been informed about the nature and criminal activity and that for me is part of obviously ensuring that we are getting the best outcomes. By contrast, those opposite have given little regard for the facts but have sought mainly to create a climate of fear—one that exacerbates the difficulties of policing and law enforcement without offering any meaningful solutions; one that demeans the hard work and dedication of thousands of men and women in blue who serve and protect our great state every day.

However, our government remains focused on solutions and outcomes. The testimony to this responsibility is this government's commitment to adapt and evolve in crime prevention initiatives. We know that new methods of crime fighting and crime prevention need to be adopted and we are looking at those in every way. Being nimble and innovative in our approach is part of our responsibility, so having access to all data and being aware of the latest and best methods in policing will always be a priority. However, when we look on the other side of the chamber, there is not a suggestion, merely they have made announcements that they will be cutting services. That is what they did. We can expect to see a significant dislocation happen if anything happens.

I make this comparison: on the opposite side we have fear and misinformation without obligation and answers; on this side we have a commitment to the truth, a quest for better outcomes and tangible results.