



Speech By  
**Dale Last**


**MEMBER FOR BURDEKIN**

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Record of Proceedings, 24 May 2023

**MOTION**

**Palaszczuk Labor Government; Youth Crime**

 **Mr LAST** (Burdekin—LNP) (5.54 pm): I rise to support the motion moved by the member for Clayfield. There are two words that the members for Thuringowa—

**Mr Harper:** Where's your plan?

**Mr LAST:**—and he is having plenty to say already, but we will see what his record is when I finish this contribution. There are two words that the member for Thuringowa, the member for Townsville and the member for Mackay cannot bring themselves to utter. They had the opportunity a couple of weeks ago in Cairns during the sittings to mention those two words. What are they? Youth crime. We will mention that on this side of the House every day of the week. On this side of the House we will talk about the victims of crime every single day of the week because on this side of the House we will stick up for the victims of crime in this state of Queensland.

**Mr Mickelberg** interjected.

**Mr ACTING SPEAKER:** Pause the clock. Member for Buderim, you are on a warning. You can leave the chamber for one hour.

*Whereupon the honourable member for Buderim withdrew from the chamber at 5.55 pm.*

**Mr LAST:** This issue had its genesis back in 2015-16 when the then attorney-general watered down the youth justice laws—and hasn't Queensland suffered since that day! Who could forget? The then attorney-general abolished breach of bail and brought back detention as a last resort. Let us not forget that those three members—the members for Thuringowa, Townsville and Mackay—voted to support that bill. They voted to support those changes.

They have adopted our policy on breach of bail word for word. If they were serious about addressing youth crime in this state, they would get rid of detention as a last resort. What does it say? It says that 'a detention order should be imposed only as a last resort and for the shortest appropriate period'. How can our magistrates and judges undertake their role—how can they impose a penalty that reflects what the community wants when their hands are shackled and they cannot impose a sentence of imprisonment?

I say this unequivocally: if they are breaking into houses, if they are stealing cars, if they are out there ramming police vehicles, then they belong in jail! I will say that every single day of the week. These members have had seven years to stand up in this place and talk about this issue.

**Mr Purdie:** Nearly eight.

**Mr ACTING SPEAKER:** Order, member for Nicklin!

**Mr LAST:** Nearly eight—going on eight years. What have they done? They have toed the party line. The big whip has been waved over their head. They have toed the line. They are not game to come in here and speak up on behalf of their communities. Well I will and so will every one of the members on this side of the House!

What have we seen in those seven years? Let me give you some more figures, Mr Acting Speaker. In the 83 months since those changes, more than 32,000 charges of unlawful use of a motor vehicle have been laid against juveniles. In the 83 months before that date, there were fewer than 17,000.

**An opposition member:** Numbers don't lie.

**Mr LAST:** Numbers don't lie. Let me give you a couple more. From 15 May to 16 April, in the Townsville district, the number of car thefts was 801. From 22 May to 23 April, they were 1,643—up 104 per cent. Break and enters were up for the same period—110 per cent. What about assaults? They were up 220 per cent.

Last week that lot over there would have us believe that the laws are working. Last week on Friday two stolen cars were chased in Townsville. They were involved in an incident and the offenders raced off. They punched an 85-year-old lady in the face and they ran through a school yard putting those students at risk. It is still going on as we speak. We know that everything this Labor government would have us believe is absolute rubbish.

**Mr ACTING SPEAKER:** Pause the clock. I would just like to give general guidance to all members because a number of members have referenced recent incidents. It is incumbent on all members that when you rise to your feet in this chamber and make reference to incidents, particularly recent incidents, we have no way of knowing whether those individuals have been apprehended, caught, charged or anything else, so it is incumbent on you to ensure that you are not offending the sub judice rules. Member for Burdekin, I would ask you to continue with those thoughts in mind. It is very important that we do not offend the sub judice standing orders of this chamber.

**Mr LAST:** Who could forget 29 December last year, when the Premier stood up and announced the you beaut plan that was going to change everything: the toughest youth justice laws in the country. They were going to see these juvenile offenders jailed. They were going to be brought to account. The Premier did not tell Queenslanders about the little provision embedded in the Youth Justice Act called 'detention as a last resort'. On the one hand, we are supposed to be jailing these kids; on the other hand, when they come before the court the judiciary is bound by the principle of detention as a last resort.

Listen to Queenslanders; that is what I say. Listen to Queenslanders, because they want these offenders brought to justice. Victims of crime across Queensland have had enough. They want change, and they want it now.

*(Time expired)*