




Speech By
Dale Last

MEMBER FOR BURDEKIN

Record of Proceedings, 23 August 2023

MOTION

Vehicle Theft

 **Mr LAST** (Burdekin—LNP) (5.00 pm): I move—

That this House—

1. expresses its concern that, since July 2016, motor vehicle theft has risen by:
 - (a) 132 per cent in Cairns,
 - (b) 95 per cent in Townsville,
 - (c) 322 per cent in Rockhampton,
 - (d) 215 per cent in Bundaberg,
 - (e) 373 per cent in Hervey Bay-Maryborough, and
 - (f) 119 percent in Brisbane; and
2. calls on the Labor members who represent these areas to join their communities and the opposition in supporting laws and strategies to reverse this crime crisis.

'It's not a game. People are dying.' That was said to me today out the front of this place at the victims of crime rally by a victim. When you look into the eyes of the victims of crime—the sons and daughters, the husbands and wives—like we did today, it brings it home. We see the sheer devastation and the pain that is evident on their faces. They are still going through that pain today and that will never be erased. They are looking for hope and they are looking for answers from this government, but that is not forthcoming.

I said at a crime rally in Townsville on 17 June this year that I would be their voice in this place because the local members could not be bothered to turn up. Those on this side of the House will continue to be their voice. We will continue to stand up for victims of crime in this state because they deserve it. The fact that no-one from that side could go down there today and meet with those victims of crime is an absolute disgrace. They are genuine, decent people—they are Queenslanders just like all of us—and they deserve better. They deserve to have us wrap our arms around them and support them because I can assure the House that they are hurting. They are seriously hurting.

If we look at the front pages of the newspapers across Queensland today, the *Townsville Bulletin* said, 'It's just not good enough,' while the *Cairns Post* stated, 'How did we get here?' That is a pretty good question, isn't it? How did we get to the point in Queensland today where we are being ripped apart by a youth crime epidemic that is not showing any signs of abating? The number of serial repeat offenders is going through the roof, and this government is clueless in terms of addressing the youth crime issue.

The statistics do not lie, but they paint a sobering picture in terms of how much motor vehicle theft has risen in the last 12 months. It has risen by 132 per cent in Cairns—you cannot get your head around some of these figures; 95 per cent in Townsville; 322 per cent in Rockhampton; 215 per cent in Bundaberg; 373 per cent in Hervey Bay-Maryborough; and 119 per cent in Brisbane. I hope members

opposite stand up here tonight and try to defend that because I want to know—as do all the members on this side of the House—what their solutions are and what they are doing about this crime epidemic. Their residents deserve answers, and their residents deserve to know and want to know that their member is standing up in this place and going in to bat for them.

Mr Bleijie: Where were they today? They didn't even go to the rally.

Mr LAST: That is exactly right. It was an absolute disgrace that they could not find it within themselves to go down there and meet with victims of crime. I looked into the eyes of those young girls who have lost their mothers and their fathers. They are devastated and they will never recover from the loss of their parents. Each and every one of us in this place has a responsibility and a role to play in addressing this issue. The Premier came in here this morning and said that this state has the harshest penalties and that they have spent \$1.4 billion trying to address this issue, but what has it achieved? Absolutely nothing. Crime is still going through the roof. It might be well and good for the Premier to say that there are no quick fixes, but they have had eight long years and Queenslanders will not forget that. They will not forget that at the next election—that they have had eight long years to address this issue and by the time the election rolls around it will be nine.

The government can accuse me of scaremongering and whatever they like, but the facts remain that crime in this state is spiralling out of control and this mob are absolutely clueless in terms of addressing it and in terms of giving Queenslanders hope. I can assure Queenslanders tonight that we will never give up the fight in making sure that we address this issue.