




Speech By
Hon. Grace Grace

MEMBER FOR MCCONNEL

Record of Proceedings, 25 October 2023

MOTION

Townsville, Youth Crime

 **Hon. G GRACE** (McConnel—ALP) (Minister for Education, Minister for Industrial Relations and Minister for Racing) (5.59 pm): I rise to support the amended motion because this is a serious issue. No-one on this side of the House would ever say it is not. Let me tell honourable members that when I go to various meetings of ministers—education ministers, racing ministers, industrial relations ministers—they all say the same thing: this is an issue that is happening all over Australia. Queensland is not alone when it comes to these issues. However, if we listened to those opposite we would think that it is only happening in the state of Queensland.

To be serious, to blame a particular government and say that it does not care, that it is all their fault or somehow it is the orchestration of the will on our part is misleading and is playing the people of Queensland for fools. Let me tell them the people of Queensland knew all about chaos between 2012 and 2015. Those opposite know all about chaos because those who were in the House then lived through it for three years. It was absolute chaos. Let me tell honourable members if someone's career in this place should have been dead, buried and cremated, it is that of the member for Kawana. Just have a look at those opposite and what the former auditor-general said about what they brought in to address youth crime. What did they bring in? What did they say? Boot camps, beautiful! That was the solution! Direct quotes from the former auditor-general laid bare the appalling failures of this scheme, 'cost blowouts, youth absconding and an abject failure'.

Mr Harper interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly): Pause the clock. Member for Thuringowa, you are warned under the standing orders.

Ms GRACE: The Audit Office's report states—

Services procured for the expanded boot camp trial do not represent best value.

...

The evidence indicates that suitable, lower cost service providers were available.

...

It also ultimately leaves the process of awarding the two contracts open to accusations of favouritism ...

That is what we got from those opposite. The Auditor-General even found the contract awarded to one of the service providers 'includes a 15 per cent "profit margin" and ... other costs not clearly related to service delivery.' What a shameful indictment of the LNP's signature youth crime policy. That is what we got from them. What have they done now?

Mr Mickelberg interjected.

Ms GRACE: They have elevated that person whose career should have been dead, buried, cremated—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Buderim, you are warned under the standing orders.

Ms GRACE:—and is now the deputy leader. We can also look at the bikie laws. Recently—and who could forget—Campbell Newman spoke out about the failed bikie laws that were to crack down on them. Those are not my words; they are Campbell Newman's words who, I remind members, was mentor to the member for Broadwater; he said that last month. Then we have the former premier of this state, Campbell Newman, coming back to what they did on crime—

Mr Stevens interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: The member for Mermaid Beach is warned.

Ms GRACE:—and said in his words, not mine—

Looking back on the whole thing, I just don't believe that it was necessary.

Then they came up with all these magic possessions. They said, 'Let's have breach of bail as an offence.' Under their breach of bail—the Clayton's one they had, the one that did not work—zero people were convicted. We brought in true breach of bail. We have done it, so now they have moved on to another tangent. Now it is incarceration as a last resort, a UN convention that applies to adults, to human beings. They want to eradicate that, another magic potion on that side. They are as empty of ideas as Jann Stuckey said—and let me say it again: 'whingeing, weary, policy-vacant bunch of ageing, grumpy individuals'.

This motion that we are supporting outlines our plan, laws that those opposite supported in this House. We are doing everything we can for Townsville and everywhere in Queensland—the toughest in the country—and we will not be lectured to by those opposite.