




Speech By
Tim Nicholls

MEMBER FOR CLAYFIELD

Record of Proceedings, 11 May 2023

MOTION

Far North Queensland, Service Delivery

 **Mr NICHOLLS** (Clayfield—LNP) (3.40 pm): After listening to a speech that was three minutes of the usual Labor Party propaganda, that is the only thing a minister in the Palaszczuk Labor government, after many years in that post, can spout. I watched the clock tick down as he went through the same litany of excuses and mistakes for the Labor Party.

This is an easy motion to speak to, given it reflects exactly the comments made by many members of the Cairns community to the LNP here in Queensland as we have been out and about. You do not have to go far to hear just how much on the nose the local members in Far North Queensland are. On Monday night, the deputy opposition leader, the Manager of Opposition Business and I were out in the community and we were approached by a complete stranger who proceeded to regale us with a litany of horrors. When you hear that, you think you might hear one problem but this fellow had faced all three. He had crime, he had health and he had manufacturing which was not being supported by the local members up here.

Just yesterday, what did the three Far North Queensland members do in respect of the community meeting that was being held out the front? They walked straight past it. They did not want to even engage with members of the community who had reasonable requests and were concerned about law and order.

A quick look at the figures shows how bad the local Far North members are when it comes to dealing with the issue of youth crime. No figure stands out more than the number of cars stolen in Cairns in the last 12 months. In the year to March 2023, there were 1,182 cars stolen here in Cairns—more than three cars a day. The number of reported juvenile offenders for unlawful use of a motor vehicle in the Cairns local government area has gone from 280 in the 12 months to May 2015 to over 1,150 in the same period in 2023—a 300 per cent increase. There are similar shocking figures for robbery, with the number of offenders increasing by 353 per cent for the same period and over the same time that the members for Barron River, Cairns and Cook have been in this place. Break and enter offences are up, as is assault.

No-one should be allowed to get away with saying this failure in service delivery has just happened over night. This has been happening right under the noses of the members here in Far North Queensland and especially here in Cairns for the last eight years. It is just that the local MPs are not taking the fight up in Brisbane. Take, for example, the member for Cairns. He talks a big game up here. When he spoke to the *Cairns Post* in 2020, he said, 'I'm not singing the party line. I'm going to take down to Brisbane what's going on up here,' but what does he do when he is down in the warm embrace of the comrades in the politburo in Brisbane? He toes the party line in the finest tradition of all the Labor apparatchiks. He votes against breach of bail laws, he votes against detention as a last resort and he continues to parrot the Labor Party talking points. He does it time and time again.

The people of Cairns fondly remember the LNP's local members, people like Michael Trout, who were not afraid to take the battle up in Brisbane. I can tell you that not many members fought as hard for their local area as Trouty. Whether it was on the phone or in person, Trouty was battling and battling hard. What did he want? He wanted more police, and 1,000 more police were delivered by the LNP all over Queensland over four years. He was successful with the youth offender camps that were working, with a \$45 million centre for tropical medicine delivered here in Cairns—

Mr Hinchliffe interjected.

Mr ACTING SPEAKER: Pause the clock. Member for Sandgate, you are warned.

Mr NICHOLLS:—with the hugely successful Attracting Aviation Investment Fund, with the first hugely successful DestinationQ conference held right here in Queensland and let us not forget the Aquis project that died a death under Labor. With colleagues like Dave Kempton and Gavin King, he stood up for the Far North. He was not heading off on a farewell Dame Nellie Melba tour to Hong Kong. He was working here on the ground. He did not cut and run when the going got tough. He fought and fought and fought. As it was here in Cairns it was throughout the state, because we were successful. The Childrens Court report for 2014-15, as prepared by the chief judge Michael Shanahan, showed that the incidence of youth crime fell by five per cent in that year. That is a five per cent decrease. When it comes to representing the people here, this lot are in the rear with the gear.

(Time expired)