



Speech By
Christian Rowan

MEMBER FOR MOGGILL

Record of Proceedings, 11 November 2015

COUNTER-TERRORISM AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

 **Dr ROWAN** (Moggill—LNP) (8.40 pm): I rise to address the Counter-Terrorism and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2015. Whilst Queensland's preventative detention legislation and terrorist emergency powers have not had to be used during the last 10 years, they are still an important means of preventing and reducing the risk of terrorist acts in our state. There is no doubt that the threat of terrorism in Queensland and Australia is increasing due to the espoused radical views of some and the online recruitment of extremist terrorist sympathisers and supporters within our sovereign borders. The potential undetected return of individuals who have been fighting alongside terrorist groups in the Middle East and other parts of the world is also cause for great concern.

I want to take this legislative opportunity to address the very important and related public policy matters of education, security and terrorism, given there is bipartisan support for this legislation. We need to further prepare our young people to be well-informed citizens, engaged in public debate and contributing to our democratic institutions, freedoms and way of life. The primary objective of formal education for our young people must be to inspire a sense of community service and to develop loyalty to Queensland and Australia, whilst also allowing for open-minded inquiry to develop and with the purpose of awarding formal qualifications being beyond just what is needed for vocational employment.

Fostering citizenship entails an evolving sense of love and respect for one's country and its culture. Future economic and social development needs can only be addressed by sound public policy as it pertains to education. Education is the cornerstone of achieving political, social and economic stability. The further evolution of global terrorism and the radicalisation of young Queenslanders and Australians is not only deeply disturbing but also very tragic. Stopping the spread of extremist agendas and insular ideologies can only be addressed through engaging the disenfranchised, the disaffected and the marginalised from a very young chronological age. Developing strategies and practical programs to address social, economic and educational disadvantage must be a top priority of successive governments in Queensland.

Prisons can be a particularly susceptible breeding ground for the recruitment of individuals to extremist ideology. Providing access to literacy programs and enhancing mental health treatment options as well as increasing the availability of and access to drug and alcohol rehabilitation services in Queensland correctional facilities would be a prudent and wise measure. Social media platforms continue to evolve with the internet, in particular the hidden darknet, also becoming more problematic for law enforcement and intelligence agencies. There are international and local crime gangs collaborating with global terrorist organisations, manufacturing and distributing illicit drugs as well as participating in other illegal activities, such as money laundering, fraud and sex offences, in order to do our state of Queensland and our nation harm. Ongoing strategies to prosecute both direct supporters and sympathisers of terrorist organisations and criminal gangs who profit for their own gain must be further prioritised by our state government.

It is only through comprehensive primary, secondary and tertiary educational opportunities for our young people that we can truly hope to address further security risks in Queensland over the longer term. In order to provide those opportunities, Queensland needs a real economic plan and proper debt reduction strategies which will have a realistic chance of success.

We need strong action against those people, whether Australian born citizens or otherwise, who follow and promote transnational terrorism. I certainly support the suspension of a person's privileges, including the right to vote or receive social security or other governmental entitlements, if they are convicted of terrorism related offences. A reintroduced death penalty for certain or specified terrorist acts should also be considered, in my view. With a number of overseas terrorist incidents involving transport networks and the United States and British intelligence agencies indicating that there is credible evidence that ISIS planted a bomb on the ill-fated Russian Metrojet that exploded over the Egyptian desert killing all 224 people on board, it is a timely reminder that we must pay particular attention to the security of our own infrastructure here in Queensland. On Remembrance Day 2015, as we recognise the formal ending of the hostilities of World War I at the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month and recognise the service and sacrifice of all in our armed forces, it is timely to reflect on both past and current challenges facing our state and nation with respect to international diplomacy and security.

We all deserve to continue to enjoy the great freedoms and opportunities that this state and country offers. We must not allow a new form of darkness to dampen the spirit and hope of the next generation of young Queenslanders in the 21st century whose aspirations and dreams must continue to be cherished and respected. I commend the Counter-Terrorism and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2015 to the House.