

Office of Dale Last MP | Member for Burdekin

Shadow Minister for Police & Corrective Services, Shadow Minister for Fire & Emergency Services, Shadow Minister for Rural & Regional Affairs



November 23rd, 2020

MEDIA RELEASE

Last wants get together with prison union on issues

On the same day he was appointed to his new role, Shadow Minister for Police and Corrective Services, Dale Last, requested a “blanket approval” to visit Queensland’s correctional centres to allow him to hear directly from staff about the issues plaguing the state’s facilities.

With correctional centres appearing to “spiral out of control”, Mr Last has today taken the extraordinary step of requesting a briefing from the union that represents staff who work in those centres.

“I find it just a little convenient that the Together Union has publicly called for extra capacity in Queensland’s correctional centres after the election,” Mr Last said. “But I’m prepared to take their comments at face value, and I’d like the opportunity to hear what they propose firsthand.”

“Staff in Queensland’s corrections and detention centres have been used as punching bags for way too long and overcrowding is obviously one factor in the problems but, if we are going to get a result from the government, we need to share information and work cooperatively.”

“COVID 19 has definitely had an impact but no one is going to convince me that these issues are solely the result of the pandemic.”

As a former Police Officer, Mr Last said he was “familiar” with the corrections system but that the insight of the people who work in the facilities would be priceless.

“Every Queenslanders knows that, to end up in prison or detention, you have to have committed either a serious offence or be a recidivist offender,” Mr Last said. “Many people will say Labor is soft on crime and, while I don’t disagree, I won’t stand by and watch violence and attacks on correctional centre staff be treated as minor issues.”

“I want to hear what the union and the workers see as the causes for the problems and hear what they think can be done to address them. If we need to look at what other jurisdictions do to address these issues we can do that but I’m sure that the last thing Queenslanders, and staff of the centres, want is an even softer approach.”

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