



Speech By  
**Mark Robinson**

**MEMBER FOR CLEVELAND**

---

Record of Proceedings, 17 August 2016

### **COUNTER-TERRORISM AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL**

 **Dr ROBINSON** (Cleveland—LNP) (5.57 pm): I rise to speak to the Counter-Terrorism and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2016. The events of the 2002 Bali bombings are etched in the memory banks of every Australian. On 12 October 2002, 202 people were murdered by radicals from Jemaah Islamiyah in the tranquil atmosphere that is Bali. Eighty-eight Australians were killed, 209 others were injured and many more were psychologically scarred for life. Abu Bakar Bashir, the head of Jemaah Islamiyah at that time and the leader of an Islamic boarding school in Solo Central Java, was convicted as the mastermind of the Bali bombings. The Bali bombers who were caught and jailed were part of the Islamist group Jemaah Islamiyah.

The Bali bombing terrorist act had an indirect impact on me in that at the time I was studying at the University of Queensland. I had started my doctoral studies at the School of Languages and Cultural Studies on Indonesia. I was about to commit to a year of field work based in Solo Central Java when the Bali bombings occurred. As a result, the university decided that I could not go. The terror threat to Australians travelling to Indonesia was high and it was no longer safe. It was two years before I was able to return to Indonesia. Fortunately, I was able to adjust to those changes and complete my PhD. However, my inconvenience was a small matter in comparison to the suffering experienced by those in the Sari Club on that fateful night in 2002.

Prior to entering parliament in 2009 I had been travelling to Indonesia for work going back to 1988. In my career in aid and development prior to politics I had met many wonderful Indonesians—Christians, Hindus and Muslims. They are generally lovely people to work with.

I have also indirectly come across less than acceptable circumstances regarding Jihadi Islamists. Unbeknown to me, one of the orphanage projects that we partnered with in Solo Central Java was not far from the Islamic Boarding School, or Pesantren, of Abu Bakar Bashir. His radicalised sharia students, fuelled with teachings of violence from the Koran, would march down the road nearby the Christian orphanage with swords and knives and threaten to rape and kill the infidel female workers at the Christian orphanage simply because they were non-Muslim.

While I experienced the friendship of good Muslim people, I have also indirectly experienced what sharia law can do to largely friendly people in terms of radicalising young men and turning them into violent Jihadists and potential terrorists.

Debate, on motion of Dr Robinson, adjourned.

 **Dr ROBINSON** (Cleveland—LNP) (9.09 pm), continuing: In September 2014, ASIO raised the national terrorist alert level to high where it has remained. Since September 2014, nationally there has been an escalation of terrorist related activity which has been well documented in terms of the statistics by other members, so I will not repeat all of those facts. The majority, almost all, of the attacks are due to Islamist terrorists and involve the infiltration of radical and dangerous forms of Islam into our nation.

Who could ever forget the Lindt cafe siege by Islamic extremist Man Monis in which two people were killed in Martin Place, Sydney, or the Islamic radical who shot dead Curtis Cheng, a police civilian worker in Parramatta in 2015?

Today what is clear is that Australia is facing the most significant ongoing threat from Islamist terrorism in our nation's history. The threat of Islamist terrorism is increasing as the number of Islamists living in Australia grows through a number of sources—immigration, biological growth and radicalisation. Fortunately, to date our federal and state agencies have been able to intervene early to prevent many Islamist terrorist attacks, often on very little intelligence. I congratulate them on their fine work.

In terms of policy objectives, I agree with the policy objectives of the bill in regard to providing further security, safety and protection for Queenslanders from all forms of terrorism. I also agree with the measures taken towards those objectives that are outlined in the bill. However, I am of the view that the measures do not go far enough in order to counter terrorism most effectively in Queensland in two ways—one, in terms of the main specific source of this threat and, two, in regard to education and prevention measures that could further be taken.

The bill fails to address the specifics of the main source of terrorism, and that is jihadi Islam. The huge majority of terrorist acts in recent times in Europe, the UK, USA and Australia were committed by violent jihadi followers of sharia law. Sharia law itself is dangerous because it is the breeding ground for violent jihadi Islamism. The problem is not the majority of peace-abiding Muslims who now live in Australia and those who will come and live in Australia but those who follow sharia law.

A common definition of sharia Islamic law is the religious legal system governing the members of the Islamic faith derived from the religious precepts of Islam. Sharia is a form of law—a legal system of governance that affects many aspects of life. Most disturbingly and relevant to countering terrorism is that strict observance of sharia law can involve violent jihad. It can also involve interpretations of life very different to our Australian way. Due to time today, I will not get into the details of aspects of family law, banking and finance, eating and dietary restrictions, and even clothing. I will not go there, but to varying degrees these aspects of sharia law are in conflict with Western democracy and our Australian way of life. The violent jihad teaching that has led to violent radicalisation is of great concern.

Indonesia, again, is a good example of what I am saying. While Indonesia is not modelled on the Westminster system, it is a democracy—a multiparty, multireligious, multiracial democracy. The majority of states and islands operate democratically also. However, one state, Aceh—and there may be others—in North Sumatra is governed as a sharia state. The people are subjected to sharia law. This means that non-Muslims are second-rate citizens. Women are not equal with men. Violent jihad is acceptable—

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Furner): Order! Member for Cleveland, I have been listening closely to your contribution and I find your contribution at this stage irrelevant. I bring you back to the relevance of the bill.

**Dr ROBINSON:** I am talking about counterterrorism.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** No, sharia law has nothing to do with this bill. I bring you back to the relevance of the bill.

**Dr ROBINSON:** Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker. Sharia law in Australia radicalises young men into violent jihadists. It concerns me greatly when we are talking about counterterrorism to see that some aspects of sharia law are reported to be creeping into Australia and impacting on our counterterrorism measures. Recently, a Channel 7 news report showed that in some Sydney suburbs a form of legal pluralism is operating, one that involves mediation sessions where sharia law is being used to settle disputes on matters generally covered and usually covered by Australian law. Sheikh Abdul Salam Zoud, a possible successor to the current Grand Mufti, until 2014 was also a key figure in a group called Ahlus Sunnah Wal Jama'ah—

**Mr BYRNE:** Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. My point of order is that this discussion is not within the long title of the bill by any stretch. I understand the member's convictions, but there is no reference that identifies people by race, religion or any other criteria that is relevant to the discussion of this bill. Respectfully, I ask that relevance to the long title be adhered to.

**Dr ROBINSON:** Mr Deputy Speaker, in defence—

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! Member for Cleveland, once again I bring you back to the contents of the bill.

**Dr ROBINSON:** Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker, and I am talking about counterterrorism here in Australia. This sheikh was also a key figure in a group called Ahlus Sunnah Wal Jama'ah, a group in Australia that has alleged ties with terrorist organisations Al-Qaeda and Jemaah Islamiyah. The possible

links of some of these sharia Islamic groups to known terrorist organisations and the expansion of the rule of sharia law creeping into Australia is of great concern because it is a substantial source of concern about terrorism and terrorist acts in Australia. Sometimes it is low-tech terrorism.

The main concern is that sharia law is a governance system that is completely incompatible with Queensland's Westminster system. We have one system of law that governs Australia. A critical element of countering terrorism in Queensland, in my view, is to deal with one of the main issues which is the spreading of sharia law. We could do it by making sharia law illegal in Queensland so that good peaceful Muslims who live here and those who come in the future will steer away from the more violent forms. In an increasing number of American states and in a growing number of European jurisdictions, sharia law is not allowed. It is being banned at a state level.

**Mr RUSSO:** Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. My understanding of this legislation is that it is about making Queenslanders safer, not about outlawing a religion.

**Dr ROBINSON:** How else do you make it safer?

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! Member for Cleveland, you will be seated while I am dealing with the point of order.

**Mr RUSSO:** All we have heard here is a story about a religion which is not part of the bill.

**An opposition member:** Is this a point of order?

**Mr RUSSO:** I ask for a ruling and I ask the member for Cleveland to be relevant to the bill.

**Dr ROBINSON:** Mr Deputy Speaker, I am relevant to the subject of counterterrorism.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! Member for Cleveland, wait until I give you the call. This is the third time I have asked you to be relevant and it is the last time. I bring you back to the relevance of this bill.

**Dr ROBINSON:** Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker. I appreciate your ruling. I am certainly just trying to address the issue of counterterrorism. In doing so, I have agreed with the measures in the bill as partly going towards dealing with the issue. I am supporting the bill but saying we should go further.

With respect to state government education, we should be considering extending current radicalisation programs which are considered very important in counterterrorism measures. The federal minister, Simon Birmingham, has raised this in terms of the need to look at Islamic schools and various government and non-government schools. Every Queensland student should be educated in the terrorism threat and the link to sharia forms of Islam and jihadi violence.

In conclusion, I support the bill. It goes a little way to help but I believe we must identify the sources of terrorism and the very real risks in our nation and respond to them. I believe that we need to look further at sharia law in Queensland and follow the trend in other nations and other states in dealing with it.