



Speech by
**Mr DENVER
BEANLAND**

MEMBER FOR INDOOROOPIILLY

Hansard 29 April 1999

MOTOR ACCIDENT INSURANCE AMENDMENT REGULATION (No. 2) 1999

Disallowance of Statutory Instrument

Mr BEANLAND (Indooroopilly—LP) (4.03 p.m.): I rise to second the disallowance motion moved by the honourable member for Moggill. In doing so, let me say that I participate in this debate to keep Labor honest because we have never seen such dishonesty as we have seen in this debate from those opposite. The Treasurer knows all about it. I will deal with some of the points that I want to highlight in this debate.

Prior to and after the last election we heard the Premier and various Labor spokesmen, including the Treasurer, talking about taxes. In the Courier-Mail of 12 June 1996, when we were well into the election campaign, Mr Beattie ruled out any new taxes or charges above the CPI. After the election we saw the famous letter to the member for Nicklin. As part of the letter to the member for Nicklin the Premier wrote—

"Labor can deliver its capital and current program without imposing any new taxes or increasing existing taxes and charges above current real levels."

During the campaign, and after the election, the Leader of the Labor Party—now the Premier—indicated time and time again to the people of Queensland that there would be no increases above the CPI.

We now have the situation where Labor comes forward with a number of taxes, charges and levies which are being increased above the CPI level. In the past few months we have seen a 25% increase in CTP. Those opposite should be ashamed of themselves. Those opposite are living in the time when Labor formed the Federal Government. Those opposite are living in the times of Mr Keating, Mr Hawke and Mr Whitlam. At that time we had 25% inflation. We had no such rate of inflation under the Howard/Fischer Liberal/National Government. Under the current Federal Government inflation has been virtually eliminated in this country.

Those opposite are living in the wrong era. The Treasurer, the member for Ipswich, thinks this is the time when he stood for the Federal seat of Oxley and was done like a dinner. He failed to do the numbers in his Labor Party factions. He got the numbers mixed up. We are now in a different era. We have moved on. We do not see such inflationary increases these days.

Under this Government we have seen a \$60 increase in the compulsory third-party insurance levy in nine months. Those opposite, including the Premier, indulge in a creative use of the language. Let us look at a few more facts.

One person who is missing from today's debate is the Premier. I challenge him to come into the Chamber and participate in this debate because it is his credibility that is on the line. It is the Premier's honesty that is being tested today. He has been found out for what he is—dishonest. The record speaks for itself.

The member for Moggill has already referred to what Mr Beattie said in the House on 25 July 1996. At that time a petition was tabled in this House which referred to the unfortunate situation in which the former Government found itself. The coalition Government was in the unenviable position of having to announce the first significant increase in compulsory third-party insurance premiums in some 11 years. Unfortunately, that action was necessary and was based on independent advice from the actuary and on the recommendation of the Insurance Commissioner.

The coalition came to Government after some six and a half years of Labor Party Government. We inherited this mess from the Labor Party. The Treasurer of the day had to confront this situation. When the coalition Government confronted this situation it was accused of being in bed with the insurance companies. I think the words of those opposite are coming back to haunt them. The petition presented to the House on 25 July 1996 contained 15,107 signatures. I bet the Premier is not writing to those signatories and explaining to them why we are now seeing a \$60 increase in compulsory third-party insurance.

Dr Watson: I bet the Treasurer isn't, either.

Mr BEANLAND: No. Those opposite do not have the courage to do that. It is easy to go out and collect a petition. It is easy to play politics. However, the Labor Party now has to run the hard yards. At that time Mr Beattie said this—

"Battlers are having to scrimp and save for what is for them a huge hike of \$66 for their tiny old battered cars, while the well-off do not give a second thought as they flash the plastic to insure their luxury limousines."

Those remarks apply to this Government's treatment of battlers. This Government is responsible for horrific increases in several areas over the past three or four weeks. These increases are going to hit those same Aussie battlers. Those opposite do not give a damn.

The Labor Party wants to blame lawyers for ambulance chasing. Labor wants to blame lawyers for advertising. But which party stood up in this House and said, "We are going to introduce advertising for lawyers because this is going to be great for consumers. We are going to reduce the cost of legal services."? Labor's action increased the cost of services. I well remember the Premier of the day standing up and saying, "This is a wonderful achievement for the State. It is going to reduce the cost of legal services for all consumers in the State of Queensland."

Now we have the Premier, the leader of the same party, coming in and saying that the lawyers have increased the costs. What a nonsense! What a load of rubbish that we get day in and day out from this Government! We get from the Labor Party whatever suits them. If it suits Labor to play the game of politics and say one thing one day and say exactly the opposite the next day, it does so. The members opposite do not give a damn about what is recorded in Hansard or anywhere else. They do not give a damn at all.

The situation is very clear. We were last confronted with this problem when the coalition came to office after the six and a half years of continual failure of the Goss Government. The situation has now caught up again with this Government, because it has not done the hard yards. The Treasurer has not tabled any advice at all in relation to this matter. He has not explained in any detail why he is going to slog the Aussie battlers. He has not said a word about it at all.

Mr HAMILL: I rise to a point of order. I tabled in the House the reasons for the announcement of a premium adjustment for compulsory third-party insurance, and they are on the table of the House.

Mr BEANLAND: The Treasurer has not tabled the actuarial advice. He does not have the courage to come into this Chamber with that advice, and I challenge him to do that. Again, he is trying to be creative and is using weasel words. That is typical of what we get from the Labor Party. That is typical of what we get from the Premier.

However, whatever Government members say does not overcome the problem that they are socking it to their voters without giving them any reason or explanation. None at all! The actuarial advice has not been tabled in this House. The Minister has tabled some words of his own, but that does not give us the actuarial or independent advice. His words mean nothing and the Premier twists his words, but at the end of the day the record speaks for itself.

I say to the people of Queensland that they can expect more taxes and charges increasing by well above increases in the CPI because this Government has to find the additional money. The Labor Party made election commitments that at the time it knew it could not keep. All it wanted to do was to get into office. That has been demonstrated by this disallowance motion today. Labor will say anything and do anything—even write letters to the member for Nicklin—to get into office. That is what counts.

I know that I have caught out the Treasurer and this Labor Government because they have not tabled the actuarial advice in on this matter. There is no point in the Treasurer trying to laugh away this matter. The Queenslanders, those Aussie battlers to whom the Premier referred a couple of years ago in this House when the former Government was faced with the unfortunate situation of having to increase compulsory third-party insurance premiums after six and a half years of Labor doing nothing—

Time expired.