



Speech by

HARRY BLACK

MEMBER FOR WHITSUNDAY

Hansard 17 August 1999

INTERACTIVE GAMBLING (PLAYER PROTECTION) AMENDMENT BILL

Mr BLACK (Whitsunday—ONP) (12.45 a.m.): I rise to speak on the Interactive Gambling (Player Protection) Amendment Bill. Is it not interesting to see a Government producing legislation to correct a problem that should never have occurred in the first place? The attitude seems to be, "If we stuff it up, well, we'll just legislate to fix the problem."

I am astounded at the ineptness of this Government to maintain some degree of credibility in its members. Since taking up our position in this House we have seen more and more evidence of deceitfulness and betrayal of the Queensland people through deceitful political antics. We have seen the yet-to-be-explained shredding of documents by five current Ministers of the Labor Government. We have seen this Premier mislead the House as to the number of investigations which have taken place with regard to that matter. In both these instances we have seen the members involved vote to save their own hides.

We have seen this Government legislate to overrule a Supreme Court decision to acquire private land. We have seen this Government waste whole days debating such issues as Sorry Day only to then pass legislation that negates Aboriginal land rights. We have seen another member of the Government in trouble over serious criminal allegations that I will not go into. Now we see the Treasurer standing aside over an issue of clear abuse of his position. The member for Woodridge conducts himself in a similar manner.

The issues of who knew what, who covered up what and why, not to mention the transparent political patch-ups and the drivel, I assume, are meant to resurrect confidence in the Government. It is no wonder that the people of this State have no respect for the no-can-do Labor Government.

Quite frankly, I have no respect for tawdry political opportunists. The members of the Labor Party conduct themselves in such a manner as to raise questions. Such actions do not show honesty and integrity but, rather, snakiness and corruption.

Yet, we hear the Premier go on and on about the honesty and integrity of the Beattie Labor Government. The phrase is a contradiction in terms. The Premier can stand in this House day after day and profess until the end of time that his Government is responsible, accountable, honest and the epitome of integrity. However, his Government's actions reveal what Labor is really like. What do the actions of the Labor Party reveal? They reveal a Government that is bereft of conscience and devoid of integrity, honesty and accountability.

As I have already mentioned, it is a typical act of this Government to legislate in order to correct an error that it made. The Bill is being rushed through the House in order to allow the Premier to save face. It will allow his Government to brush it all aside and hope that it goes away. That is reason enough for us not to support this Bill. The Government's blatant attempt to have this legislation thrown upon this Parliament in this manner is wrong and I cannot support it.

The retrospectivity of this Bill and its effect upon other shareholders of Internet gambling has not been scrutinised by the Scrutiny of Legislation Committee. Other members of this House have not had the opportunity to consider this legislation. The retrospectivity of this legislation means that there is no relevance in whether the Bill is passed today or in two weeks' time; the only relevance is that it saves face for the Labor Party if it passes today.

I again express my disgust with the actions of the members involved in this affair and I also express my dissent in relation to this Bill.