



Speech by

JACK PAFF

MEMBER FOR IPSWICH WEST

Hansard 17 August 1999

IPSWICH INC; MR PAUL PISASALE

Mr PAFF (Ipswich West—ONP) (12.26 p.m.): I rise with great concern with regard to developments in the Ipswich area. I refer to politics which have greatly shamed the citizens of the region. These shameful actions have developed over a number of years and have now become known locally as Ipswich Inc.

When running as a mayoral candidate, I became aware that other candidates had been offered and received what could be considered political bribes by Mr Maha Sinnathamby of Springfield developments. I believe this was the beginning of the net bet affair.

Since about 1993, Councillor Paul Pisasale of the Ipswich City Council has woven a web of business connections that reach throughout Queensland and Asia. It is known that Mr Pisasale has connections with a Singaporean billionaire, a T. P. Tay, the owner of the Ipswich City Square. Mr Pisasale has been active in council in pushing for a rate reduction for Mr Tay.

Councillor Pisasale is also on the council committee for the Global Artslink and the Ipswich Global Infolink. Global Artslink is chaired by the editor of the Queensland Times, Mr Mark Hinchliffe. Mr Hinchliffe and Councillor Pisasale are next door neighbours. The Queensland Times is known locally as the Pisasale Times.

Mr Hamill: Who says that?

Mr PAFF: This is reported. Many a truth has been first said in jest. This has some connection with the net bet affair. The former member for Ipswich West, Mr Don Livingstone, is also a partner in the perceived web of deceit with the member for Woodridge, Mr Bill D'Arcy. These men are all partners in a registered company called Navari Pty Ltd. Mr Pisasale is also a co-owner of a home unit at Cleveland with Mr D'Arcy's daughter. He is also in partnership with his brother, Councillor Charlie Pisasale, in the ownership of properties.

The perceived web of deceit does not stop at this point. The member for Ipswich, Mr Hamill, now employs on his staff a Mr Wayne McDonnell. Mr McDonnell is a former electorate officer to Mr Livingstone and a member of the Arts Council. Are these ties questionable? Do they deserve answers? The answer is yes.

Mr HAMILL: I rise to a point of order. I can assure the House that there is nothing questionable about any involvement with the Arts Council.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Reeves): Order! There is no point of order.

Mr PAFF: The Queensland Times, under the hand of Mr Mark Hinchliffe, has given these people some honesty, notoriety and credibility. I refer to local reporting of the net bet affair. How far does this perceived web extend? Councillor Pisasale admits that he has criminal convictions for theft and assault. The question arises as to how Mr Hamill made the probity checks on Mr Pisasale and others for a casino licence.

Mr HAMILL: I rise to a point of order. I find the implication not only offensive but untrue. I do not undertake probity checks. Probity checks are undertaken by the Office of Gaming Regulation. I ask that that remark be withdrawn.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Will the member for Ipswich West withdraw?

Mr PAFF: It is a fact. The Treasurer is responsible for the probity checks.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The member finds it offensive.

Mr PAFF: If he finds it offensive, I will withdraw it.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The member will also refer to honourable members by their correct titles.

Mr PAFF: How did these people pass the probity checks? Why was the licence granted? As Mr John Howard would say, "Maaates!" It is incredible that Mr Wayne McDonnell, who worked as an electorate officer for Mr Livingstone, is now working for Mr Hamill. Could it be that Mr Hamill was not aware of this? Were illicit contracts and documents passed between them? This gives rise to another question. Many questions are unanswered.

Mr Don Livingstone has been behind a failed attempt at an industrial site near Willowbank, which is to the west of Ipswich. Some doubt was cast on the purchase of this land. Navari Pty Ltd has large holdings in an industrial site at Caboolture. It is also interesting to note that Mr Livingstone dines frequently in the members' dining room of this House with the other members who are involved in this shameful affair.

Because of what I have just outlined, the City of Ipswich and its fine people have suffered. Ipswich has gone from being a city of engineering excellence, manufacturing, mining, cattle and farming to a city of abject poverty, crime, home invasions, bashings and murder in the streets. Is that because these councillors and politicians, who are supposed to represent the people, are too busy representing themselves? Where were Pisasale, Livingstone and Hamill when the employment of the region was failing, the industry was closing down and the crime gangs and violence were increasing? What were they doing? Lining their own pockets! They were profiting from their own knowledge—

Mr HAMILL: I rise to a point of order. The statement that I have lined my own pockets is not only untrue but also offensive, and I ask for it to be withdrawn.

Mr PAFF: I withdraw that. The high unemployment level of the city due to the closure of industries—which, I might say, all occurred under Labor—has resulted in the people of Ipswich crowding onto the trains and onto the Ipswich Motorway travelling backwards and forwards every day at enormous cost and involving a huge waste of time.

This net bet affair must strike at the heart of every family man. It is an appalling indictment on those who proposed such a scandal. To think that these people, tarnished by their connections, were representatives of the City of Ipswich! The public is sick to death of silvertail politicians who are arrogant and who have selfish agendas. They are sick of the perceived actions of the likes of Pisasale, Livingstone, Hamill and D'Arcy. Frankly, their actions make me sick as well. It is no wonder that the people of Ipswich and its surrounding areas have decided to turn to One Nation. The politicians involved in this net bet affair need to be disciplined severely and their affairs need to be scrutinised in depth. Obviously, dishonesty prevails in their lives. The people of Ipswich deserve nothing less than the removal of the offenders—people who acted selfishly and who, whilst their own lives prospered, let the lives of their constituents fall apart. This is a shameful time for the Labor Party and a time that, hopefully, they will never get a chance to repeat.

I have listened with interest to the Leader of the Opposition and I support him. I ask that this House support the call for an inquiry. I live in Ipswich and I have been affected by the number of people who have called at my office and the number of phone calls that I have received in respect of this net bet affair. I commend the suggestion of the Leader of the Opposition that there be an inquiry into this whole sordid affair.
