



Speech by

Hon. J. ELDER

MEMBER FOR CAPALABA

Hansard 17 August 1999

CENSURE OF MEMBER FOR IPSWICH

Hon. J. P. ELDER (Capalaba—ALP) (Deputy Premier and Minister for State Development and Minister for Trade) (6.25 p.m.): I rise to second the amendment moved by the Premier. Why? Simply because the Premier has outlined that the appropriate action of the Treasurer was to do the right thing, and the Treasurer did the right thing. Supposedly, this Parliament is censuring the Treasurer for doing the right thing.

This is all about prejudging inquiries. This has nothing at all to do with the issue. This is about prejudging, and prejudging well in advance, which shows one and all the stunt that it is. The Treasurer, in this case, did the right thing. He actually stood down while the inquiries were under way. He knew that under the Westminster system it was the responsible and appropriate action to take.

Mr Beattie: And he did it.

Mr ELDER: And he did it. So we are censuring the Treasurer for doing the right thing. How absurd! It is prejudging, and it is a stunt.

We can only judge his accusers by the actions of members opposite when they were last in Government—if anyone needs to see just how much of a sham and how much of a stunt this is—because their history is a really sad history. It is a pathetic history. It is a corrupt history. At the time of the Mundingburra by-election, when the MOU was signed to deliver Mundingburra, and when that secret police deal was exposed, the CJC found that those members had a case to answer. The CJC found that the Opposition at the time, which became the Government, had a case to answer. And who had the case to answer? None other than the member for Surfers Paradise and the member for Crows Nest.

Mr Beattie: Did they stand aside?

Mr ELDER: And did they stand aside? No! The acting Leader of the Opposition said, "Tell the truth." Did he tell the truth when he was in the box? Did he tell the truth when he was under pressure? He said, "I can't remember signing it." In fact, he could not remember the document that he signed.

Mr BORBIDGE: I rise to a point of order. The comments made by the Deputy Premier are absolutely false and untrue, and I ask that they be withdrawn.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The Deputy Premier will withdraw.

Mr ELDER: I withdraw. But he said publicly that he could not remember signing the document. This is the accuser—the man who could not remember signing the document that actually delivered to members opposite a victory in the worst case of electoral bribery that we have ever seen. And how did they stop it? How did they scuttle it? They scuttled Carruthers by the Attorney-General at the time bringing on an inquiry—the Connolly inquiry—an inquiry that he knew would be biased, because he had the legal advice to sustain the argument that it would be biased. He brought on that inquiry to scuttle the Carruthers inquiry to get the former Premier and the former Police Minister out of the box.

As Carruthers said—and I will quote it again for the information of the House—

"Two of the persons into whose conduct and possible misconduct I am currently inquiring have participated in setting up a commission of inquiry into my inquiry into them."

That is how farcical it was. And in my view, that is how corrupt it was. They scuttled him to get themselves and the Police Minister out of the box. The fact of the matter is that they stand here and accuse this Treasurer, who has done the right thing. Did the acting Leader of the Opposition stand aside at the time? No! Did the acting Police Minister—

Mr BORBIDGE: I rise to a point of order. The Deputy Premier seems unaware of the fact that there was a legal opinion to the CJC that neither the member for Crows Nest nor I had a case to answer.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! There is no point of order.

Mr ELDER: A case to answer? Let history judge—as it has—just how corrupt members opposite were in scuttling that inquiry. They have high and proper standards now, but where were they when they were in Government? Where was their morality and probity when they were in Government? They had none.

Mr Cooper interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The member for Crows Nest will cease interjecting.

Mr ELDER: That makes this the hypocritical exercise that it is. It drips off them. They have no sincerity in this at all.

Mr Cooper interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The member for Crows Nest! That is my final warning.

Mr ELDER: They have no right in this debate to accuse the Treasurer of any impropriety at all. Their record in this speaks for itself.

Mr Borbidge interjected.

Mr ELDER: That is why the Leader of the Opposition is where he is. The people of Queensland saw through him. That is why he is sitting where he is and where he will stay sitting for the next few terms.

Mr Braddy: No, he'll be down there.

Mr ELDER: The Minister is right, because other Opposition members will get him in time. And in relation to our international reputation—I did not hear it mentioned once in South Africa.

Time expired.
