



Speech by

**JOHN MICKEL**

**MEMBER FOR LOGAN**

---

Hansard 22 July 1999

**MR SPEAKER'S RULING**

**Motion of Dissent**

**Mr MICKEL** (Logan—ALP) (3.14 p.m.): What a load of claptrap we have just heard from the member for Cunningham! He said that we have to follow the correct procedures; that we have gone off the rails.

**Mr Elliott** interjected.

**Mr MICKEL:** Five minutes? That is longer than the member has. I watch him run his business from inside this place all the time. "Get back on the rails", he said. He had an opportunity on Tuesday to get back on the rails, so to speak, when, Mr Speaker, you were placed in a position where you had to call for order 14 times on the member for Tablelands. Here is one of the glowing things that we heard the member for Tablelands say. After you had named him, he said, "You can name me all you like, Mr Speaker." In other words, after calling for order 14 times, it did not matter. It did not matter a damn. He was not going to listen to you. And what support did he get? Almost the unanimous support of that lot opposite, including the previous Speaker, who wants to get it back on the rails!

I remember when the member for Gladstone was first elected; we were all a rabble—the Parliament—and she was going to uplift the standard, like the One Nation members. But when push came to shove on Tuesday, in a most defiant display, what did we see? They all rattled in here behind that offensive behaviour. The member for Tablelands should have gone, and go he did.

The only person who can be excused is the honourable member for Ipswich West, who went out rather than vote on the motion. As for the member for Mooloolah, who has been a Deputy Speaker here, there was no sense of restraint from him after all he said this afternoon. There was nothing like that. Instead, the rest of them filed in here and, in an act of complete defiance of you, Mr Speaker, proceeded to support actions that the member for Cunningham said put us all in disgrace.

Let me revisit 10 June 1999. The member for Noosa is something of a genius around the place. Who else but the member for Noosa could have got permission from the previous Premier to go to no less than South Africa to bring back an endangered species, not capable of being exported, on the off-chance that he would meet Nelson Mandela? And he got permission to do it! It takes rare genius to defy international conventions. And he was going to set it up somewhere near Mount Isa. The member is someone we have to watch. Affable though he is, he is someone with acute genius. Let me revisit his performance that morning.

After he asked a question, the member for Noosa interjected—according to Hansard—twice, and on that occasion, Mr Speaker, you warned him to cease interjecting. The Minister, the member for Mount Gravatt, proceeded to give her answer. And remember, it was a three-minute answer—three minutes—so that Opposition members can ask more questions than they have ever been able to ask in this Parliament; to have true accountability of the Government; and to allow the proper processes to proceed. What happened then? The member for Noosa was interjecting again, and again the Speaker had to warn the member for Noosa. He then rose to a point of order.

**Mr Elliott** interjected.

**Mr MICKEL:** The member's brain starts to wander, but his trouble is that he wanders along with it. The Leader of the Opposition was then warned for interjecting.

**Mr Elliott** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order! The member for Cunningham!

**Mr MICKEL:** He was warned to stop. Then he was warned under Standing Order 124, which was the correct procedure. He had been defiant up until then and had to be warned under Standing Order 124. But then I come to what was missing from the day. We are looking at this quite dispassionately. But when one reads page 2408 of Hansard, one gets some sort of flavour of the rabble into which members opposite descended.

We had five separate members of the Opposition taking points of order. Such was the lack of decorum in the House that three members of the Opposition were on their feet at the same time. There was no question of allowing Mr Speaker to hear one point of order at a time. The member for Nerang and the member for Maroochydore were on their feet while Mr Speaker was trying to hear a point of order. Those members were acting in complete defiance of Mr Speaker.

At that stage the honourable member for Indooroopilly gave notice of a motion of dissent. The next day you, Mr Speaker, ruled correctly on that motion. It was at that stage that the honourable member for Indooroopilly moved dissent from your ruling.

**An Opposition member:** See, you are wrong.

**Mr MICKEL:** You, Mr Speaker, had given the warning under Standing Order 124. There was no suggestion that it was the first warning that the honourable member for Noosa had received. You had been subjected to consistent and utter provocation. You had to warn the member for Noosa many, many times. The honourable member for Indooroopilly gave notice of a motion of dissent from your ruling, presumably under Standing Order 117. The following day you gave a ruling in relation to the Opposition's complete misunderstanding of Standing Order 124. I believe you acted appropriately and upheld the dignity of the House.

The honourable member for Mooloolah quotes from Erskine May and says a whole series of things about rulings. The member for Mooloolah missed the important part at page 7 of Erskine May. The following appears on page 7—

"The House of Commons has its own body of case-law. This consists principally of rulings given by the Speaker in answer to questions raising points of order on current business. Such rulings are, as stated above, the principal source of modern practice. They are constantly needed for the purpose of applying the standing orders to doubtful or new cases; and for harmonizing the standing orders with older practice and with each other."

This is longstanding practice and convention. Your ruling on the next day, Mr Speaker, was quite appropriate and was fully in line with Erskine May.

The Government rejects out of hand this attempt by the Opposition this afternoon to quibble with your ruling. During that whole week we saw a pattern of disruption which culminated in some unseemly goings on outside this Chamber. I do not propose to go into that matter now because I prefer to leave these things within this House. It was a pattern of behaviour and a pattern of defiance of the Speaker. My colleague the honourable member for Ashgrove points out that he had the same trouble when he was Speaker.

What is the difference? The difference is that we are in Government and those opposite do not like it. Those opposite do not like the fact that, after they had been in office for 32 years, they found the member for Ashgrove as Speaker and the Labor Party back in office. Those opposite have never liked it and cannot cop it. That is why they wanted to defy you, Mr Speaker.

This afternoon, I urge the House to uphold the dignity of the Parliament and uphold the symbol of authority. Having you in the Chair, Mr Speaker, is the only way that members of this House can receive a fair go and fair rulings. You have never shown any sign of being unfair. This disallowance motion should be rejected because it places a cloud over the fairness of your rulings, Mr Speaker, and that would be unfair.

---