



Speech by

Hon. JUDY SPENCE

MEMBER FOR MOUNT GRAVATT

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PERFORMANCE OF MINISTERS

Hon. J. C. SPENCE (Mount Gravatt— ALP) (Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Policy and Minister for Women's Policy and Minister for Fair Trading) (6.32 p.m.): This debate tonight is no more than a political stunt and no-one has made that more obvious than the member for Noosa, whose hysterical outburst in this place was not only shallow, trivial and offensive but also revealed what a policy-free zone he and the Opposition are on the issues that are of importance in my portfolio.

This year the member for Noosa has scored some cheap political points in the media—I will give him that—on a few issues concerning what is in my bathroom and a rusty utility. However, his fascination with political exotica is not shared by the electorate of Queensland.

As Minister, I have been out in the community talking about issues that are of importance to the people of Queensland. I have been dealing with issues such as retirement villages—an area which the previous Government could not fix up even though it tried. I have been involved in the rewrite of the Auctioneers and Agents Act— another failure by the previous Minister and his Government.

Whilst I have been out in the community holding forums and talking with interested parties about issues as important as Queensland's real estate industry, day after day the Opposition has been talking about a \$6,700 claim for a rusty old utility. So far this financial year approximately \$870,000 has been paid out of the Auctioneers and Agents Fidelity Guarantee Fund to Queenslanders— last year it was nearly \$1m. I guess it will top \$1m this year. While that money goes out of that fund, the member for Noosa stands here day after day and talks about a \$6,700 claim and attacks the committee.

Whilst I have been out in the community reforming the Building Services Authority— something that the previous coalition promised Queenslanders but failed to do—the Opposition has nothing to say on the matter. Let us talk about the Building Services Authority, because this evening is the first time that I have heard the member for Noosa acknowledge its existence in my portfolio.

The previous Government left Queenslanders with an annual \$3m debt for the Building Services Authority. Last year the current Leader of the Liberal Party had to go to his Treasurer and ask for \$3m to pull the Building Services Authority out of its financial debt. He did not get \$3m from Mrs Sheldon; he got \$1.5m. The Building Services Authority's debt is spiralling because of the previous Government's inaction. This is something that this Government addressed in its first nine months in office. What hurts those opposite most of all is that they know that our reforms have the support of the building industry in Queensland.

The Fair Trading aspect is only one part of my portfolio. The other section of my portfolio deals with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander policy. What have we heard from the Opposition on that part of my portfolio? The Opposition does not even have a shadow Minister on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander policy matters. Such is the Opposition's contempt for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders that—

Mr DAVIDSON: I rise to a point of order. I find the Minister's remarks offensive and ask that they be withdrawn.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! There is no point of order. The remark was not directed at the member personally.

Ms SPENCE: I do not know why the member finds it offensive. Such is the Opposition's contempt for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders that it does not even bother shadowing that particular department in my portfolio.

Mr LESTER: I rise to a point of order. I find those remarks offensive. Who is going to be debating the Bill that is coming up very shortly?

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

Ms SPENCE: If the member for Keppel is announcing tonight that he is the shadow Minister, I am sure it is a revelation to everyone in this Chamber.

That is not the only section of my portfolio about which the Opposition has been silent. Those opposite have also been silent about the issue of women's policy. The previous Government had a policy-free zone as far as women's affairs were concerned. My women's affairs policy unit has been involving itself with the Women in the Criminal Code Task Force, as I have myself. We have been talking about women and reconciliation. We have been talking about sexual assault——

Time expired.
