



Speech by

**Mr L. SPRINGBORG**

**MEMBER FOR WARWICK**

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Hansard 25 August 1999

### **SES POSITIONS, MERIT SELECTION**

**Mr SPRINGBORG** (Warwick—NPA) (Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (6.10 p.m.): I rise to second the motion moved by the honourable member for Clayfield. It is a pity that we have to move this motion, but we have to do it because this Government has completely and absolutely lost respect for the institutions of proper transparency and selection on merit. Unfortunately, Labor was elected on that platform. It trumpeted it throughout the State. It conned the people of Queensland into believing that it was able to deliver on that platform.

As the member for Clayfield pointed out quite properly in his contribution, when the coalition was in Government it was quite clear that we were very reluctant to appoint anybody who was associated with the National Party or the Liberal Party, and particularly any person who held positions within either of those political parties. In that regard, I know the view of the former Premier, Rob Borbidge.

What happened when Labor came to power in Queensland? It threw that out the window. It started appointing people on the basis of their political affiliations and on the basis of their political affiliations alone. In most cases, there was absolutely no consideration given to selection on merit and transparency. A moment ago, the member for Clayfield referred to people who were appointed to very senior positions by this Government who exempted themselves from the need to have their positions advertised. Can members believe anything more wrong or more corrupt than exempting oneself from the selection process? That is absolutely unbelievable! In this State, the only people who are appointed to such positions are people who are associated with the Labor Party. We have jobs for mates and jobs for the Labor Party's boys.

I refer to the great headline for Queensland in the Sydney Morning Herald of Saturday, 7 August, "Jobs for the boys.com". We know what that is associated with. I table that.

**Mr Beattie:** No.

**Mr SPRINGBORG:** The Premier knows what the headline was associated with—"Jobs for the boys.com". I have a range of interesting news clippings. One such clipping, headed "Premier gambles all on coming clean" states—

"Whenever he has had the chance in the past 14 months, Peter Beattie has shouted his political mantra: 'Jobs, jobs, jobs.'

But public suspicion is growing that Mr Beattie may have been referring to jobs for his Labor mates, as the Government is accused of gross cronyism in its first scandal."

Who can forget headlines such as, "Electricity boards reshuffled"? That has been great! Right throughout Queensland, a grab bag of Labor Party hacks and failed Labor Party candidates have been appointed to the new electricity councils. I have never, ever held the view that a person should not be appointed principally because that person is affiliated with a particular political party. Such a person can be appointed, but the Government has to have a process of merit selection, which is of absolutely paramount importance.

I refer to appointees to the South-west Queensland Electricity Council. I think that a couple of the members here who have Labor Party affiliations would probably have the capabilities to be appointed to that council. However, people have been appointed to it simply because they have ALP affiliations. I refer to Phil Doyle in Warwick, who I know quite well. He will probably do an okay job, but

he was appointed because he is an ALP member. Another appointee is Maurice Passmore, who comes from Stanthorpe. He is a nice bloke. He stood against me in 1989. He was appointed to that particular position only because he is a member of the Labor Party. Other appointees include Garry Ryan, who is close to the ALP and the south-west district secretary of the AWU; Robyn Fuhrmeister, who actually stuck her hand up for ALP candidacy in the Federal seat of Maranoa; Frances Harding, who is a Labor Party member and the wife of a former ALP candidate; and August Johanson, who has acknowledged links with the Labor Party and who was the ALP candidate in Roma in 1986.

We can see that, under this Government, the only criteria for the appointment to anything in the State of Queensland is membership of or affiliation with the Labor Party. Merit selection does not matter. Transparency principles do not matter. The Premier is called "Grinner" and his mate is called "Skinner". With these sorts of things going on, I would call the Premier "Spinner". The only way a person can get a job in Queensland is if that person is a Labor Party member of Parliament or is a Labor Party mate. One only has to look at all of these news cuttings to see that. I have outlined only some. There are hundreds.

Time expired.

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