



Speech by

Miss FIONA SIMPSON

MEMBER FOR MAROOCHYDORE

Hansard 17 October 2000

MS G. WALLACE; TOOWOOMBA HOSPITAL, INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS

Miss SIMPSON (Maroochydore—NPA) (10.24 a.m.): After a disastrous industrial relations track record that saw widespread strike action closing down hospital services earlier this year inconveniencing hundreds of Queenslanders, we would think that this Labor Government would be looking for someone with sensitivity and skill to take over the helm of the department's industrial relations.

However, in a recent move that defies imagination, this Government has decided that the new head over the department's industrial relations section should be someone with a track record that sends a clear message to health workers, and the message is: "If you thought EB4 negotiations were bad under this Labor Government, wait till you get to enterprise bargaining 5."

The Minister must answer why the head of the Toowoomba health district, Gloria Wallace, has been rewarded with this critical job as the new organisational development branch manager, a decision which is sure to inflame tensions given Ms Wallace's record of budget slashing at the expense of clinical services and her confrontational approach to staff management.

Let us look at what has happened at Toowoomba Hospital, one of the State's biggest regional hospitals, which has seen a 36% reduction in specialists under Ms Wallace's administration—something this Minister tries to blame on the doctors.

I quote from a memo, which I table, which was circulated in the Queensland Health Department quoting Dr Terry Coupland, staff specialist and full-time Medical Officers Association representative, addressed to Ms Wallace in which he accuses her of pursuing an autocratic path of confrontation, aggression and intimidation. The memo goes on to say that—

"Speculative criticism and the threats of unilateral decision-making can only further exacerbate staff disenchantment to the point of adding to the pile of resignations currently on your desk."

I make these comments—

Mr Horan interjected.

Miss SIMPSON: Yes, she got the director-general's top reward for cutting services at Toowoomba as well. I make these comments because of my sincere concern that arrogant senior bureaucrats, a compliant Health Minister—

Time expired.
