



Speech by

Mr L. SPRINGBORG

MEMBER FOR WARWICK

Hansard 5 September 2000

ELECTORAL FRAUD

Mr SPRINGBORG (Warwick—NPA) (Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (6.08 p.m.): I second the motion moved by the Leader of the Liberal Party. It is quite apparent that the Parliament has no choice tonight but to pass the motion moved by the member for Moggill. It is also quite apparent that the Labor Party has been cheating the people of Queensland for a long time now—election after election. It has been boasting about it. Even in his autobiography, *In the Arena*, published in the early 1990s, the Premier was talking about doorknocking as a hopeful candidate in the Redlands by-election in 1986. He spoke of turning up to places and not finding the person there.

This is not only folklore; it is fact. It is fact which the Labor Party boasted about and was happy to cover up for so long. But the chickens have come home to roost, and the people of Queensland are finally finding out what the Labor Party has been up to in this State. Three convictions in Townsville—which I understand the Labor Party is now describing as its own little Balkans—have proven that it is now finally being caught out. We have two members of this Parliament who were part of the process the Labor Party engaged in and adopted in reviewing and overseeing whether there was any corruption in the electoral rolls in Townsville. Not surprisingly, those two members indicated that there was not. They are the member for Woodridge and the member for Kurwongbah.

How can the people of Queensland have any confidence in this Government? How can the people of Queensland have any confidence in its ability to put the important mechanisms in place to ensure that we have some integrity in the electoral enrolment process in this State? What we have seen from the Labor Party over the last couple of weeks is abject panic as it has thrashed about trying to come up with a mechanism to ensure some degree of community faith, to restore some degree of the credibility, something which it has been losing so much.

The people of Queensland are very concerned about any political party which cheats in the electoral system. They are very concerned about a political party which rorts the electoral roll. People may laugh with a bit of hilarity at the indications of branch stacking, but when it goes further than that, when it goes as far as doctoring the electoral roll by systematically and endemically placing people on the roll who do not even exist or do not live in a certain part of the world, there is something wrong, and that leads people to believe that they have been cheated.

The very important point for us to remember is that, over the last few years in this State, Governments have either come to office or lost office based on one or two seats. So if one or two electorates are deciding the outcome of a State election, and if people are enrolled falsely in either of those State electorates and they are voting in those State electorates and determining the outcome because they are there in such significant numbers, then the people of Queensland are being cheated out of a just outcome.

Over the last few years Townsville has been important to the political make-up of this State. Much of the cheating has been occurring in that electorate. Who knows what effect that has had on determining the Government of Queensland? What about the other allegations which have come to the fore over the last couple of weeks in some of the suburbs of Brisbane? Those allegations have also been referred to the CJC, which I understand will make an announcement tomorrow.

It is very important that we put in place mechanisms which prevent this type of cheating from occurring. That is why this Parliament needs to establish some very clear principles which it can

enunciate for the direction of the Legal, Constitutional and Administrative Review Committee and also for the people of Queensland. With the information we have about the endemic rorting and corruption of the electoral roll by the Labor Party, which has been going on for a long time in this State, it is quite apparent that we need to put in place some form of identification at the time of enrolment to ensure that people who do not exist are not put on the electoral roll and to ensure that people who do not live in a certain electorate are not put on the roll. We need to be emphasising that point to the Commonwealth Government as well.

Further to that, it is now time to put in place a mechanism which ensures some form of legitimate and real identification for people casting a ballot on election day, that is, proof of identity. If we have a position in which Governments are being determined by such small margins in this State and we have such a high number of false enrolments, it is only fair that we have some sort of system which guarantees some integrity in our process.

Time expired.
