



Speech by

Hon. R. E. BORBIDGE

MEMBER FOR SURFERS PARADISE

Hansard 6 September 2000

HOSPITAL WAITING LISTS

Hon. R. E. BORBIDGE (Surfers Paradise—NPA) (Leader of the Opposition) (6.12 p.m.): In joining this debate tonight I second the motion moved by the honourable member for Maroochydore. I do so to set the record straight in regard to the circumstances relating to the appointment of the director-general of the Department of Health by the current Premier. What we have under this Government is a Premier who is more interested in performance bonuses than in patients, a Premier who has sought to create the impression that Dr Stable's contract was the sole creation of me and my colleague the former Minister for Health, Mr Horan.

On 16 February 1996, the then Minister for Health, Peter Beattie, wrote to Mr Horan. He said—

"Dear Mike

Re: Appointment of Director-General— Dr R L Stable.

I wish to advise for the record that Dr Stable was offered and he subsequently accepted the position of Director-General, Queensland Health, on the basis that the salary package would be in the order of \$200,000 per annum for a five year contract.

At my request, Dr Stable commenced duty much sooner than would normally have been the case and, in particular, before his service contract could be finalised. Because his contract has been somewhat different to previous Public Service contracts, there have been delays associated with discussions, and procedural matters to be resolved, with both the Public Sector Management Commission and Crown Law."

The then Minister for Health, the current Premier, went on to say—

"As you and I have both recognised in the past, it was important to attract a suitably experienced and qualified person, preferably with a clinical background, to the position of Director-General. I achieved this but in the process offered a larger package than would normally have been the case in the public sector. Therefore, I ask that you take any necessary steps to honour my commitment to Dr Stable.

Yours sincerely, Peter Beattie, Minister for Health."

What was enclosed? What was enclosed was a document dated 2 February 1996, which stated—

"Queensland Health, Office of the Director-General, Private and Confidential, Agreement re Incentives as per the Contract of Employment of: Dr R L Stable, Director-General, Queensland Health. Financial Year—1995-96.

(A) Quantitative. Activity—If activity levels meet or exceed 1994/95 levels (within 1%)—one-third. Financial—If the Queensland Health budget is achieved— one third.

(B) Qualitative. Restructure—If the organisational restructure is finalised—one third."

That all adds up to 100%. And who signed it? Was it the signature of Mike Horan or Rob Borbidge with Dr Stable? It is signed "(Dr) R L Stable Director-General, P Beattie Minister for Health" and it is dated 2 February 1996.

I table that document so that once again the Parliament and the people of Queensland can see just how desperate this man is, the lengths to which he will go to hide the truth, the fact that

increasingly we cannot believe anything that the leader of this corrupt Government says. He tried to create the impression during the Estimates hearings and during the political controversy over bonus payments that somehow this was all the work of the previous Government. His own signature on that document on 2 February 1996 shows that it was his work. He wrote a begging letter to the incoming Minister for Health saying, "This is the deal I have done, please honour it." Of course, we had to.

Mr Horan: And he did, and then he turned it into a lie at the Estimates.

Mr BORBIDGE: Then he turns it into another blatant lie at the Estimates. The fact is that when we subsequently checked on this deal that Mr Beattie had done, we found that the particular performance agreement between Dr Stable and the then Minister for Health was not approved by the Premier of the day. It was not approved by Premier Goss. So after his 100 days of listening as the Minister for Health, Peter Beattie committed the Government by way of the agreement that he signed on 2 February 1996 to the performance bonus agreement that he later condemned.
