



Speech by

**JEFF SEENEY**

**MEMBER FOR CALLIDE**

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Hansard 12 December 2001

### **CENSURE OF MINISTER FOR HEALTH**

**Mr SEENEY** (Callide—NPA) (6.46 p.m.): The Attorney-General may well be honoured, but I am appalled at the way the government has sought to defend this debate tonight and every Queenslanders should be appalled at the arrogance that has been displayed in this chamber by a government that is drunk on arrogance. This censure motion was the culmination of three weeks of hard work by an Opposition Leader who was doing his job—an Opposition Leader doing a difficult job. The only defence that the government has been able to muster is to come in here and shoot the messenger. No-one has been prepared to stand up and address the dot points in the censure motion. Besides a passing reference from the Attorney-General and half a passing reference from the member for Logan, nobody has been prepared to come in here and tell the House and the people of Queensland that the Minister for Health should not be censured because she has done a good job in resourcing Ward 9D. Nobody has done that. Nobody has been prepared to address the other three dot points. All we have heard is a cheap, shoot-the-messenger attack that reached its culmination with the contribution from the member for Logan. What a disgraceful act.

One of those dot points refers specifically to the minister's performance in relation to his own electorate. He made no attempt to defend his actions in respect of his own electorate. There was no attempt to stand up for the people he represents. Instead we heard the cheap, arrogant and slanderous attack that has become the hallmark of this government's defence of any criticism. This government is too arrogant to come into this House and defend its position. Instead we have this cheap, slanderous attack that is the hallmark of a government that is out of control.

**Mr Schwarten** interjected.

**Mr SEENEY:** The performance of Mike Horan is not the subject of the question here tonight. The question concerns the performance of the Health Minister. Any reasonable examination of the performance of the Health Minister on the issues that have been raised in this censure motion and the issues raised in this House in the past three weeks—any reasonable consideration of those facts—would lead every honourable member to support this censure motion, and so they should.

The people of Queensland have every right to ask: what does a minister in the Beattie government have to do to get the sack? What does a minister in the Beattie government have to do to get censured? Tonight we have seen a pitiful attempt to divert attention from the performance of a minister who is the classic underperformer. The backbenchers in the Beattie government have every right to ask: just what do they have to do to get a go? Where is the Premier's much-talked-about mid-term reshuffle? It is long overdue. The first candidate for that ministerial reshuffle is the Minister for Health. The first candidate to be replaced by some of the obvious talent on the Labor Party backbench is the Minister for Health.

The Premier won an obvious mandate to govern at the last election. He did not win a mandate to protect an incompetent minister. He did not win a mandate to inflict upon the health system of Queensland the type of incompetent management that has been highlighted by the efforts of the Leader of the Opposition over the past three weeks and which is encapsulated in the censure motion that is before this House tonight. All we see in response to that hard work and that genuine attempt to expose to the people of Queensland the true situation is a series of stunts from a Premier who is obsessed with stunts and TV cameras. The losers are the patients. The losers are the users of

Queensland's health system. They are the people who lose because of the arrogant attitude of this government. The Premier comes in here for question time, faces the TV cameras, puts out his hands and says he wants to focus on the patients. The way he can deliver to the patients is by doing something about this Health Minister. Then the people of Queensland would know he was genuine; instead of that he came in here tonight with a three-page-long amendment to a motion that seeks to demonstrate to the people of Queensland just—

Time expired.

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