



Speech by

**JOHN MICKEL, <sup>MLA</sup>**  
**STATE MEMBER FOR LOGAN**

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Hansard 30 April 2003

**SENATOR HERRON**

**Mr MICKEL** (Logan—ALP) (10.28 a.m.): Queenslanders are indebted to the *Courier-Mail* for exposing the contempt the Howard government and the ruling faction in the Queensland Liberal Party have shown with regard to the appointment of former Senator John Herron as Queensland's Ambassador to Ireland and the Holy See. The *Courier-Mail* has listed key dates in this matter. There is one date missing, and it is key to the outrage that followed. It is a date all members will recall well. It is Saturday, 17 February 2001. It was the date of the last state election. It marks the date the former member for Clayfield led the coalition by example and departed this place never to return.

The *Courier Mail's* FOI research has confirmed that two days before the election the Howard government was communicating with another government, probably Canada, on a diplomatic post for Senator Herron. Suddenly after the state election the diplomatic appointment was put on hold. The Liberal Party kept Senator Herron on its ticket and he was re-elected for a six-year term commencing on 1 July 2002. The reason why his diplomatic appointment was postponed is really quite simple. With the state election, the former member for Clayfield was unemployed and now wanted Senator Herron's job but needed time both to shore up the numbers in the Queensland Liberal Party and breathe life into previously dead Liberal Party branches.

In August last year, less than two months after he took up his Senate term, Senator Herron resigned and Mr Santoro did what I predicted two years before he would do: he ran for the Senate. So the Senate appointment was a job creation scheme Liberal Party style. As the Minister for Employment has reminded this House on many occasions, the current senator and former minister opposed job creation schemes when he was a state minister.

John Howard and the Liberal Party deceived Queensland voters about Senator Herron's term and they owe Queenslanders a humble apology.

Time expired.