



Speech by

Lawrence Springborg

MEMBER FOR SOUTHERN DOWNS

Hansard Tuesday, 18 May 2004

ACCESS TO MINISTERS

Mr SPRINGBORG (Southern Downs—NPA) (Leader of the Opposition) (10.22 a.m.): On 26 February last year it was reported—

Mr Beattie has reprimanded ALP state director Cameron Milner after it was revealed the party had been offering the business community direct access to him and his senior ministers for \$5,500.

Further, on 25 February it was reported—

'We will not be attending any function where it is a prerequisite to pay funds to see us about any project involving government,' Mr Beattie said.

Imagine my surprise when I picked up the Auditor-General's report tabled today, which states on page 20 in relation to the Law Society—

An instance was noted with the Society's attendance at one of these function where the Society was initially invoiced by Chatsworth ALP for \$1,200 for the attendance of ten Society staff and guests, and subsequently for an additional \$500 following seating of the Honourable R J Welford MP, Attorney-General and Minister for Justice, at the Society's table.

The Society's participation at such activities is in accordance with its lobbying activities, however, I am not convinced of the need for the Society to make additional financial outlays for access to the Minister.

Quite clearly the Premier misled this parliament—lied to this parliament—last year when he came in here and said that he would address 'this particular issue. What we have is the chief law officer of Queensland being up for sale. That is, if you want to meet with the chief law officer you have to pay a premium. Where does this expose sit with the shallow commitment made last year by Mr Beattie that there will be no cash for access to government ministers? It was a shallow promise. It was a duplicitous promise. It is a promise which has already been broken. The Auditor-General has exposed it as such.