



Speech by

Hon. PETER BEATTIE

MEMBER FOR BRISBANE CENTRAL

Hansard Tuesday, 28 February 2006

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Poole, Mr R

Hon. PD BEATTIE (Brisbane Central—ALP) (Premier) (9.54 am): I want to deal with the issue of Robert Poole. As I indicated publicly, on the weekend I spoke to Robert Poole on three occasions. As everyone will be aware, he will not be the Labor Party candidate in Gaven for the next election. I have made it clear to Mr Poole that I thought that was an appropriate outcome, both for him and for, obviously, the people of Gaven.

Yesterday I made it clear that on the medical evidence that I had seen to date there was no possible case for a claim for superannuation on the grounds of ill health. I know that this has been speculated on in the media and as the chairman of the trustees, and you, Mr Speaker, being a member—the honourable Leader of the Opposition is another member—I know that people would be aware that we have taken a tough stand on these matters.

I digress and pass on the government's best wishes to Mr Springborg and his family, as I did yesterday when I spoke to Lawrence personally and passed on the best wishes of the government.

I illuminate the point that these issues are ones that are of concern to the community. I have taken a very firm stand on this matter because I do think that every member needs to be accountable. As a result of that I have today been handed a letter from Mr Poole addressed to me—and I will later pass it to you, Mr Speaker. The letter states—

Dear Peter,

I have much regret in offering you my resignation from the Qld parliament and as the member for Gaven.

My position as a member of the government has become increasingly difficult as you would be aware, with not only my health, but the constant media attention focus on my private life and also the problems it is causing for our government.

Peter, I would much rather have surgery in Australia, as I am fully covered with private health, but, if Connor's situation—that is his son—

deteriorated whilst I was unable to return to Thailand, I would have an extra problem I don't need.

I am filled with many regrets to end my political career this way, but in reflection I think I have made a difference to the Gaven electorate since the February 2001 election.

Please notify Mr Speaker of my resignation effective immediately.

I have done that. I will be perfectly frank with everybody here: I am disappointed in the way that Mr Poole has handled this matter. I feel very personally betrayed. I will do what is appropriate on behalf of the people of Queensland in relation to the people of Gaven. I will also ensure that we, through the motion I moved this morning, establish standards which will apply to both sides of parliament.