



Speech by

## Fiona Simpson

MEMBER FOR MAROOCHYDORE

Hansard Wednesday, 7 February 2007

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### MOTION: ATTORNEY-GENERAL, MOTION OF NO CONFIDENCE

**Miss SIMPSON** (Maroochydore—NPA) (Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (6.07 pm): I support the motion moved by the Liberal Leader and deputy coalition leader. The government protests its innocence and that of its Attorney-General and asks for evidence of the Attorney-General's innocence in regard to matters that we have raised concerns about. Mr Speaker, I ask you: how can we present all of the evidence in light of rulings that prevent us from going to the heart of some of the very matters that we are not allowed to discuss? How can we present all of the evidence when there are rulings preventing us from going into all of that detail?

**Mr SPEAKER:** Member for Maroochydore, if you are referring to the chair in that regard, I would ask you to withdraw that statement.

**Miss SIMPSON:** It is not a reflection upon the chair, but it is—

**Mr SPEAKER:** I believe that it is a reflection on the chair and I would like you to withdraw that reflection.

**Miss SIMPSON:** I withdraw. I rephrase: the government asks for evidence that we are not allowed to present in this place, but I present to this parliament a very concerning matter that was raised as a result of question time. This morning I asked the Attorney-General whether he had provided any documentation regarding potential legal proceedings to the Premier, Deputy Premier or their staff which had been leaked. The Attorney-General told this House, and I quote—

The position is that as Attorney-General I am called upon often to provide advice, both in writing and verbally. That advice is privileged and I cannot reveal the content of it.

As we know, the Attorney-General has been accused of being involved in a collusion to leak information to the media.

**Government members:** He has not.

**Miss Simpson:** The Attorney-General has been accused of being in a collusion to leak information to the media in relation to judicial proceedings outside of this place.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order! I say to the member that you are again skating on very thin ice here. I made a ruling on Tuesday morning and I would ask you to adhere to that ruling.

**Miss SIMPSON:** In the Attorney-General's answer, he said—

The position is that as Attorney-General I am called upon often to provide advice, both in writing and verbally. That advice is privileged and I cannot reveal the content of it.

I put it to this House that not only is that advice that the Attorney-General refers to privileged but there are also privileges obtaining to those who receive that advice. Yet this Attorney-General has presented nothing to this House about whether he is going to take actions in regard to people who have received that privileged advice and abused that privilege. That is one reason why we have moved this no confidence motion in this parliament. People who have received that privileged advice and who have leaked that privileged advice are also bound in law, yet the Attorney-General has made no provision to address those issues. The smoking gun is in his hands. Unless he is in collusion with those who deliberately leaked information that is related to judicial proceedings, that smoking gun points to the fact that he has been a party to inappropriate actions.

I know that there are a lot of Labor lawyers in this place and that the nature of the sleazy Beattie government is to find loopholes to get their way around the spirit of the law, but our concern is that the very important office of Attorney-General has been compromised. We have seen no actions from this Attorney-General to rectify wrongs which are in the public arena but which we are not allowed to talk about here.

This Attorney-General has failed to uphold his duties and his responsibilities to ensure that there are fair and equitable approaches to the judicial processes. He has compromised what has been a leaking of information. That alone is a concern to this House and the reason why this parliament should vote for this motion of no confidence in the Attorney-General. If the Attorney-General wants to truly protest his innocence, perhaps he would like to reveal to this parliament those he has handed information to and who have illegally leaked it to others—all of which has brought other cases into disrepute. We certainly await his advice.