



Speech by

John-Paul Langbroek

MEMBER FOR SURFERS PARADISE

Hansard Thursday, 8 March 2007

ELECTION CAMPAIGN, PRINTED MATERIAL

Mr LANGBROEK (Surfers Paradise—Lib) (6.08 pm): Listening to the Premier lecturing MPs about dishonesty this morning reminded me of that famous line uttered by the third President of the United States, the great statesman Thomas Jefferson—'An honest man can feel no pleasure in the exercise of power over his fellow citizens.' While the Premier's fetish for unfettered power and intrusion in the lives of law-abiding citizens is a topic for another time, Jefferson's definition leads one to question Premier Beattie's honesty credentials.

This morning the Premier tabled an election brochure of mine because the document was apparently conclusive proof that I was dishonest and corrupt with regard to my printing arrangements. My crime? The document did not contain the line 'not printed using taxpayer funds'. He claims that Labor Party MPs are more honest because that statement was printed on the bottom of all of their election material during the 2006 election.

It may come as a surprise to some members opposite that section 161 of the Electoral Act sets out the requirements of what information must be printed on electoral material and not the gospel according to the Premier. Section 161 outlines that it is the name and address of the person authorising the material that must be printed on the brochure. Section 161 does not say that the statement 'this was not printed using taxpayer funds' must be added. The Premier knows this, yet this morning tried to insinuate that by leaving this statement out a candidate is committing a heinous crime. What holds for the opposition must also hold for the government. The Premier's gospel is that if one does not put this statement on a publication covered by section 161 then, in the Premier's words, that person is dishonest and corrupt.

It is important to note that section 161(5) says that the word 'publish' covers material published on the internet. A quick look at the Team Beattie web site—a web site used widely during the campaign—will reveal that no statement claiming that the web site was not set-up or maintained using taxpayer funds. Does this make it illegal? No. However, if the Premier is going to go around saying that we are dishonest and corrupt for omitting that line, then obviously he and his party are also dishonest and corrupt. After all, they have a publication covered by section 161, and they do not have the magical line in it.

The Premier may argue, despite what it says in the act, that I am talking about the internet and that the internet is totally different. So let us apply the Premier's gospel to other candidates for election endorsed by the Queensland Labor Party and its printed material.

At the 2004 federal election printed material from the Labor Party that was distributed to voters in the Gold Coast seat of Moncrieff did not contain the statement 'not printed using taxpayer funds'. Applying the Premier's golden rule, that would make David Parrish, the ALP's candidate at that election, dishonest and corrupt. Further, according to the Premier's definition, as contained in accusations against the Liberal Party this morning, such activities by a candidate would prompt asking the question: did elected representatives of the same party in that area assist the candidate with this printing? For the House's information, the Moncrieff electoral boundaries at the 2004 election covered parts of the then Labor held state seats of Southport, Gaven and Mudgeeraba. Let us hear from those members next week. The

Premier is being grossly deceitful and dishonest on this issue, and he is abusing the privileges of this place.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr ACTING SPEAKER: Would people making comments please return to their own seats before they do so.