



Speech by

## Hon. Robert Swarten

MEMBER FOR ROCKHAMPTON

Hansard Thursday, 7 June 2007

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### CLEAN COAL TECHNOLOGY SPECIAL AGREEMENT BILL; APPROPRIATION BILLS

**Hon. RE SCHWARTEN** (Rockhampton—ALP) (Leader of the House) (10.28 am): They say mimicry is the best form of flattery, so thanks very much for repeating badly that great one-liner that I said which very much applies to you, Leader of the Opposition.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Leader of the House, we need a seconder.

**Ms BLIGH:** I second the motion.

**Mr SCHWARTEN:** If ever I have heard an attack on the opposition whips, then I have heard it now. One of the reasons we are in this position is the incompetent activities of the opposition whips who supplied the wrong speaking list for the debate yesterday afternoon on the revenue bill. That is what happened. That then tied up business.

Quite frankly, the reason we are cognating the debate for these bills is to afford the honourable member the opportunity to make his speech in reply at the appropriate time today without interrupting the passage of the Clean Coal Technology Special Agreement Bill which, I might add, is a very significant revenue bill in itself. It is entirely appropriate to cognate it with the appropriation bills.

The fact of the matter is that, by doing this, no member of this parliament is disadvantaged in any way. Members will note that the second part of the motion says that those who have already spoken can speak again. So no-one has had their voice taken away from them whatsoever. Every single member of this parliament can speak to both of those bills if they so desire. For the life of me I cannot understand what the problem is.

Mr Speaker, there is one thing that I know the honourable members opposite lack, and that is absolutely any respect for those people who are employed under your provisions and the Clerk's provisions. We know that on one occasion certain members of the opposition came to me because they wanted to go to a private function downtown. On that occasion I obliged them to enable them to do that. I am not going to name names, but I do my best to try to oblige the people here.

**Mr LINGARD:** I rise to a point of order. Mr Speaker, what is your ruling about 10.30?

**Mr SPEAKER:** My ruling is quite obvious. I am taking the division—and I will be asking the Leader of the House to wrap up shortly—and then going into question time.

**Mr LINGARD:** I rise to a point of order. Surely a member is not allowed to speak when the standing orders say that questions without notice should be at 10.30.

**Mr SPEAKER:** By the very fact that my clock says 10.31, the Leader of the House will wrap up shortly and then we will have a division.

**An honourable member:** Are we going to have a debate?

**Mr SPEAKER:** The Leader of the House is having his right of reply.

**Ms BLIGH:** I rise to a point of order. I seek leave to move a procedural motion that the standing orders be suspended to allow the Leader of the House to complete his contribution to this debate.

### **Speaker's Ruling—Motion Not Allowable**

**Mr SPEAKER:** I indicate to the Treasurer that that motion is not allowable. I ask the Leader of the House to finish the debate so that we can go on to the division and then have question time.

**Mr SCHWARTEN:** Thank you, Mr Speaker. I find myself pushed into the position of going into question time by the actions of those opposite. The reality is that I took advice from the Clerk of the Parliament on this matter last evening so that everybody could get a fair go at both of these bills. The advice that I received from the Clerk was that it was appropriate that this occur and, indeed, that is the case.

As I said, I have tried to institute reasonable sitting hours here out of respect for the people who work here and who have registered with you, Mr Speaker, and you, Mr Clerk, on a number of occasions the issue of the lack of family friendly hours here. This does not in any way take away the rights of any member of this parliament to say what they wish about the bill. It is not a guillotine, it is not a gag motion; it is just a simple common-sense approach to allowing—

**Dr Flegg:** Give them all an extra 20 minutes.

**Mr SCHWARTEN:** I did not interrupt the member when he spoke, and if I had it would have been more intelligent. The reality is that this is a lot of stuff and nonsense about nothing. As I say, it does not take away or trammel over the rights of any member of this parliament. I know what the Tories are going to do, but I ask the Independents to please ignore this action as I regard it as not taking away any of their rights to speak at any time they wish.