



Speech by

**Fiona Simpson**

**MEMBER FOR MAROOCHYDORE**

Hansard Wednesday, 13 February 2008

---

## **INDIGENOUS MORTALITY AND EDUCATION**

**Miss SIMPSON** (Maroochydore—NPA) (Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (11.43 am): Like the Leader of the Opposition, Lawrence Springborg, we do acknowledge that there have been injustices, damage and hurt in the past, and part of charting the future is acknowledging the past. But in the last nine years since the sorry motion was passed in Queensland we have also seen that not much progress has been made for Indigenous people in Queensland, and that is the true tragedy.

**Ms Jones** interjected.

**Miss SIMPSON:** I acknowledge that interjection from the member for Ashgrove, but I do not think she gets the point. In the last nine years we have still had a horrendously high number of Indigenous people dying 20 years earlier than other Queenslanders. It is still the case that Aboriginal infant mortality is 1.7 to 2.7 times greater than the non-Indigenous rate of infant mortality. There is still a problem in that young Indigenous people are not in schools and achieving the levels of education that would put them on par with other Queenslanders. There is no doubting the sincerity of the federal government's motion, but where is the sincerity in the actions of this government? It has words, but its actions are failing Queenslanders.

We are saying that as a parliament we should be concerned about these issues, because actions must speak louder than words—actions must speak louder than words. While words can be symbolic, they are like that gong that the Prime Minister talked about if they fail to meet those basic issues of life and death—life and death. It is appalling in this day and age to see the levels of infant mortality in this state, and we can all do better as members of parliament if we truly care about charting a different future.

Time expired.