



Speech by

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MEMBER FOR SURFERS PARADISE

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POLITICAL DONATIONS

Mr LANGBROEK (Surfers Paradise—LNP) (Leader of the Opposition) (11.53 am): Oh, what a tangled web we weave! This morning we sought answers from the government about donations from someone who had been charged with corruption to attend a couple of functions implicating the member for Ferny Grove, the current Minister for Education and Training; the member for Bulimba, a new member in this place; and the Deputy Premier and member for Lytton. Let us look at a couple of these function details. In October last year there was a function for the Bulimba SEC. Let us have a look at what is on the invitation for the event on 10 October at the Colmslie Hotel at Junction Road, Morningside. It was 120 bucks a head and of course the Talbot Group donated \$1,200. The invitation states—

The same great catch-up with mates in the building and construction industry, business and political leaders
Auction and raffles

Your support over the years is much appreciated. We look forward to seeing you again this year.

It sounds like cronyism to me, and that is exactly what we have. The new member for Bulimba is obviously a beneficiary of the largesse of the Talbot Group—headed by someone charged with corruption. Another function was attended by the current Minister for Education and Training, who was then minister for mines and energy, with the guest speaker being the Deputy Premier, who at that stage was the minister for infrastructure and planning and is currently the Minister for Health.

An opposition member: The drawcard!

Mr LANGBROEK: He was the drawcard. Once again, the Talbot Group donated \$1,250 to that function. Isn't this outrageous? Today none of those ministers were prepared to answer the questions about the implications contained within but tried to turn it around. They were not prepared to address the ethical considerations that have been clearly raised. There are corruption issues that go to the cabinet table of this government. Can we imagine if back in the time of Fitzgerald, following the charging of Gerry Bellino or Hector Hapeta or Eddie Kornhauser, they had donated money following their charges to the National Party? What on earth would have happened back then? There would have been an outrage, and this is the equivalent.

Mr Springborg: Oh, yeah! Call it piousness!

Mr LANGBROEK: But of course we have got piousness and now piety coming from the government, obfuscating and refusing to answer questions about issues involving dinners here. I offer this challenge to the Premier: tell us about all of the Hawker Britton dinners that you have had in Sydney. Tell us about all of the dinners that Con Sciacca has done. Tell us about all of those particular details. On our side—

Mr Seeney interjected.

Mr LANGBROEK: Exactly! Has the Treasurer been to any of these? From the perplexed look on his face I would suggest that he has! He has been to something with Con Sciacca—the great Labor mate! He has been to something with Hawker Britton. I reiterate that the government tries this spin and this obfuscation and tries to turn the issue around to our issues. Let me make these points: at no stage have I

or the opposition refused to provide details of those who donated to a fundraising dinner prior to the state election, because the organisation will do it.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr O'Brien): Order! The House will come to order!

Mr LANGBROEK: That was a dinner that was hosted to enable my party to balance the union donations to the Labor Party, but a very important point needs to be made. I can advise the House that neither I nor the deputy leader—or any of our staff—keep records of donors, and nor should we. That is the difference between the Premier and me. The Premier keeps records of donors in her office because her government and staff are encouraged to reward donors with preferential access and preferential decisions. That is what we have been able to elucidate over the last couple of weeks. We have been able to work out that that is exactly what is happening.

Mr Fraser: Prove it!

Mr LANGBROEK: The Treasurer cannot disprove it, and that is the point. We have said that we should have a royal commission into this and get it all out in the open—that is, these aspects of lobbyists acting for companies coming to parliament seeking preferable deals. My staff are not encouraged to provide preferential favours and, as such, these records are not kept in our office, nor do we ever seek to have access to them. Where did these recommendations come from? From Fitzgerald! After 20 years, this Labor government has found ways to get around the recommendations of Fitzgerald. In fact, it would not even know what Fitzgerald had recommended. But clearly the outcomes of Fitzgerald and its subsequent committees recommended that MPs remain at arm's length, as much as practically possible, from proactively seeking to identify donors to their party. That is why when this information is released next Tuesday, 25 August, under the Electoral Act all donations over \$1,000 will be declared. That will happen in seven days. I have received confirmation that the LNP will be lodging its electoral returns within the next seven days.

Mr Seeney interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr O'Brien): Order! Member for Callide, your language is unparliamentary. I ask you to withdraw. Your leader is on his feet. I ask you to withdraw.

Mr SEENEY: I will withdraw.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable members, there is too much audible conversation from both sides of the House. I ask that we maintain some level of decorum in the House.

Mr LANGBROEK: As I was pointing out very clearly, it is all very well for the Premier to say that she is providing leadership on this issue when she selectively chooses what issues she wishes to canvass. As I said, the LNP secretariat will be lodging their electoral returns within the next seven days on time and in compliance with the law.

But let us contrast that with the Labor Party—the only political party not to have lodged electoral donations on time, the Bligh Labor Party which corruptly concealed a donation of just over \$225,000 from the CFMEU in the seat of Mirani. Again, that is what this Labor Party has done. The questions just kept on coming over the weekend—questions about \$4 million from Labor Holdings. In the last three months, we have had donations of \$200,000 from Labor's private business arm. It donated \$200,000 on 29 July, \$470,000 on 17 June and \$3.4 million on 26 May.

When the laws were brought in they ruled that donations had to be declared within 14 days. The Premier said that the new laws were necessary so that Queenslanders could see who was donating and would be able to ask questions why. We are asking those questions on behalf of all Queenslanders. We believe that Queenslanders have a right to know, especially when the Premier is talking about bringing in laws that may bring in new caps on political donations. Clearly, the Labor Party is trying to stock up on cash now. It is still going to take money from the unions, but it may well impose bans on donations on other political parties to give them a rigged electoral advantage at the next state election.

There are questions marks, too, about the board members of Labor Holdings—the investment arm of the Queensland Labor Party that is making these large donations. The board members of Labor Holdings are also government board appointees to GOCs. It begs the question as to what information they have been able to find out. Do they then recommend that Labor Holdings use some of the information received to make investments in things that will then lead to more donations to the Labor Party? These are all questions that have been raised throughout Queensland. Today we have asked questions as well about lobbyists' links.

I want to remind the House that, during the election campaign, the former Leader of the Opposition indicated that he was happy to ask the LNP to provide details of donations made in a fundraising dinner until it was revealed that campaign workers for the Deputy Premier, the member for Lytton—the Lucas Luddites—were actively threatening and boycotting businesses which so much as displayed an LNP sign. That is what happens with the Labor Party. When you donate, you get favours with Labor—

Opposition members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Members on my left, I cannot hear your leader because of your interjecting.

Mr LANGBROEK: That is the point with this Labor government. When you donate to the Labor government, you get favours. When you are an LNP donor, it leads to retribution from this Labor government. That is exactly what happens. These Labor tactics that are employed are identical to the tactics that are employed by the most corrupt and ruthless regimes across the world. That is how this government behaves with people who donate to the LNP. We saw it and it was admitted to by the Deputy Premier, the member for Lytton, during the election campaign. They want to stymie democratic expression.

Mr Seeney: He had to apologise for it.

Mr LANGBROEK: He did apologise, but he did so in the typical Deputy Premier's way—apologising but not quite apologising. That is what this Labor government is known for. Today the government refused to come in here and answer questions about accepting money from someone who is implicated in a corruption scandal that goes right to the head of the cabinet table.

Today we have again asked questions and the government now has 30 days to reveal the names of former lobbyists who were in the Premier's office and in the offices of other ministers—the names of staff employed in the Premier's and ministers' offices who have worked for lobbyists in the past three years, the names of firms they worked for and their clients, such as the clients that the Premier's two deputy chiefs of staff represented while they were employed by a lobbying firm, and what meetings they or the Premier have had with these clients since being employed in the Premier's office.

Finally, when have the ministers and the Premier met with lobbyists run by Labor Holdings board members—the private investment arm of the Labor Party—including Milner Strategic Services and Govstrat Pty Ltd? The questions just keep coming. This government keeps distracting. It is not good enough for the people of Queensland.

(Time expired)