



Speech by

John-Paul Langbroek

MEMBER FOR SURFERS PARADISE

Hansard Wednesday, 28 October 2009

COMMISSIONS OF INQUIRY (CORRUPTION, CRONYISM AND UNETHICAL BEHAVIOUR) AMENDMENT BILL

Mr LANGBROEK (Surfers Paradise—LNP) (Leader of the Opposition) (11.30 am): I move—
That the bill be now read a second time.

Today I introduce a bill that, if passed, will establish a comprehensive independent commission of inquiry into 11 years of Labor corruption, cronyism and unethical behaviour. Lip-service to accountability, spin and buck-passing have got to stop and the only way to properly investigate suspected cronyism, corruption and the unethical behaviour of the Labor government is to have a commission of inquiry that has the powers, resources and mandate to perform such a function.

The Premier has said there is no need for a royal commission as the Crime and Misconduct Commission is a constituted commission of inquiry. However, the CMC has limited powers and resources. The CMC does not have powers to investigate the suspected misconduct of parliamentarians; the CMC can only investigate allegations that may amount to criminal behaviour. The CMC does not have the power to review ministerial decisions unless there is an allegation of a crime being committed. The CMC does not have the power or resources to investigate the judicial appointments process of this Labor government over the past 11 years. The CMC does not have the power or the resources to examine questionable lobbyist dealings which resulted in exorbitant success fees. In light of the time I seek leave to have the rest of my speech incorporated in *Hansard*.

Leave granted.

The CMC doesn't have the power, or the resources, to forensically examine every financial decision that corrupt former Labor Minister Gordon Nuttall made. The CMC isn't properly able to investigate the allegations made by former Labor staffers turned whistleblowers.

The extent and multitude of allegations of corruption, cronyism and unethical behaviour of this Labor Government over the past 11 years require a dedicated full time Commission of Inquiry that can solely focus on the murky history of the past decade of Labor rule.

The majority of Queenslanders do not trust this Government and no amount of spin will get to the core of the myriad of allegations raised during more than 11 years of Labor rule.

The LNP is not alone in its calls for a Royal Commission—

Queensland Council for Civil Liberties vice-president Terry O'Gorman has said a Royal Commission or expanded CMC inquiry is warranted.

"A combination of a number of events over the last two weeks is starting to lend some credence for a call for a Royal Commission," Mr O'Gorman said—

"Soon the Premier is going to have so many bushfires in parts of her backyard they are going to add into one fire and something will need to be done."

Urban Development Institute of Australia Queensland Chief Executive Brian Stewart said the "system of using lobbyists" needed examining, rather than "any incidences of unlawful conduct".

"I know most of the people who are involved and I don't have any question mark about their integrity," Mr Stewart said.

Mr Stewart went on to say "However, what we do need to avoid is that possibility existing because it doesn't create good circumstances for governance."

It was Tony Fitzgerald himself who said on July 28, 2009, "Ethics are always tested by incumbency. Secrecy was re-established by sham claims that voluminous documents were "Cabinet-in-confidence". Access can now be purchased, patronage is dispensed, mates and supporters are appointed and retired politicians exploit their political connections to obtain "success fees" for deals between business and government.

Queenslanders are now haunted by the ghosts of Nuttall and 11 years of Labor cronyism and allegations of corruption and unethical behaviour. It is time this Government opened the books and opened itself up to a full and independent commission of inquiry.

I commend the Bill to the House.