



Speech by

# Lawrence Springborg

MEMBER FOR SOUTHERN DOWNS

Hansard Friday, 19 June 2009

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## MOTION: ALLOCATION OF TIME LIMIT ORDER

**Mr SPRINGBORG** (Southern Downs—LNP) (Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (2.36 am): Let us make no bones about this: the reason the Leader of the House came in here and moved this motion is that those opposite want to close down debate. Why do they want to close down debate? Because they have been forensically torn apart in this debate during the course of this evening. But the other real reason is due to the growing revolt on their own side. The simple reality is this: we have had speaker after speaker after speaker on the opposition side stand up and categorically tear apart the argument the government has put forward for the sale of Queensland Rail's above-rail assets and privatisation. Have we seen one Labor member who has been prepared to stand up and go on record and say what their point of view is? No! No, because many of them do not support this and the government—the executive—is not prepared to let them have their say. They are wimping out. They are proving themselves to be absolute complete categorical cowards.

There are three noises that are gathering in Queensland today. One is the increasing rumbling from the people of Queensland who, as this headline has proven tonight, have been deceived and betrayed by the Premier, who they said lied to them. That is what the headline says. That is what the headline actually said. The other sound out there is the sound of the knees knocking on those wimpish members opposite who are not prepared to stand up and be counted. The third noise is those who are lining up rushing to the toilet out of their nervousness. That is what we are seeing from those members. You should have seen the exodus in here before! You should have seen the exodus, because they have no courage. They are not prepared to display it and the government has no support; otherwise they would stand up and they would say it tonight. Where is the member for Everton? He is sitting there and is the political personification of a Cheshire cat—not prepared to stand up and put it on the record, but his face says it all.

What those opposite do not want us to know is the simple reality, and that is the real cost of this, the real cost to the people of Queensland and the cost to the jobs of the people of Queensland—the rail workers, the Forestry Plantations Queensland workers, the Queensland Motorway Ltd workers—but more importantly there will be a devastating cost to employment in the Queensland Legislative Assembly in the Labor Party, because what this means when this bill goes through is that there will be an impact on employment and it will be as simple as this: Chatsworth—gone; Everton—gone; Broadwater—gone; Cook—

**Opposition members:** Gone!

**Mr SPRINGBORG:** Barron River—

**Opposition members:** Gone!

**Mr SPRINGBORG:** Toowoomba North—

**Opposition members:** Gone!

**Mr SPRINGBORG:** Whitsunday—

**Opposition members:** Gone!

**Mr SPRINGBORG:** Southport—

**Opposition members:** Gone!

**Mr SPRINGBORG:** Townsville—

**Opposition members:** Gone!

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Wendt): Order!

**Mr SPRINGBORG:** Springwood—

**Opposition members:** Gone!

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order!

**Mr SPRINGBORG:** Cairns—

**Opposition members:** Gone!

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order!

**Mr SPRINGBORG:** Mansfield—

**Opposition members:** Gone!

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! Member for Southern Downs!

**Mr SPRINGBORG:** Ferny Grove—

**Opposition members:** Gone!

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order!

**Mr SPRINGBORG:** Pine Rivers—

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! I call the member for Southern Downs.

**Mr SPRINGBORG:** But the greatest impact of unemployment will be on the Premier. In the most unprecedented and extraordinary step that we have ever seen, her own local branch lost faith in her. When you are prepared to deceive your own, there is no stopping the level of deception that you are prepared to go to. There is one prediction we can confidently make today and that is that this Premier is damaged goods. She will not be leading this government to the next state election. That is why the debate is gagged.

**Ms SPENCE:** I rise to a point of order. I question the relevance of the speech by the member for Southern Downs to this motion. It seems to me that none of this debate is relevant to the motion before the House.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Wendt): Order! I call the member for Southern Downs.

**Mr SPRINGBORG:** The Leader of the House does not even know why she has moved this motion. The simple reality is what I am outlining. It is to protect the government members from themselves. That is why the motion has been moved—to cut off debate—because of the dramatic impact this bill is going to have on the employment of Queenslanders, the Labor members opposite and, more importantly, the Treasurer and the Premier.

The people of Queensland have seen through this government. We are seeing one of the most profoundly undemocratic acts that has ever happened in this parliament. We are seeing bills of parliament that will have an extraordinary effect on Queenslanders in terms of privatisation, of which this government has absolutely no mandate, being rushed through, with debate being guillotined, without being properly set aside for debate on all of their aspects. Whether that be the sale of above-rail assets, below-rail assets, Forestry Plantations Queensland, Queensland Motorways, we have an obligation and a duty in this parliament to properly scrutinise this legislation, because its impact on Queenslanders will be profound. The impact on their jobs will be quite extraordinary. Also, we are going to have a truncating of the debate on the petrol subsidy scheme in Queensland without any member of this government standing up and talking about the impact of the abolition of the petrol subsidy scheme on tourism.

In the past 24-odd hours, did any member on that side of the parliament stand up and talk about the impact of the introduction of the fuel tax on tourism in Queensland? Did one single member on the other side of the House stand up and talk about the impact of the fuel tax on food prices for the average Queenslanders? No! Did one single member of the government stand up and justify the impact of the fuel tax that was being introduced on transport in Queensland? No! In the past 24 to 48 hours, did one single member opposite stand up and seek to justify how people in regional and rural areas are going to be disproportionately affected by the fuel tax in that it is going to cost them more to travel for their medical appointments and then for their social interaction? Did one single member opposite stand up at all and even try to repudiate the contention that was put forward by the Premier in her own Q2 document last year

that Queensland is the most decentralised state and Queenslanders travel further in their cars—indeed, 1,000 kilometres further in their cars—than any other Australian and, therefore, the impact, by the government's own concession in that document, that the fuel tax is going to have? No, they did not! The reason this motion has been moved tonight is that the government members want to quarantine themselves from the inevitable criticism that continues to exist and continues to grow in the community. We have seen it here before.

The absolute last paragraph sums it up beautifully. The Galaxy pollster states—

There may be many factors that have contributed to the slump in support for the Bligh Government but central to their demise is the widespread belief that Anna Bligh lied and her government misled—

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order! You will withdraw that word. It is unparliamentary.

**Mr SPRINGBORG:** I withdraw. I quoted that from this particular piece.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Yes.

**Mr SPRINGBORG:** Deliberately misled. I withdraw.

**Mr SPEAKER:** The ruling is based not so much that you have used the word but that you cannot use the article to be unparliamentary, and that is my ruling. It is well-established practice. Thank you for your cooperation with this.

**Mr SPRINGBORG:** I withdraw and I substitute 'deliberately misled'—'and her government misled the people of Queensland'. That is the case.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order! There are ways of dealing with the word. I would substitute 'deliberately misled'.