



Speech by

Lawrence Springborg

MEMBER FOR SOUTHERN DOWNS

Hansard Wednesday, 5 August 2009

MOTION: ESTABLISHMENT OF ROYAL COMMISSION, ALLEGATIONS OF CORRUPTION

Mr SPRINGBORG (Southern Downs—LNP) (Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (5.39 pm): I rise to support the motion moved by the Leader of the Opposition. This is a motion which aims to establish a royal commission in Queensland with the broad terms of reference that we saw from the Fitzgerald inquiry. What is the reason for that? There should be no more obvious reason than the Galaxy Poll that we saw last Sunday that said that 65 per cent—two-thirds—of all Queenslanders felt that the Labor Party government, led by Anna Bligh, was rotten to the core, was corrupt to the core, was full of nepotism and full of cronyism. That is the jury. It is the people of Queensland who are crying out for a royal commission. It is the people of Queensland who are crying out for this government and this Premier to show some real leadership and to clean up this mess. They are crying out for the government to do more than the Labor Party usually does, that is, get its little broom and sweep it along; lift up the carpet, sweep it underneath and put it down as though it has not happened. That is the Labor Party government in Queensland.

This government is rotten to the core not only because it is a modern government in a modern era but because it is a Labor government that believes it can do anything. As Wayne Goss said, it is suffering the scourge of longevity which is actually leading it to make decisions and do things which are inherently a part of governments that have been in office for such a long period.

This Labor government has form. This Labor Party has form and it has pretty dark form indeed. Let us look back at some of its dark history over the past 20 years. Does anyone remember Keith Wright? We all remember Keith Wright. Many of those people opposite were lined up getting their photograph taken with Keith Wright because they wanted him to be Premier of Queensland. He is one of Queensland's worst convicted paedophiles. What happened after that? We remember Bill D'Arcy, who sat over on that side with many of those members of parliament; they sang his praises. They kept him in the party because they needed his numbers—hardly the mark of a party that believes in principle, integrity and probity. They were happy to have their photograph taken with him. They wanted him to be Deputy Premier. He was the deputy leader. What happened? He is one of Queensland's most insidious convicted paedophiles.

But it does not stop there. The list goes down to Merri Rose, who was jailed—another cabinet minister that they sat across from. Then there is Gordon Nuttall, a mate to all, a very special mate to the Deputy Premier, who stood in this place in December of 2005 and sang his praises. I was sitting here and I thought, 'This Deputy Premier is probably going to nominate this bloke for an Order of Australia.' He was such a fine and model citizen! He was closely followed by the Premier in the adulation and the adoration that they could actually profess for this person.

Let us cast our minds back also to Grant Musgrove, the former member for Springwood. He was done for what? Electoral cheating! What happened after that? The Deputy Premier of the day, Jim Elder, was done for what? Electoral cheating—more rorts! Then what did we have? The piece de resistance, Mike Kaiser, was done for electoral rotting. Peter Beattie, man of integrity, said, 'I'll have no rorters,' and not only that but, 'They will go to jail, jail, jail.' Do honourable members know where the jail is in Queensland? In the Premier's office, because Kaiser is in the Premier's office. He has been promoted.

Guess what? He had a \$100,000 pay rise on a \$300,000 salary. So if you are an electoral roter in Queensland you do not go to jail; you go to the Premier's office and you sit there, you pull the strings and you advise on integrity, you advise on probity and you advise on how to comply with electoral disclosure laws. Have we not seen that recently in relation to the CFMEU that failed to disclose \$225,000 and the Labor Party did the same? There have been serious crimes and serious illegality and this government should pay that money back, but it is not.

This government has form. If the Labor Party had been in power in the 1980s it would never have established a Fitzgerald inquiry. It would have swept it under the carpet. It is an about time that it took a leaf out of the book of the previous government and established a Fitzgerald inquiry with Tony Fitzgerald as head. It needs to clean up this rotten stench of corruption once and for all.

(Time expired)