



Speech by

Michael Crandon

MEMBER FOR COOMERA

Hansard Wednesday, 28 October 2009

CRIMINAL CODE (HONESTY AND INTEGRITY IN PARLIAMENT) AMENDMENT BILL

Mr CRANDON (Coomera—LNP) (8.20 pm): I rise to contribute to the debate and speak in support of the Criminal Code (Honesty and Integrity in Parliament) Amendment Bill 2009, which is intended to amend the Criminal Code to make it an offence to give false evidence before parliament. Reading the background to what occurred has been fascinating to say the least. The *Gold Coast Bulletin* wrote—

The Beattie government has passed legislation giving life to what shall be known as 'Nuttall's Law', which grants governments the right to lie with impunity.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order!

Mr Wettenhall: How many times do they have to be told?

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: The member for Barron River will resume his seat if he wishes to interject. Member for Coomera, resume your seat please. The Speaker did put out a statement this morning in regard to the use of the word 'lie'. I ask you to refrain from using that word, even if you are quoting an article from the paper. The statement that the Speaker made this morning was quite explicit, and I would refer you to it.

Mr CRANDON: It continues—

Nuttall's Law represents one of the low points in Queensland's history, shamefully brought about by (the) Attorney-General.

And it goes on. Why? Gordon Nuttall told intentional untruths to a budget estimates committee. The current Attorney-General argues that section 57 is not needed. He argues that what Nuttall did was okay. What Nuttall did then and what he was later found to be guilty of is not okay. Ask any fair-minded—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Honourable member, resume your seat please. I have already made a ruling on this not 10 minutes ago in regard to sub judice. These matters are before the court. I ask you to refrain from using aspects of this argument in the debate this evening. You have the call.

Mr CRANDON: Ask any fair-minded man or woman, ordinary citizens in this great state, if they believe these actions are okay. The short answer is the same as the long answer—no.

This parliament has a reputation. This 53rd Parliament is the parliament that was formed based on sleight of hand, based on story telling. Fair-minded people gave this Premier and Treasurer the benefit of the doubt. They said, 'Okay, let's give Premier Bligh a chance to prove herself,' and that is exactly what the Premier did—prove herself. Proving sleight of hand is what was called for for Labor to win government. Then and only then did this government turn its back on these fair-minded people and sell their assets down the drain. While they were at it, it increased forward debt projections to an incredible \$85 billion; debt our children will not pay off. It is time for this parliament to stand up for what is right and prove to the people of Queensland that it does have scruples, that it is able to restore respect, that it is capable of restoring accountable government to the state of Queensland.

It is not acceptable to knowingly deceive this parliament. To knowingly deceive is to have the intention of swaying a decision in a particular way, in a way that suits the deceiver. This parliament

deserves to make its decisions on honest testimony, not on deceit. If government members have any desire to ensure that future decisions are based on truth in testimony, they have no choice but to vote to reinstate section 57. To not vote to reinstate section 57 is to tell the fair-minded people of Queensland that they want the option to tell an untruth when it suits them.

The Minister for Public Works talked about telling an untruth not being worthy of penalty. Would that not depend on what the untruth was about—a big deception or a little deception, as we would talk to our children about? I put it to the House that a big deception would be along the lines of that which we have talked about in this parliament before and cannot talk about today—and that is one that amounts to a jail sentence for someone. That is a big lie and that is the sort of lie that we have talked about prosecuting with this section.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Honourable member, resume your seat. I have already warned you about the use of that word here this evening. I will not warn you again. Withdraw the comment and continue.

Mr CRANDON: I withdraw the comment. I commend the bill to the House and urge those opposite to do the right thing by the people of Queensland—cross the floor and vote for what is right. I seek clarification, if I may, Mr Deputy Speaker. I note that I inadvertently said the wrong word. I note also that my colleague the member for Beaudesert in a poem used that very same word. Each time we used that word we were both pulled up and corrected and told to withdraw. On the other hand, the Minister for Public Works used that word and the record will show that that word was used and the Minister for Public Works was not pulled up.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Resume your seat. Your comments are a reflection on the chair. I ask you to withdraw.

Mr CRANDON: I withdraw the comments. I am seeking clarification, however, from the chair.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! You can continue but I have made my ruling. The ruling I think is pretty clear. You have the call.

Mr CRANDON: I will say one last word then. The Leader of the House managed to use the word twice before being pulled up.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Your comments are a reflection on the chair. They are unparliamentary. I ask you to withdraw.

Mr CRANDON: I withdraw the comments.