



Speech by

Shane Knuth

MEMBER FOR DALRYMPLE

Hansard Wednesday, 25 November 2009

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

Mr KNUTH (Dalrymple—LNP) (2.40 pm): I rise to speak in the debate on the Integrity Bill 2009 and the Commissions of Inquiry (Corruption, Cronyism and Unethical Behaviour) Amendment Bill 2009. The Integrity Bill is an attempt by this government to save face with Queenslanders. It is not about addressing the issues that have plagued this government or the issues to do with honesty or integrity. If the government were serious about reform it would have addressed the legislation which allows lying by ministers to parliamentary committees.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr O'Brien): Order! We have had a long and lengthy discussion about the use of that word in this place. You should be well aware that it is unparliamentary and I ask you to withdraw.

Mr KNUTH: I withdraw. I recall the Premier advising Queenslanders that it would not call an election. Yet six months short of the end of its term she called an election. Many people did believe that the Premier was telling the truth. She put her hand on her heart and told the people of Queensland that she was going a full term. What happened? She went to the Governor. This government had done everything in its power to send the state broke and it needed to find more money to satisfy its uncontrolled spending. Under the guise of the global financial crisis it called an early election asking Queenslanders to grant them another term to waste willingly the hard-earned taxes of everyday Queenslanders. Its lust for power and control could only be achieved by deceiving the people.

This government won the election by promising no new taxes and no privatisation. The photos of the induction ceremony of the 53rd Parliament were not even printed before Queenslanders had lost their fuel subsidy and QR was up for sale. This is deception of the highest degree and yet the government believes that it has done no wrong and does not need to be accountable for its trickery.

Its deception in the privatisation of electricity is another example of how devious the government is. 'Privatisation will reduce costs by allowing competition' was the mantra. Then when the costs were increased the government could do nothing but bleat incoherently about how inconsiderate the energy companies were and how it was going to get the energy companies. But it was the government, in a blatant grab for cash, that gave away the control. It was the government that set the perception that it was going to reduce the cost of electricity with its persuasion that electricity costs would come down. It was very persuasive. It was the government that caused endless financial pain to everyday Queenslanders.

It is a legacy of this government that legislation had to be introduced to protect people who told the truth. This is not China nor North Korea. People should not be punished or threatened for telling the truth; they should be punished for lying. The legislation does not prevent or deter members from lying and does not address the laws that the government had enacted to make it legal to lie. It does not address the capacity the government has for hiding information that it does not want to share.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! I have already warned you once during this address about the use of that word. I ask you for the final time to withdraw that word. It is unparliamentary.

Mr KNUTH: I withdraw. It is in Queensland where it is against the law to leave your windows down in the hot sun. It is in Queensland where the laws govern the choices people can make about the type of fittings they can choose when building a new home. It is in Queensland where flying foxes enjoy protection greater than humans.

Government members interjected.

Mr KNUTH: It is unbelievable, is it not? There is no other state where flying foxes are more protected than in Queensland. Only Queensland protects flying foxes over humans.

Government members interjected.

Mr KNUTH: Well, get up there and do something about it. It is in Queensland where revered leaders and elected representatives get the full protection of the law for lying and it is in Queensland where loyalty to the Labor Party is considered the only requirement for promotion. It is a disgrace.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order!

Mr KNUTH: I withdraw that. I wanted to bring that to the attention of the House.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: No, resume your seat.