



Speech by
Ted Malone

MEMBER FOR MIRANI

Hansard Wednesday, 28 October 2009

**CRIMINAL CODE (HONESTY AND INTEGRITY IN PARLIAMENT)
AMENDMENT BILL**

Mr MALONE (Mirani—LNP) (9.07 pm): It is with some pleasure that I rise to speak in support of the bill introduced by the Leader of the Opposition, the member for Surfers Paradise, which is before the House tonight, the Criminal Code (Honesty and Integrity in Parliament) Amendment Bill. All 89 of us represent electorates in this parliament and we should feel privileged that we have had the opportunity to do that and must respect the support we have in our electorates to be able to represent more than 30,000 people in this House. Quite frankly, what we are dealing with is the integrity of this parliament. We saw the disgraceful situation where parliament was recalled in early December 2006 to clear the way for a member of this parliament to be able to misrepresent a situation in the parliament so that he would be able to continue to represent his constituents.

I think that we as a parliament, and more so given the fact that we are a unicameral parliament and do not have an upper house, have to be even more vigilant in our representation of the people. What we do in this place is very important to the people of Queensland. I think that responsibility should weigh very heavily on our shoulders. I listened intently to what the Deputy Premier of the government spoke about in this House just a little while ago. Personally, I quite strongly believe that one does not build one's own credibility by pulling others down. I was disappointed that the Deputy Premier had to resort to trawling back through passages in *Hansard* for more than 10 to 15 years to find instances where he believed that there was a slight against a member of parliament. I think that is quite disgraceful. I think that he has not actually endeared himself either to this parliament or to the people who he represents.

We should all be aware of the fact that we are held in reasonably high regard in our electorates. Everything that we do in this place that misrepresents the truth takes a little bit of that respect away. I believe that the bill we have before the House tonight goes some little way to restoring the integrity of the parliament and the respect that people have for members of parliament. I am reasonably sure that all members in their electorates have sat and listened to some very sad cases where grown men have cried and because they were a member of parliament and had the respect of the community, the force of 30,000-odd people supporting them, they were hopefully able to help that person out. That is a huge responsibility. It is a huge privilege to be able to do that. We should do whatever we can on both sides of the House to make this place a better place. I think that the legislation before the House tonight goes some way towards that.

I am not saying it is the be-all and end-all. I think it has to be balanced by some other things that we maybe need to do. Members in this House should be very concerned about the way in which the credibility of this place has been lowered quite substantially over a period of time. I believe that in the 15 years that I have been in this House the respect that people have for the Queensland parliament has diminished. All 89 members of parliament must work towards making sure that when we go out and stand proudly in front of a group of people we are respected not only for the fact that we are a member of parliament but also because we represent and support all of those people who we see before us. With those few words, I support the legislation before the House. Hopefully, it will be passed.