



Speech by
Ted Malone

MEMBER FOR MIRANI

Hansard Wednesday, 25 November 2009

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

Mr MALONE (Mirani—LNP) (2.45 pm): I rise to speak briefly in the cognate debate on the Integrity Bill and the Commissions of Inquiry (Corruption, Cronyism and Unethical Behaviour) Amendment Bill. I will speak briefly in support of the Leader of the Opposition's proposal for a full and independent inquiry into cronyism and other matters in terms of this government.

There is no doubt that there is a real need for integrity in government. Unfortunately, I am almost of the belief that those on the other side of the House really do not understand what integrity is all about. Indeed, it is quite laughable to see the attempt by the Premier to bring some integrity into this parliament in terms of the operation of government. When we look at the history of her time in parliament—she has actually been part of the executive government for many years—we see that one of the issues of concern is the way in which this government has operated. Particularly galling from my perspective was the way in which the Premier promoted her husband to the position of executive of the climate change department.

Mr WALLACE: I rise to a point of order. The member for Mirani is deliberately misleading the House. As has been explained previously in this place, the Premier's husband was appointed on merit, not by the Premier.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! There is no point of order. If you believe that the member is misleading the House there are other processes to deal with that.

Mr MALONE: It is interesting to look across the range of decisions that have been made by this government, particularly in this term and during the election campaign. Others have spoken about the lead-up to the election and the promises that were made and indeed the promises that were not made. Quite frankly, the government went to the people of Queensland without any indication of the way in which it was going to address the huge debt that it was racking up over a period of time. Indeed, one would have to be blind Freddy to not realise there was going to have to be some mitigating circumstances under which this government, or any government for that matter, would have to address the issue of a quickly escalating debt load on the people of Queensland.

As the then opposition leader went into the election and talked about ways and means of minimising the growth and the costs of running government, in terms of trying to take a stronger role in actually being more efficient in government—smaller government and things that would actually go towards making government more efficient—we were criticised from pillar to post all the time by those knowing full well that they were going to the people of Queensland without any way of mitigating the horrendous range of debt that it had racked up over a period of time and were continuing to rack up. This government has been all about spin and media opportunities.

Mr Wallace interjected.

Mr MALONE: Whenever the government gets into trouble—and we have a prime example with the minister over there—suddenly a press release is published and another issue is thrown into the public

arena. Only last week the government was in a bit of strife and suddenly a \$3,000 incentive was offered to encourage people to move to country areas and an underground metro was suggested for Brisbane. The incentive is ridiculous. Three thousand dollars would get you only about halfway to Townsville and that is where you would have to dump your furniture. Most of the hospitals in towns outside the south-east corner of Queensland have closed down. The towns have no services. There is no public transport outside the south-east corner, yet the government wants people to move to regional Queensland. QR has rolled back its services. That has meant that most of the country roads are absolutely stuffed or unserviceable, frankly, because cattle and other produce have to be transported by road. Main Roads is not able to keep up with the maintenance of the roads. We have perfectly good rail lines, but QR is winding back its services and now most produce has to be transported by road. The government cannot see the benefit of utilising QR and the rail lines to move heavy materials across thousands of kilometres. Instead, the roads are being used and those roads are deteriorating before our eyes, and the government does not have the money to fix them. Despite all that, the government has the audacity to suggest that people should move to rural Queensland. I really do not want to dwell on this too much, but during—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Particularly as it is not relevant to the bill before the House, it would be good if you did not dwell on it for too long.

Mr MALONE: I am actually talking about integrity. I am sure that I can link that into some of the decisions made in this parliament. I turn to the government's Integrity Bill and the lack of electoral reform. The Attorney-General raised the issue of the number of people in electorates, et cetera. At the last election, the Labor government won 50.9 per cent of the vote and 51 seats in the parliament of Queensland; the LNP won 49 per cent of the vote, which is not too far away, and 34 seats in the house. Something really stinks under that system. Yesterday in the parliament the Attorney-General said that one vote, one value is equal for every person in Queensland.

I do not have a large electorate compared to some others, but the other night I made a 900-kilometre round trip to attend a speech night in Mount Morgan. How many city based members of parliament, particularly those from the other side of the house, would be willing to do that? We talk about one vote, one value. People who live in regional Queensland—and the government wants to move more people to regional Queensland—under this government will be regarded as second-class citizens, but it does not even realise it.

Mr Schwarten: Are you saying the people in Mount Morgan are second-class citizens?

Mr MALONE: I am saying that under the member's government people who live in regional Queensland are regarded as second-class citizens.

Mr SCHWARTEN: I rise to a point of order. I take offence at that. I live in regional Queensland and I do not believe I am a second-class citizen and nor are my constituents. The people of Mount Morgan are not second-class citizens. They are wonderful people and they do not vote for you. They do not vote for rotten Tories like you!

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Minister, please. There is no point of order. The member was not making a personal reflection on you. Member for Mirani, you have the call.

Mr MALONE: Thank you very much, Mr Deputy Speaker. I will stick up for the people of regional Queensland, unlike the government. It ignores people who live in regional Queensland and the member for Rockhampton knows exactly what I am talking about. With those few words, I support the bill.