



Speech by

John-Paul Langbroek

MEMBER FOR SURFERS PARADISE

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LIBERAL NATIONAL PARTY

Mr LANGBROEK (Surfers Paradise—LNP) (Leader of the Opposition) (11.58 am): I invite the Premier to come back and hear the answers to some of the questions she posed or wanted to pose to us in question time this morning. Of course, I am unable to answer those questions in that forum but I am happy to answer them now. That is what delineates this side of the House from that side of the House. There is honesty and integrity from this side of House. We answer questions upfront for the people of Queensland—unlike those opposite, who I notice will not stay to hear my answers. Let me answer some of the questions that have been posed by the Premier this morning.

How many MPs from our team were under preliminary investigation for issues pertaining to claims, allowances and performance? Two. How many of my current MPs are under preliminary investigation for issues pertaining to claims, allowances and performance? Zero. In answer to the question as to whether they were referred for preliminary investigation by my office or that of the deputy, no, they were not. Did I know that preliminary investigations were underway? Yes, I did. Why do I allow these preliminary investigations to be done at arm's length from the parliamentary party? Because we have learned a lesson. From whom have we learned a lesson? We have learned a lesson from those corrupt Labor MPs opposite.

We on this side do not form our own court and come into this House and exonerate our own members, as members opposite have done. Let us see what happens when a leader of the party sits in judgement of one of their own MPs. I remind this parliament of the most corrupt exoneration of an MP that has ever occurred in Queensland history. Let us remember December 2005—the day that this parliament was urgently recalled for a special sitting. Let us remember the day the now Premier seconded a motion to exonerate her corrupt cabinet friend Gordon Nuttall—the day that Labor MPs gathered in this House to sit in judgement of one of their own. Let us remember the corrupt actions of those who exonerated Gordon Nuttall and let a corrupt minister back into the community. Let us remember how the current Premier defended her friend as a decent person.

Mr LUCAS: I rise to a point of order. The honourable member has used unparliamentary language repeatedly. I ask that he be required to withdraw that.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms O'Neill): I ask the honourable member to withdraw.

Mr LANGBROEK: I am happy to withdraw and make reference to the fact that, clearly, the member was exonerated for not telling the truth to a parliamentary estimates committee. Let us remember that the current Premier defended her friend as a decent person. Let us remember, and in doing so let us never forget.

My party undertakes preliminary investigations on all complaints. If those complaints reveal any hint of legal wrongdoing at the conclusion of the investigation, we refer that immediately to the appropriate authorities. We do not refer vexatious complaints to anyone, and the various authorities warn against vexatious complaints. But we do investigate, and if we believe that they are not vexatious then we refer them to the appropriate authority. That is the difference. That is the difference between Labor and the LNP.

Let us all remember how the Premier personally stopped the Director of Public Prosecutions from pursuing Gordon Nuttall. That is Labor's way. That is the corrupt way. That is the Premier's way. In case Labor members opposite need other names to be reminded of with regard to whom they have judged amongst themselves, we have Gordon Nuttall, Keith Wright, Bill D'Arcy, Merri Rose and even Pat Purcell. On issues such as bullying, clearly the Premier exonerated Pat Purcell. They are the facts of the matter in this case. We do not resile from the proper way of doing these investigations. We do not investigate our own and then exonerate our own, as has been done in this case by the Labor Party.

This morning we have seen on a number of issues where the state Labor government, the health minister and the Premier have been unable to stand up and do the things that they are supposed to do in state government. This morning we heard the Premier, in answer to my question about health workers being paid, saying that everyone knows that they will be paid on the day if they are not getting paid electronically, somehow implying that we are only asking about electronic payments. Wherever I have been over the last month, whether it is Mapoon—here I met a nurse who said that she is not taking jobs in Queensland anymore but is going to New South Wales because she has not been paid properly—Mossman, Ingham, Bundaberg, Weipa or Toowoomba, I and my MPs have received representations from constituents because this health minister, the member for Lytton, will not take responsibility for having brought in a payroll system on his watch that has cost up to \$400 million across government but which is not delivering what it should, even though this government was warned.

This morning my other question to the Premier was whether the Premier is going to support Kevin Rudd in his new resource super profits tax. Very obviously, the Premier was not able to answer the question and would not answer the question. In fact, she implied that it is not actually a tax yet. Unless I am mistaken, Wayne Swan made sure his budget was based on this new tax—a tax which he came up with in order to deliver some spurious \$1 billion surplus three or four years from now. He is trying to say that that is ahead of schedule—a schedule they only came up with last year when they could not fulfil the previous year's schedule! If it were not so serious, it would be a big joke. The Premier said, 'No, all the details of the tax are not actually finalised,' implying that this might be a tax that would prevent her from fulfilling her 100,000 bread-winning jobs promise, and then the next day she said, 'Maybe it will help us create more jobs.' She is all over the shop. The Premier is saying that she cannot fulfil her bread-winning jobs promise and then saying that this new tax could help create more jobs.

But it was the Treasurer who belled the cat in his answer to the question from the shadow Treasurer about whether there would be other projects that might be affected. What did he say? The Treasurer said, 'We will support Kevin Rudd'—again, not standing up for Queensland. Just as the government refused to stand up on health negotiations, now what do we find? We are going to lose 42 per cent of our GST revenue—the hard-won GST revenue, lost in the health negotiations—and now the government is rolling over again on the mining sector, which provides 40,000 jobs in this state and supports one in 12 of all jobs in Queensland. When are these people going to stand up for Queensland? Clearly they are not doing it now.

Of course, the Henry tax review is very obviously a lost opportunity. It was an excellent, detailed review with a pathetic, meagre response. To see this we only have to look at the fact that there were 125 taxes before that review and the recommendations from the government, and subsequently we now have 126 taxes. There were 138 recommendations in the Henry tax review. What did the government adopt? Two and a half—a reworking of one, adding to another tax, and the state to be worst affected is Queensland. Meanwhile, the Premier and the Treasurer are fiddling whilst Rome is burning in not standing up for our state.

I have a copy of the government's submission to the Henry tax review. It calls for an end to the vertical fiscal imbalance between Canberra and Queensland. How often have we heard the Treasurer come in here and wax lyrical with all those words that no-one really understands but which show how intellectual he is—saying that we need to do something about this vertical fiscal imbalance that is affecting the federation? This of course is the Treasurer who in his maiden speech talked about getting rid of the GST. We do not hear too much of that anymore, but he is happy to give it away to Canberra.

We are going to keep monitoring and pointing out Labor's failure to budget. It says in its submission—

Vertical fiscal imbalance weakens government accountability and reduces transparency.

So there it is. The Labor government has finally admitted that it has serious problems with accountability and transparency. Just like every other Labor failure, it is someone else's fault! Let us look at how the Rudd government's response has failed Queensland. On 24 November 2009 the Premier said—

That is why I have written to the federal Treasurer ... about the Henry tax review and the once-in-a-lifetime opportunity that it represents to put the levers of government to work in this regard.

I have indicated to the federal Treasurer that decentralisation must be advanced through the tax reform process and I have indicated that the Prime Minister's agenda for a big Australia should include incentives to support regional economies and encourage decentralisation. We need incentives for people to settle outside the south-east corner so that all parts of Queensland can enjoy the benefits that measured, sustainable growth can bring.

What have we seen from the Prime Minister—the great friend of our Premier and another Queenslander? We were going to get a great advantage from having a Queensland Prime Minister and a Queensland Treasurer. There is nothing in the Prime Minister's response that covers these points. The Prime Minister no longer supports a big Australia, because we are still waiting for him to announce what he has been told to think by Hawker Britton about this particular point. The federal Treasurer said—

Is there a case for substantial tax reform that exists in this nation? Absolutely yes.

The federal Treasurer said that on 12 November 2008. He said—

It has long been my view that tax reform is required. It remains my view that that tax reform is required.

So why don't Kevin Rudd and Wayne Swan agree with their Labor mate, the state Treasurer? Because they are only interested in their own survival at the next election!

(Time expired)