




Speech by  
**Bill Byrne**

**MEMBER FOR ROCKHAMPTON**

Hansard Thursday, 1 November 2012

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## **NEWMAN GOVERNMENT, PERFORMANCE**

 **Mr BYRNE** (Rockhampton—ALP) (2.44 pm): I am sure that all members will be aware that during this week's sitting of parliament there has been a noticeable absence. I am referring to the television cameras that focus on whichever member or minister may be speaking at any given time. While this side of the House will always support the democratic right of the television networks to have a presence in this chamber, we also absolutely respect the decision of the Speaker to remove the cameras for a period of time this week.

At the same time, you can bet your bottom dollar that those opposite could not be more delighted by the entirely coincidental absence of cameras from proceedings this week. That way, they have not had to suffer the indignity of seeing their crumbling, embarrassed, mortified and shocked facades broadcast on our television screens from Coolangatta to Cairns. I am willing to gamble that there has been one big sigh of relief from the government and its ministers, who have had to cope with disaster upon disaster this week as their cruel, secretive and sneaky government has been exposed for what it is. I bet they were thinking, 'At least the people of Queensland won't be watching us squirm on the six o'clock news.'

Let us review the week and we will get the gist of what I am talking about. First, we have the spectacle of a Premier who behaves as if every comment he makes is designed to win a Logie nomination. The theatrics of his melodramatic response to each and every question and the wild gesticulations are probably best spared from Queensland lounge rooms while normal Queenslanders are trying to eat dinner.

You can also bet that the Deputy Premier was ecstatic that the cameras were not here today so that the people of Central Queensland and Rockhampton did not have a televised record of the Deputy Premier's assault on the environment and their health. The Deputy Premier this morning—despite just minutes earlier denying it in question time—introduced new legislation that appears to give the government the right to release untested water from mines with the flick of a pen or a phone call.

**Mr STEVENS:** Madam Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. The member is clearly anticipating debate with his comments in relation to that bill that has been introduced.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mrs Cunningham): I am advised that reference to a matter in a bill can be made but the bill cannot be discussed. Please be careful in your comments.

**Mr BYRNE:** The people of Rockhampton will be hearing about it, though they were not able to see the Deputy Premier's face as he unleashed this disastrous plan to degrade the Fitzroy Basin and further contaminate the area's water supply.

Then we had the transport minister who, coming into this place, was rightfully frightened of the questions he was bound to face over the debacle he has made of his department in just seven months. That discussion is for another time, but I am sure the transport minister was thrilled and overjoyed when there were no cameras around to record his uncomfortable approach to the questions about his department, his behaviour and his office's refusal to stick to this government's woefully dishonest pledge to be open and accountable. While many of his ministerial colleagues have done the right thing and handed over copies of their diaries, the transport minister's office has closed inquiries down.