




Speech by  
**Bill Byrne**

**MEMBER FOR ROCKHAMPTON**

Hansard Thursday, 15 November 2012

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## **BRUCE HIGHWAY**

 **Mr BYRNE** (Rockhampton—ALP) (3.04 pm): It is an absolute revelation for me to sit on this side of the chamber and witness the blistering incompetence of this government. This government thinks that it can just spin its way through the first term without the slightest need to provide rigorously tested and grounded decisions in support of honest leadership. It was only during the last sitting of this parliament that the opposition was subjected to the sanctimonious, irrational nonsense from LNP backbenchers and ministers regarding the state of the Bruce Highway. I particularly recall the comments of Minister Emerson lauding his achievements.

But what about the Minister for Local Government? I copped a spray in his adjournment speech while he rambled on about the joys of the Bruce Highway Action Plan. The minister made specific comment of billions of dollars over 10 years. I do not understand why he did not talk about \$10 billion over 100 years for all the relevance it has. The truth is that this financial year the government has committed just \$10 million in additional funding and the same next financial year. Effectively, that means in the first term of this government no real additional money will be committed to the Bruce Highway. There will be no effect on the ground. The entire exercise from prior to the last election campaign to this very moment has been nothing more than spin and misrepresentation.

All was revealed last week by the LNP's federal comrade Warren Entsch. He described this much lauded plan as 'bull'. Someone on the LNP side of politics does not seem to like the Minister for Transport and Main Roads. Someone is actively seeking to destroy his credibility and destroy bits of this government. I wonder who has the most to gain from that? There are two deeply concerning aspects to this. The first is the outrageous claims made by this government about what it was 'gunna do' versus what it will actually do, which is nothing, as evidenced by the fact that not even their own federal colleagues will support them. Of course the fact that there will never be a commitment to the Bruce Highway of any description from a federal coalition government is a replay of the Costello era. The second aspect, of course, is the incredible revelation that the leaking of this correspondence represents: good, old-fashioned, full-blown factional war within the illegitimate child called the LNP. This political omelette has been in government for eight months and it has reverted to its natural tendencies of eating its own. It looks to me as though it is not just the police service that is desperately in need of stab vests while on duty; increasingly it would appear that the transport minister might like one as well. Perhaps the Minister for Transport and Main Roads would be safer sitting on this side of the parliament. There is an old saying: never confuse the opposition with the real enemy. That might be a useful palm card for the minister.

In conclusion, it is great to see that Warren Entsch has been honest enough to call a spade a shovel on this matter. No amount of subsequent retractions is going to change what he said.