




Speech by

Hon. Campbell Newman

MEMBER FOR ASHGROVE

Hansard Wednesday, 11 July 2012

WASTE REDUCTION AND RECYCLING AMENDMENT REGULATION (NO. 1): DISALLOWANCE

 **Hon. CKT NEWMAN** (Ashgrove—LNP) (Premier) (8.02 pm): This evening I am going to enjoy the opportunity to rise to speak in this debate. In particular, I will address my comments to some of the nonsense that we have heard from the Leader of the Opposition this evening. This has been going on for about 12 months and it is time to correct the record. We know that the Australian Labor Party is good at saying things again and again and again. It is a technique. They must do courses in it. They take a George Orwell approach, whereby if you keep repeating it eventually people will believe that black is white. We will not let them do that.

The facts are these: prior to the 2009 state government election, the South-East Queensland Council of Mayors, which I led as chairman, wrote to the then Labor state government, the Liberal National Party and the Greens and asked a few questions about various policy matters. One of the questions that we put to the two major parties and the Greens was: what is your position in relation to a waste levy? As I recall it, the answer from the LNP was that it opposed a waste levy. The answer that we received from the Australian Labor Party, in black and white—I do not have it with me this evening, but I am happy to bring it into the chamber and table it—was contained in a letter that stated there would be no waste levy under a future Bligh government.

I see the very wet-behind-the-ears member for South Brisbane objecting, because she is one of the machine people of the Labor Party who will do and say anything for political power. That is what we see. Clearly, the Australian Labor Party made a statement that they would not introduce a waste tax or waste levy. Do members know why I am so convinced of that? A number of the mayors involved still belong to that council and they will bear this out. The council published a table in the *Courier-Mail* newspaper and we had the various policies of the various parties going into the 2009 election. The position of the Labor Party was faithfully recorded as not supporting a waste levy; that they said they were not going to bring in a waste levy.

Then the election occurred and what happened? You could have knocked me over with a feather, because within about three weeks as I recall it—my memory may be slightly wrong on the timing, but I think it was about three weeks later—the new minister for the environment, the Hon. Kate Jones, contacted the Council of Mayors and said, 'I want to have a meeting.' We turned up to the meeting. I recall Mayor John Brent was there. The minister sat us down. That bloke who used to be the director-general of the Premier's department and who was her director-general at the time—we do not want to remember his name—sat us down and said, 'We want to talk about the new waste levy.'

We had just had an election. There was going to be no waste levy and they had put that in writing. We put that in the newspaper. We told the people of South-East Queensland, through the *Courier-Mail*, that there was not going to be a waste levy if the Labor government was re-elected. Three weeks later they said, 'There's going to be a waste levy.' To say that we felt betrayed is an understatement. To say that we felt that they were shonky is an understatement. That is what they did. They had a three-year term and a gun against our heads.

We said, 'If you're going to have a waste levy, surely it should be only for the purposes of reducing waste? It should be about landfill, about weighbridges, about trying to encourage people to reduce their waste.' As mayors, as leaders of local governments that had put in recycling schemes and paid for that without any help from the former Labor government, we were quite committed to reducing waste to landfill. Guess what? Minister Kate Jones ratted on that one as well, as they say in the vernacular. Initially, to get our reluctant support after they had backflipped and reneged, she actually said that it would go only to the reduction of waste and not to buying national parks, dealing with weeds, employing rangers or whatever. We were told it would go only to waste.

The other thing that we were adamant about was that it would not apply to municipal waste. Contrary to the way that the Leader of the Opposition misled the House only a few short minutes ago, it was going to apply to municipal waste and I will tell the members opposite how that was to occur. People in suburbia who hire a miniskip, which is municipal waste, were to be hit with it. They did not even know what their legislation was about. They did not even know how the former director-general was going to manipulate them. A bloke called John Bradley used to manipulate the schmucks in front of him. I withdraw that if it is unparliamentary. Those people were hoodwinked by people like Mr Bradley, because they did not have a clue about the legislation they brought into this place. Miniskips—bins hired by ratepayers and property owners in South-East Queensland—were going to be hit with this levy. That was another solemn commitment from the then minister for the environment, Kate Jones, that was broken.

I will wrap up. The idea of a tax fuelling a wonderful new industry, as we heard from the Leader of the Opposition, just shows what financial and economic illiterates the Australian Labor Party are. A tax supporting a brave new world: where have we heard that? The carbon tax! The carbon tax is not a tax; it is a wonderful, economic reform. For many years I have heard spin from the Australian Labor Party, but I can tell members now that their breathtaking efforts on both the waste levy and the carbon tax really take the cake.

Mr Springborg: They are rippers.

Mr NEWMAN: They are just rippers. It is not an environmental thing anymore; it is a brave new economic reform! The carbon tax is going to transform our economy! It is a brave, new, clean-energy future! We can all stand up and salute 'Comrade' Gillard.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr NEWMAN: I have got to the honourable members opposite, going by their interjections. Their ongoing spin and relentless nonsense is finally being exposed.

Mr Springborg interjected.

Mr NEWMAN: Yes. No new tax ever spawned a wonderful new industry. Those of us who have worked in the private sector, who have actually filled out a BAS, who have employed people, who have made payroll, who have had the responsibility of looking after employees and remitting their PAYE tax to the tax office, know that a brave new tax never created an industry. A tax never created a great new industry.

What have the Australian Labor Party come to? Once a upon time, the benches comprising Australian Labor Party members had one thing: people of integrity. They had people who built things with their hands. They had chippies. They had coalminers. They had sparkies. They had people who worked for councils. They had people who dug ditches. They had people who drove steamrollers. Nowadays, what do we have in the Australian Labor Party? We have university educated union hacks, spin doctors, complete fibbers—people who could not tell the truth under water if they were forced to.

These people have lost their way. They do not understand the economy. They do not understand finance. They have never run businesses. They are incompetent. They racked up \$100 billion worth of debt. They do not understand that we have to get this state back on the straight and narrow.

Opposition members interjected.

Madam SPEAKER: Order! Member for Bundamba, you already have one warning.

Mr NEWMAN: They have not one single idea in their brains about how to take this state forward. They will sit there on those benches and bleat confidently, I am sure quite, because nobody across there represents business. Nobody across there represents the good, honest Labor values that I happen to greatly respect. I respect real, decent people, and I have known a few—people like Hughie Williams, my friend who used to run the Transport Workers Union and understands what it is like to struggle and to deal with adversity in life and overcome that adversity. But, sadly, the members of the TWU are about to be hit with a carbon tax. I can tell members one thing: they and their businesses are not going to be hit with a waste tax.