




Speech by

Michael Crandon

MEMBER FOR COOMERA

Hansard Tuesday, 5 June 2012

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY

 **Mr CRANDON** (Coomera—LNP) (4.17 pm): I rise to give my address-in-reply to the Governor's speech at the opening of the 54th Parliament. This was without doubt the most significant event in Queensland's recent history—an opportunity for Queensland to get back on track. The Governor said in her opening speech—

You have been entrusted with a responsibility to uphold and maintain the basic principles of our parliamentary democracy—representative and responsible government. Each of you will play an important role in considering and making decisions on matters relating to the welfare and prosperity of this great State.

Take a moment to think about that—'consider and decide on matters of welfare and prosperity for this great state'. That is our commitment. Our pledge to the people of Queensland is to grow a four-pillar economy, lower the cost of living for families by cutting waste, deliver better infrastructure and better planning, revitalise front-line services for families, and restore accountability in government. People have heard it many times in this House. They have heard it many times around this state. They will continue to hear those words, because that is the commitment that this government makes.

That is a cornerstone of what we will do and that will take us on the road to improving welfare and prosperity for all. That is what the Governor said was our responsibility. Our four-pillar economy incorporates tourism, resources, construction and agriculture—not just relying on resources to pull this state through and then frittering away the money that has been generated by those resources, but to make sure that we have strength right across our economy. Unemployment is too high and my business constituents tell me that the duplication in red tape is one aspect of what, in the past, was crippling them. The message is clear: they want less regulation and lower taxes. If we turn around those aspects, then we will reduce unemployment, because we will be going some way towards restoring confidence in business.

In my first term I said many times that it is an honour to serve my electorate, to fight for what is right in the state seat of Coomera. My constituents rewarded me at this election and recognised the hard work put in by not only me but also my darling wife, Pauline, who spends as much time as she can with me in the electorate, given that she is, after all, a doting nanna of five gorgeous grandchildren. That sometimes causes a bit of a challenge for us.

Special mention, though, must also go to my electorate office staff. The reward shown by my constituents at the election is as much as a result of their efforts as they are of mine. I thank Trish Griffin and Robin Mackay for their commitment to the people of the state seat of Coomera and to the job of providing them with a voice. In no small measure thanks must go to my campaign team, ably led by Barry Gordon, who was amazing in his organisational skills and in rallying the troops. Barry set targets for, among many other things, fundraising, corflute distribution, letterbox drops and, most importantly, having fun. I thank Barry and Beverley for their friendship and support in the time since we met shortly before the 2009 election.

Another of Barry's targets was to recruit 300 volunteers for the campaign and, by all accounts, we had all of that number. For that reason, it is dangerous to start naming names for fear of leaving someone out—there are just too many. I just want to say to each and every one of them—the many who put in a

huge effort and those who gave as much as they could, given they had other burdens on their life—thank you all, thank you from the bottom of my heart. We ran a grassroots, positive campaign and it paid dividends beyond anything we anticipated.

I contrast that with the Katter party candidate. Katter and his crony, in their negative campaign, pried into my personal life and my personal business to try to find something that they could use to unseat me. They forgot that people were sick of negativity. They forgot that people were already reacting negatively to the negative campaign that Labor was foisting on the community. Yet they persisted. They endeavoured to undermine what was right in the state seat of Coomera. But the people spoke. They were disgusted by Katter and his cronies to the extent that I achieved a massive swing of more than 21 per cent. Indeed, I was beaten in the swing only by my counterpart on the Gold Coast, the member for Mudgeeraba, who beat me by about .01 per cent. At one point she was terribly upset because she thought the result was the other way around. But I pointed out to her that no, indeed, she was the winner. So we were both very proud of that result. That really does speak volumes for having a positive campaign as opposed to a negative campaign. We were determined to stick to that positive campaign.

In talking about this fellow from Katter's party, during the campaign one moment comes to mind. He was a bully and he showed himself to be the biggest bully of all. This bloke is about six foot four. He would have weighed about 120 kilos. One of my booth workers on the prepoll was a little lady about 78 years old and she is this high. Let me make the point that this particular lady was not backward in coming forward. Members could imagine the lady when she saw this guy taking control of the situation, taking people off to one side and talking to them and whispering in their ear and trying to get them to vote for him as opposed to the LNP. In the end, she could not take it anymore. Whether he was six foot four or not, it would not have mattered. He could have been six foot 10. She came in between him and others and made sure that they got the how-to-vote card that she wanted to offer them.

On one occasion she wandered back to her seat and sat down quietly just waiting for the next person to wander in and over he comes and leans over the top of her. Can members imagine? He is six foot four and 120 kilos. She is a 78-year-old lady sitting there and there he is leaning over the top of her shaking his finger at her and basically telling her that she had better back off. I ask members to think about that. What sort of a bully have we got? This guy is an ex-copper. I am disgusted by the thought that this guy is an ex-copper. A lot of the police on the Gold Coast were also disgusted. They made it very clear to me that, yes, he had been a bully since day one. At the end of the day, we certainly put him out to pasture.

There was another incident as well, and we do not know where it came from. Some people have even suggested that it may have been one of my colleagues trying to turn things around for me. Someone managed to put a bullet through the window of my office. My photo was just next to where the bullet went through. I do not know whether they were aiming for me and they just did not wait long enough, but a bullet went through the window. I am proudly now the member who is able to say that I have taken a bullet for the LNP team.

The people of Eagleby were particularly interested in making sure that I was returned this time around. Let me explain. In the 2006 election the conservative vote in Eagleby was 19 per cent. In the 2009 election, the conservative vote in Eagleby was 35 per cent. So I increased the vote by 16 per cent. I was very pleased that I had done that. I set a target for myself of getting 50 per cent of the vote this time around. We had a trial run with the candidate for Forde, as Eagleby is part of his electorate. We managed to lift the vote for the conservatives to 40 per cent. That candidate was Bert van Manen, who is now enjoying federal parliament. I thank the people of Eagleby very much for assisting him in getting there. So this time, where do members think we went? By the way, I did take a couple of side bets on this from some of my colleagues who did not think I could do it. The target was 50 per cent. The people of Eagleby swung 24 per cent in my favour to give a vote of 59 per cent two-party preferred. We now have a conservative residential community in Eagleby with 59 per cent of the community voting for the conservative side of politics. Why?

Mr Johnson: That's because I doorknocked it for you.

Mr CRANDON: I take that interjection. That is because the member doorknocked that area back in the mid-1990s.

Mr Johnson: I doorknocked every house in Eagleby.

Mr CRANDON: In fact, it might have been for the member back then.

Mr Johnson: Billy Baumann.

Mr CRANDON: That is right. The member doorknocked with Billy Baumann to assure everybody there that the new M1 was going to be okay. It was going to be good news for them.

Mr Johnson: And relocated them to better houses than they had.

Mr CRANDON: I take the injection from the member for Gregory.

Ms Bates interjected.

Mr CRANDON: Yes, I must admit as well that there was a period of time when a few of our members were losing their corflutes.

Ms Bates: Seventy.

Mr CRANDON: Apparently the member for Mudgeeraba lost 70. I did not lose quite that many. That was dirty politics. I was driving along one of the roads in my electorate and I saw a couple of what I thought were my signs lying on the ground. I pulled up and wandered over to pick them up. They were not mine; they were the member for Mudgeeraba's. I have to say that it is a long way from the Mudgeeraba electorate to my electorate. So I rang the member and told her that I was holding two of her signs hostage for her. She came and collected them.

Ms Bates: And had them fingerprinted.

Mr CRANDON: And we had them fingerprinted. We did not take the matter any further than that.

I congratulate all members on their election wins. I congratulate my colleagues from the previous parliament who have been appointed to the ministry and also congratulate those new members who are taking up roles in the junior ministry as well. Without doubt the congratulations for the Premier have been coming thick and fast. It is obvious that that is the cornerstone of the reason why we stand here today with a majority of 78 members in this House. I also congratulate Madam Speaker. It is an historic event in this parliament of Queensland to have the first female Speaker. I know that she will do an exemplary job over the coming years.

I remind members that the commitment for each and every one of us is to our constituents. My commitment is to the people of Coomera to continue to fight for what is right for my constituents. That is what you must do. But we have to remember the integrity of the state of Queensland's finances by a failed Labor government has been exposed and the current position is unsustainable with our debt headed for unprecedented levels. Our most important job initially is to rein in government spending, waste and overspending and to, over time, address Queensland's budgetary issues. My further commitment to my constituents is to work with the Newman-led LNP government to get Queensland back on track. The impact on my constituents will be obvious to all if we can achieve that. We are committed to reducing unemployment to 4 per cent in six years. Unemployment and underemployment in the electorate of Coomera is around 13 per cent. We recognise that small business plays a vital role within Queensland's economy and employs hundreds of thousands of people. As such we will expand the payroll tax exemption threshold from \$1 million to \$1.6 million over the next six years. Once again that will have an immediate effect on my business constituents of freeing up cash flow to enable them to recover.

The excitement of the Commonwealth Games in 2018 on the Gold Coast will benefit my construction worker constituents as the building program will mean workers will not have to travel for hours to work each day and many more will find employment once again. It is estimated that the boost to our economy will create something in the order of 30,000 jobs. This new LNP government will promote a culture that ensures the reduction of red tape by 20 per cent to promote business activity and stimulate industry while maintaining high environmental standards. Many of my constituents tell me that the cost of living is crippling them. This government will work for families by addressing the cost of living by cutting waste and delivering a package of measures to reduce the impact of the rising cost of living.

These initiatives, combined with a freeze on car registration fees during the first term of government, will provide welcome relief to families in the Coomera electorate and, indeed, right around Queensland. A key issue in my electorate is the public transport sector. This government will be passenger focused by providing affordable, frequent and reliable public transport services. An example of this is the scheduled 15 per cent public transport fare increases that will be halved under this government. They were scheduled by the previous government to occur on 1 January next year at 15 per cent. That is down to a seven and a half per cent increase. My constituents who are regular commuters will be rewarded with the reintroduction of discounted weekly fares for regular commuters using go cards by making the 10th and subsequent journeys each week free.

Another area that is a high priority issue for my constituents is policing. This government is committed to increasing front-line numbers by 1,300 over the next four years, with 1,100 of those being new appointments. Importantly for my constituents, 100 additional police will be placed in Logan, Coomera and the Gold Coast in the next 12 months. In addition, this government has made it clear that we will introduce the toughest laws in the nation to send the clearest message possible to the community that such things as possession and use of illegal firearms will not be tolerated. As well, we will introduce the toughest anti-hooning laws in the nation. Cars involved in hooning offences will be clamped and removed from the road for three months for the first offence and forfeited or crushed for any subsequent offence within the next five years.

Mr Bleijie: Preferably crushed.

Mr CRANDON: I take the interjection from the Attorney-General. Additional funding of \$1 million a year has been allocated to renew Neighbourhood Watch and Crime Stoppers. That is great news for neighbourhood watch areas around my community and the rest of Queensland. There are many more initiatives that will be implemented across the state that will restore Queensland to its previous prosperity for all of us to enjoy.

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to say that I look forward to my role as chair of the parliamentary Finance and Administration Committee and I look forward to working with my colleagues from both sides of the House in a bipartisan way to scrutinise bills brought before us so that we can assist in bringing sensible legislation into being for the benefit of all Queenslanders. Thank you.