




Speech By
Ray Stevens

MEMBER FOR MERMAID BEACH

MOTION: QUEENSLAND HEALTH, PAYROLL SYSTEM

 **Mr STEVENS** (Mermaid Beach—LNP) (4.25 pm): Mr Deputy Speaker, I thank you for the opportunity to close debate on the matter.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr STEVENS: As the mover of the motion, I am now closing the debate.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order!

Dr DOUGLAS: I rise to a point of order.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: What is the point of order, member for Gaven?

Dr DOUGLAS: I was on my feet and the minister has now indicated that he wanted to shut the debate. I was on my feet. I am a speaker and I want to speak on the debate.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Gaven, the Leader of the House was on his feet. He was the next speaker and I gave him the call. The Leader of the House has the call.

Mr STEVENS: Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker. This today is a motion that is a very genuine attempt to bring forward a better outcome for Queensland. The motion in itself is extremely simple, extremely simple to accede to and I cannot understand the reluctance by the Leader of the Opposition not to bring forward those diaries of those particular ministers. She wondered which ones earlier in her cross call in the House would be of interest, but I am sure the health minister, the IT minister and also the former Premier's diaries would give great leads to what diaries may be required. From our point of view I cannot tell you how many times people from Mermaid Beach say to me, 'I get sick of the carping by the Leader of the Opposition on the television about openness and accountability in government.' And that is exactly what we are trying to get here today. The Newman government has committed itself above and beyond. In fact, I am the assistant minister for openness and accountability through e-government specially created by the Premier to make sure that all our datasets and statistical information is put out there in the public forum.

Mr Costigan: A terrific initiative!

Mr STEVENS: Thank you very much, member for Whitsunday. What we get in response is negativity from the Leader of the Opposition, which is both embarrassing and hypocritical when she calls for openness and accountability in government. I cannot believe that the Leader of the Opposition can defend the greatest financial fiasco in Queensland's operational expenditure. I am also reminded of the other great financial fiasco by the same Labor government in terms of spending in excess of around \$7 billion on drought-proofing South-East Queensland with a white elephant water recycling plant down at Currumbin and a \$2.5 billion recycled water pipe that has not been used to any effect whatsoever.

The opposition is the leading expert in world's best practice for wasting money. It has a duty—and it is the right thing for it, as well—to try to help Queenslanders with any possibility of getting back money from the firms the previous government was involved with. In this case, as we all know, that happens to be IBM. Whilst we do not say that the former government corruptly gave IBM any advantage, we are saying that its Olympic-class stupidity in taking a \$6 million exercise to a \$1.2 billion debacle is absolutely unbounded in the history of this state. We are clearly asking the Leader of the Opposition to come clean on those diaries and give the diaries—

Ms PALASZCZUK: I rise to a point of order.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Dr Robinson): Order! What is your point of order, Leader of the Opposition?

Ms PALASZCZUK: Any document that the royal commission asked for from me they have received.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: That is not a point of order; it is a point of view.

Mr STEVENS: I will say it again: we are asking the Leader of the Opposition to come clean with the diaries of former ministers who were involved in the payroll debacle so that we can see how this horrible exercise evolved. Any refusal by the Leader of the Opposition to come clean with those diaries will show the greater public of Queensland clear guilt by lack of admission. In the eyes of the Queensland public, if she has nothing to hide there is no reason for her not to come forward with those diaries. The royal commission was after these particular matters for its own reasons. However, the smell and stench of hiding the diaries from the Queensland public means that the Queensland public can only believe that the opposition has plenty to hide. That is the sad situation even though, night after night on television, the Labor Party carps on about openness and accountability. It talks about sacking nurses and other misleading rubbish. Quite clearly, it was one K Rudd who took \$103 million out of Queensland during his de facto prime ministership while he undermined the good Julia Gillard. It was she who actually took the \$103 million out of Queensland Health. Quite clearly, as the health minister has explained on numerous occasions, that is the reason certain sections of Queensland Health are being put under pressure.

Mr WELLINGTON: I rise to a point of order.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! What is your point of order?

Mr WELLINGTON: I thought the Manager of Government Business had finished. When he is finished, I want to move a matter. I will wait until he has finished, out of courtesy to the speaker.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Leader of the House has the call.

Mr STEVENS: As I was saying, if you take \$103 million out of the Queensland health system, QED by definition we will lose \$103 million worth of medical services. If you take \$1,200 million out of the Queensland health system, which the Labor Party in government successfully did, that will mean a lot fewer health procedures. We heard the health minister refer to this in question time. It will mean a lot of people will not be able to have health procedures done here in Queensland.

The Leader of the Opposition has admitted that this is one of the worst debacles ever in Queensland or in the health system. Quite clearly, she would like to forget about the matter. However, there is no reason for Queenslanders to forget about the matter when it is still an ongoing issue that was caused by the Labor Party. There are still difficulties with that payroll system and we are still trying to patch it up. Quite clearly, the Labor Party can assist this government to address this ongoing problem for Queenslanders. It can assist this government on behalf of the people of Queensland by making those diaries available. There is no reason for this motion not to be supported in a bipartisan fashion. The opposition could then stand up and say, 'Queenslanders, we are trying to help fix the Queensland payroll system.' I am appalled at the recalcitrance of opposition members in this House today that they will not support this motion. In closing the debate, I commend this bill to the House.