




Speech By
Fiona Simpson

MEMBER FOR MAROOCHYDORE

Record of Proceedings, 29 October 2015

MOTION

Member for Cook, Order for Production of Documents

 **Ms SIMPSON** (Maroochydore—LNP) (6.11 pm): How contemptuous is it to hear the Attorney-General of this state bag out the right of parliament to ask for these documents, to put a direction to the Premier! I think it is quite disgraceful. I think the Attorney-General 'protesteth too much'. What have you got to hide? What has this government got to hide? What we hear are excuses. This is a government that is an accidental administration and it has been bumbling from one crisis to the next.

Queenslanders never voted for the unsavoury sideshow that is the member for Cook, Billy Gordon, whom the Labor Party have inflicted upon Queensland. As we have heard from the Attorney-General tonight, they continue to want to keep this protection racket going. While the Palaszczuk government continue to bumble along without a plan for the state, incredibly they have made this man one of the most powerful in Queensland. This motion is an opportunity for Premier Palaszczuk to walk the walk and not just talk the talk about the standards of integrity she claims for her team. Premier Palaszczuk and her team cannot on the one hand claim outrage about the member for Cook, Billy Gordon's, behaviour, while on the other hand they provide him with support and encouragement to stay in the parliament in order to keep propping up her administration. That disgraceful contribution from the Attorney-General means that they are continuing to protect the member for Cook. It is a confusing twostep which is typical of this accidental ad hoc government.

Tonight's motion is a litmus test of how genuine the Premier is about her supposed rejection of the behaviour of the member for Cook, Billy Gordon, whose election as a Labor MP in January helped her form government. Either the Premier condones the actions of the member for Cook, Billy Gordon, or she does not. There have been many unsavoury things that have hit the media recently about the member for Cook, but it is the allegations of domestic violence and the prior criminal history which were not disclosed before the election which are the most serious and which have been brought forward into the public eye. This motion is a reasonable test of the parliament, which the Attorney-General is so contemptuous of. It is a reasonable test to see whether the Premier's claims of having put the member for Cook, Billy Gordon, outside the circle of government support are genuine. If this Labor government have nothing to hide, they will support this motion here tonight.

There have been great members for Cook who represented their people well in the past without the stain of public disgrace such as the late Eric Deeral, who was a giant amongst his community. It is a tragedy that this area, which has so much need, carries the burden of an MP who should resign—and who the Labor Party should do more to encourage to resign, rather than their encouragement here tonight to oppose this motion. They continue to encourage the member for Cook and they continue to prop him up. What we have seen on the parliamentary precinct indicates that Labor members continue to gather around and support the member for Cook, Billy Gordon, such as last night, when he voted with the government with his Labor colleagues and afterwards they were there slapping him on the back. It sure looked like encouragement to me!

This government is hanging on to power by a thread, and that thread is the member for Cook, a man whose own community has started a petition to get rid of. We have given the government two opportunities to show some integrity and to reject the member for Cook's vote, but they have refused. Last night it became clear: the member for Cook's decision to vote against a bill that would have provided his own constituents with better representation goes to show that he is a member of the Labor team first and the member for Cook second.

This motion is a test for the Labor government to prove their claim that they have some shred of integrity, that they will reject the behaviour of the member for Cook and they will clearly put into the public domain whether there have been other contacts to prop him up. The motion tonight is also tied to the recent behaviour of the allegedly rogue member for Rockhampton, whose office provided support for the member for Cook. The Premier claimed that she was very angry with the member for Rockhampton and that this was one rogue minister or rogue staffer. If that is the case, let this government support this motion. Put some integrity into the process and let us see what the real story is.