




Speech By
Ray Stevens

MEMBER FOR MERMAID BEACH

Record of Proceedings, 5 May 2015

MOTION: STANDING RULES AND ORDERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

 **Mr STEVENS** (Mermaid Beach—LNP) (6.21 pm): I do appreciate all of the accolades from the former manager of opposition business, the Treasurer. It is exactly what he was saying in quoting my words at that particular point in time. We do have a better system of voting in this House. The reason we did that is that, as the Clerk would know, we were losing a lot of time in counting divisions. This particular motion will not change things one iota in terms of time saved. If the Treasurer cares to listen for a couple of seconds, I will point out to him what this motion is all about.

This motion is about honesty and integrity. We heard a lot about honesty and integrity from the Premier, yet she will not accept this change to give honesty and integrity to the parliamentary voting system that we brought in last year through changes to standing orders. Quite clearly, the dynamics within the House have changed. That is very obvious to the good folk on the other side of the House. These changes will provide an opportunity, in the voting regime in this House, to identify a particularly delicate voting pattern that is very dependent on the minor parties and the Independents in this House—including your good self from Nicklin, Mr Speaker. This is about getting honesty and integrity into the voting system under the standing orders of this House.

The fact that the government is walking away from this particular change to the standing orders, in this delicately balanced House, clearly tells us and the public of Queensland that it does not want to apply honesty and integrity to the voting system when it comes to the member for Cook. It still wants the de facto member of the Labor Party, the member for Cook, to vote with the Labor Party. That is exactly why the situation referred to in statements attributed to the member for Bundamba on 4BC—‘there is no way that Labor cannot accept his vote’, that is, Billy Gordon—is absolutely fixed forever by this change to standing orders that the government will not accept.

Why will the government not accept the change to standing orders? It is all about honesty and integrity. It does not want the capacity for the LNP to abstain—which we will if the member for Cook votes with us. We would expect that, according to her so-called honesty and integrity, the Premier would also arrange abstention from utilising the vote of the member for Cook to pass legislation and hang on to power in this state.

This proposal to change standing orders reflects Labor’s request in opposition to recognise all of the minor parties. The minor parties—currently the only minor party is the Katter party—will have their votes recorded first, along with the votes of the Independents. The only Independent—other than your good self, Mr Speaker—in the voting regime that is required to be heard is the member for Cook. The LNP has committed, in terms of honesty and integrity, to cancel out that vote by not voting if the member for Cook votes with us. We need the Premier to make the commitment that she will not accept his vote for the Labor Party in order to keep alive her vision of honesty and integrity for the government. In fact, it is very dead.

Members opposite are opposing this reasonable change which does not affect the time taken to count divisions and does not affect the outcome in any way other than to protect the Labor

government's vote utilising the member for Cook, Billy Gordon. That is the reason for the government's opposition to the motion moved by the Leader of the Opposition. He has been very up-front. In fact, I think he is being very bold. He could have taken the opportunity to utilise the vote of the Independent member for Cook on occasion if he saw something of interest that might affect him that the LNP put forward. We in the LNP are walking away from that opportunity in the interests of honesty and integrity.

On 18 April 2013 the now Premier asked Campbell Newman—

... will the ... LNP now sit back and be happy to accept the vote of the member for Redcliffe from the crossbenches?

She was intimating that we were desperate for his vote. At that time we had 78 members to their seven, as I recall, when Mr Driscoll was in the LNP ranks and then moved across to sit as an Independent. Currently we have a situation where the Premier is quite prepared to accept the vote of the member for Cook.

(Time expired)