




Speech By
Dr Christian Rowan

MEMBER FOR MOGGILL

Record of Proceedings, 2 November 2016

MOTION

CFMEU, WorkCover Queensland

 **Dr ROWAN** (Moggill—LNP) (6.12 pm): I rise to speak in support of the motion moved by the shadow minister, the member for Kawana. The Palaszczuk Labor government should rule out the appointment of any former or current CFMEU official to be the CEO of WorkCover Queensland or to lead any other statutory authority in Queensland for the following reasons. The actions of the CFMEU and militant unions in Queensland are jeopardising our construction and building sectors. The Palaszczuk Labor government is so beholden to union influence that it is now owned and dominated by the stench of illegality, bullying, intimidation, lawlessness and corruption. Thousands of jobs in Queensland are being denied to ordinary people because of excessive construction costs due to inappropriate stop-work meetings and inflated pay rates as a result of militant unions. A Deloitte Access Economics report that was recently commissioned by Master Builders found that labour costs on building and construction projects are being pushed up by 11.9 per cent in Queensland, adding \$279 million a year to the state government's capital works budget.

Our Crime and Corruption Commission should investigate the links between organised crime, unions and the Australian Labor Party as a matter of urgency. Premier Palaszczuk can no longer continue to protect illegality, bullying, intimidation and lawlessness by unions. If you look at the industrial relations minister's meetings in relation to two candidates—

Government members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Pause the clock one moment. Minister for Police and Minister for Industrial Relations, I would urge you not to persist or you will be warned under standing order 253A.

Dr ROWAN: They do not like hearing the truth. They like to lecture us on this side of the House, but what they do not like is transparency and openness in government—

Mr Byrne interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Pause the clock. I apologise, member for Moggill. Minister for Police, you are now warned under standing order 253A. If you persist I will take the appropriate action.

Dr ROWAN: They do not like hearing the truth about openness and transparency when it comes to merit based recruitment. They meet with two potential candidates to head up WorkCover Queensland, and in between that, as we have just heard from the minister, it just so happens that she also meets with a senior official from the CFMEU. It is highly unusual and highly irregular. We need openness and transparency in relation to the appointment of all key leaders and CEOs of our statutory authorities here in Queensland.

Recently we have seen some disgraceful actions by militant unionists who targeted a charity home for the families of sick children. The Ronald McDonald House, which is being built in South Brisbane—the electorate of the Deputy Premier—was among up to six worksites targeted by the CFMEU for a two-day stop-work meeting. The Palaszczuk Labor government professes to care about vulnerable and disadvantaged children but on the other hand fails to repudiate the disgraceful delay of a project that has the capacity to assist hundreds of vulnerable children and their families whilst these children are being treated for a range of health conditions at the nearby Lady Cilento hospital.

Union vandalism and industrial warfare is also affecting Queensland's preparations for the Commonwealth Games, with the velodrome at Chandler also targeted by militant unions as well as the \$550 million Commonwealth Games village. The Sunshine Coast's \$1.8 billion university hospital is also being targeted. It is not a far stretch to see evolving concerns between criminal gangs, money laundering, fraud, terrorism, unions and the Labor Party, who are soft on crime and soft on—

Ms GRACE: I rise to a point of order. Looking at the motion that has been moved, I really struggle with relevance here. They are talking about the actions of a particular union. It is not in the motion, and I draw your attention to relevance in relation to this matter.

Mr SPEAKER: I will allow the contribution.

Dr ROWAN: The Palaszczuk government and the industrial relations minister support union bullying, union intimidation and union harassment. When we look at the recruitment of the new CEO for WorkCover Queensland, as we have said, the industrial relations minister meets with a key CFMEU official, Michael Ravbar, who is under investigation by the police for inappropriate conduct and behaviour, and then between meetings with two of the candidates she just happens to have a scheduled meeting with him. We ask again what was discussed at that meeting, what was the purpose of the meeting and—

Ms Grace interjected.

Dr ROWAN: I take that interjection. The industrial relations minister does not like to hear the truth about these matters which are very important to the people of Queensland. Premier Palaszczuk and her ministers are beholden to union bosses and union influence. We know that coercion, intimidation, unlawful industrial action, right-of-entry breaches and illegal activities have become the modus operandi of the conjoint union movement and the Australian Labor Party. We only have to look at the findings of the Royal Commission into Trade Union Governance and Corruption. Look at Commissioner Dyson Heydon's findings in relation to what he found at that time.

The shearers of Western Queensland, the founders of the Labor Party, would be aghast. They would be rolling in their graves over the evolution of the modern Labor Party. There needs to be leadership within the Labor Party who will stand up and repudiate the actions, the illegality, the corruption and the inappropriate conduct and behaviour in relation to union officials. I call upon those members opposite to repudiate criminality and thuggery. You should provide transparency and accountability in government, and you should support this motion tonight which was moved by the shadow minister and the member for Kawana.