




Speech By
Christopher Whiting

MEMBER FOR MURRUMBIDGE

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MOTION: AMENDMENT TO STANDING RULES AND ORDERS

 **Mr WHITING** (Murrumbidgee—ALP) (6.19 pm): I rise to oppose this motion. This motion flies in the face of good governance. Under this motion the opposition could simply put in any old bill based on half-baked policy. Such a bill could contain a number of errors and unintended consequences. But if this motion is successful, such a flawed bill becomes a primary bill. The star bill. The one around which all must revolve. If a bill is introduced after it—no matter how well it is constructed—if it resembles the first bill it does not make the grade. If it is argued that it is substantially the same bill, it does not make the grade no matter how good it is. Who interprets what that means?

An honourable member: The Speaker.

Mr WHITING: The member is exactly right; under this motion it looks like the Speaker gets to decide it. But that would open up a whole host of problems. There would be endless arguments and perhaps endless consultation and negotiation, but that does not lead to good government. This motion does not lead to good government because it gives the opposition members the right to insert their bills and exercise the prerogatives of government even though they have been specifically rejected as the government of Queensland.

This motion reeks of one thing, and that is their born-to-rule mentality. The LNP members just cannot grasp that they are not the government. They cannot grapple with the fact that they do not get to run the legislative agenda, but that attitude is just typical of the LNP ideology. What does the LNP actually believe in? What is their ideological framework? Everything they think and do comes down to just two bedrock beliefs, but I will deal with only one today. The LNP members believe they are there to rule and only they should rule. I would remind them that ruling is different from governing. Ruling means the exercise of authority and the issuing of orders. A ruler hands down directives from above and we must obey. To disagree or resist is a direct affront to the rulers, and that cannot be tolerated. Does that sound familiar? The LNP does not believe in governing. To govern means to reach consensus and gain consent. You must get the consent of the people and exercise it on behalf of the people, and that consent can be withdrawn if it is not done on behalf of the people. The LNP have moved this motion because they believe they are here to rule and they are born to rule.

They are complaining. Perhaps I have been a bit harsh. Let us try a more generous assessment. This try-hard motion, this limp stunt of a motion, is typical of the sad demise and short-lived history of the LNP. They had to trash two good political brands, National and Liberal, to create their new brand. The old political brands had some real value and trust. The Nats looked after the bush; they had a measure of trust. They were good old agrarian socialists who fought hard to get what they could for the bush. Then you had the Liberals, who were a town based party representing the mercantile class. They were genuinely liberal. But what does their new brand mean? This is what the LNP brand means: when you say 'LNP', people say job cuts and job losses.

Their new brand, in which they have invested everything, has become toxic. They killed two perfectly acceptable brands to create one that repels people. They cannot go back. The old Nats and the Libs brands are dead; they have killed them off. They have put all their political capital in a brand that will not be trusted by the people of Queensland. What a sad demise for those two Queensland political parties and what a sad subsequent demise for the LNP. It does remind me that they have won just one general election since Joh Bjelke-Petersen was premier—just one! They are not very good at winning elections and if this motion is the best that they can do, I think that they are going to be hard-pressed to win another one.