



Speech By  
**Jarrold Bleijie**


**MEMBER FOR KAWANA**

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Record of Proceedings, 2 November 2016

**MOTION**

**CFMEU, WorkCover Queensland**

 **Mr BLEIJIE** (Kawana—LNP) (6.00 pm): I move—

That the House note:

1. the CFMEU contributed \$156,218.60 to the Queensland Labor Party between 1 January 2016 and 30 June 2016;
2. a *Courier-Mail* article, dated 31 October 2016, stated that the Palaszczuk Labor government was intending to appoint a former National Secretary of the CFMEU as the new CEO of WorkCover Queensland;
3. the diary of the Industrial Relations Minister, Grace Grace, published on 1 November 2016 shows that the minister personally met with two candidates for the position of CEO of WorkCover Queensland on 21 September 2016;
4. between the two meetings mentioned above, that the minister met with CFMEU official Michael Ravbar.

And calls on the Palaszczuk Labor government to rule out the appointment of a former CFMEU official as the CEO of WorkCover Queensland and immediately begin the selection of an independent CEO again with a fully open, accountable and transparent process pursuant to their policy of merit based recruitment rather than union mates.

This motion goes to the heart of the relationship of the CFMEU—and the intimidating behaviour of CFMEU officials—and the Labor Party, particularly the Queensland branch and more particularly the Minister for Industrial Relations. I have to start off by correcting a misrepresentation I made in the House some time ago. It was the fault of the honourable member for Hinchinbrook, of course. He told me that Duncan Pegg, who is sitting over there, was the union enforcer of the Labor Party Queensland branch. I was as surprised as he was at the time but—

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Elmes): Order! Member for Kawana, you will use the member's proper title.

**Mr BLEIJIE:** Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker. He might want to be Treasurer, but I think he has more chance of being transport minister this week. We know the member for Brisbane Central is, in fact, an actual union enforcer herself, so it came as no surprise to me to hear that the incoming CEO of WorkCover is a former national secretary of the CFMEU. At the outset I say that the appointment of Bruce Watson, former national secretary of the CFMEU, to WorkCover Queensland is totally inappropriate and the opposition does not support his appointment. We are told that this appointment either went to cabinet on Monday or it is going to cabinet next Monday. If it is going to cabinet next Monday the minister has an opportunity to take the cabinet submission out. If it went to cabinet on Monday, it will be going to Executive Council tomorrow. She has an opportunity to take it off the agenda for Executive Council. If she does not do that, then Bruce Watson, former CFMEU official, should reject his appointment; he should not accept the appointment. This is what we do know. Since the article ran on Monday in the *Courier-Mail* the minister has not said a word—not a peep. We know her office could not find her, could not locate her, did not know where she was. I guess now we know that unless Twitter

tells them what is happening in the government they do not know. Maybe Steve Wardell should have tweeted the story and then Grace would have seen it. If he had tweeted his story the minister would have seen it just as the transport minister gets his guidance—

**Mr Minnikin:** There he is!

**Mr BLEIJIE:** Tweet it now, Steve; the minister will see it. This is something we do not have to tweet because this is the minister's own ministerial diary, and I table a copy of the ministerial diary and there are a couple more pages to go.

*Tabled paper:* Extract from the ministerial diary of the Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations, Minister for Racing and Multicultural Affairs, Hon. Grace Grace, 1 September 2016 to 30 September 2016 [\[1979\]](#).

On 21 September the minister met with a candidate for WorkCover. On 21 September, a couple of meetings later, she also met with a candidate for WorkCover. One, why is the minister meeting potential candidates when there is a panel set up? The minister is going to get up in a minute and say, 'Glenn Ferguson, the chair of WorkCover, he's your man. It's your panel. It's your board.' I will tell honourable members about the panel. Jim Murphy, the Under Treasurer, is on the panel and he is certainly not a supporter of LNP politics in Queensland. The minister will stand up here in a minute and say, 'It was your panel, your board. You selected them.' No, wrong.

**Mr Minnikin:** There goes your speech.

**Mr BLEIJIE:** If I were the minister, I would change my speech. Of course we see the minister met with Michael Ravbar for the CFMEU between those two meetings. Was the first person the minister met one Bruce Watson, former CFMEU national secretary? If he was not, why was Michael Ravbar just coincidentally meeting a minister? Mind you, he is a man under police investigation at the moment. What was Michael Ravbar meeting the minister about? Had it nothing to do with the CEO appointment of WorkCover? Is the minister going to get up here in a second and say it had nothing to do with it; it was about portfolio matters? Did the minister discuss the CEO appointment with Michael Ravbar of the CFMEU? I bet she did. We have videos of CFMEU thuggish behaviour. We have federal judges like Judge Jarrett of the Federal Court saying that there is repeated and wilful contraventions by the CFMEU and they choose unlawful means to further their industrial actions. The minister has an opportunity today to rule out the appointment of Bruce Watson. She should not stand up here and say, 'It was a panel appointed by the LNP,' because we know this appointment has had political interference by the minister's office, just as Brad O'Carroll had political interference with his appointment when the minister put him in her department on a contract. She should rule it out; if not, Bruce Watson should not accept the appointment.