




Speech By
Jarrold Bleijie

MEMBER FOR KAWANA

Record of Proceedings, 17 May 2018

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT (COUNCILLOR COMPLAINTS) AND OTHER
LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL; LOCAL GOVERNMENT ELECTORAL
(IMPLEMENTING STAGE 1 OF BELCARRA) AND OTHER LEGISLATION
AMENDMENT BILL**

Allocation of Time Limit Order

 **Mr BLEIJIE** (Kawana—LNP) (11.25 am): What we are increasingly seeing now with the Palaszczuk Labor government is a dictatorship in this House. They say everyone has the right to speak, but then they want to choose who speaks and how long they speak for. That is not a democratic institution. This is a failing of the Leader of the House and the government. They came in here weeks ago with this guise of family-friendly hours and we have now had three weeks in a row of guillotined debate. It is not because they have so much work to do. The reality is that they cannot manage the time. Not once this week has the Leader of the House come to me and said, 'How many speakers do you have? This is the time frame we are looking at'—not once. This is now Thursday of a three-day sitting week and we have a new guillotine debate.

We only have to remind members in this House how many times the Labor Party waltzed in here over the years and whinged and whinged and whinged about one or two guillotine debates. We are seeing weekly, if not daily, guillotining by this Labor government. As I said yesterday, it shows the arrogance of the Premier that she does not have to abide by what she did in opposition when in government. No, she is above the standards that she set or wanted to set in opposition! She is above all of that now because she has a majority, and when she has a majority she will dictate who speaks, how long they speak for and what they speak about. It will not be long before the Premier comes to this side of the House and hands us her speaking points, saying, 'You're only allowed to speak on this if you use the Labor Party speaking points.' This is disgusting. Weeks and weeks ago when the government had no bills to discuss and then when the committees were getting bills through, we warned the government that they would not have sufficient time with the new hours—

Mrs D'Ath: Why did you suggest fewer hours?

Mr BLEIJIE: I take that interjection. We debated a guillotine motion last week. We stayed here till 10 o'clock. Remember what the Leader of the House said? It was so that everyone could go home and regional members could book their airfares and so forth. She does not want to make the same mistake she did last week by moving that motion at 20 minutes to six. Now we are moving that motion in the morning so that people have time to adjust flights and get home.

The reality is that the Leader of the House cannot manage the time in this place. In her contribution the Leader of the House talked about consideration in detail. It is called consideration in detail for a reason. It is not called 'consideration in not-so-much detail'. How does one consider something in detail if one is being guillotined—

Mr Minnikin: Hasn't been to a committee.

Mr BLEIJIE:—and the amendments have not been to a committee? How is one able to consider clauses in detail when one is cut off, when one is told by the Leader of the House who shall speak and who shall not speak on this debate?

Two weeks ago the Leader of the House said, ‘The opposition has to pick who it wants to speak on these matters,’ and I said no. If an opposition member in this House wants to talk about the undue influence the trade union has on the Labor government, then let them I say.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Kawana, I issue you with the same warning I issued to the Leader of the House. I ask that you do not stray into talking about bills before the House.

Mr BLEIJIE: Thank you, Mr Speaker. It happens from time to time, and this is the whole point of debate in democracy. A Labor member may get up and say something which triggers an opinion or a view—an opposing or a supporting view—from another member of parliament. That member of parliament may not have considered that they wanted to speak on a clause or a particular part of the legislation, but this is the people’s house of debate and one would expect that we would have debate.

The Labor Party can no longer hold the line that they have the moral integrity, accountability and high standards that they wanted to set in opposition, because I have no doubt that we are going to see this time and time again. I would say that the Leader of the House ought to be embarrassed that we have not even voted on one bill this week, and that is despite the fact that we have cognated two bills. Imagine if the government did not cognate the two bills. We would not have even got through one of the bills.

Mr Mander: They would have guillotined it earlier.

Mr BLEIJIE: I take the interjection from the Deputy Leader of the Opposition. They would have guillotined it earlier. If we look at the comments and contributions—

Mr Minnikin interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Pause the clock. Member for Chatsworth, you are a repeat offender in terms of not using members’ appropriate titles in this House. You are warned under the standing orders. I really do not want to keep repeating myself to you on so many occasions.

Mr BLEIJIE: I can recall between 2009 and 2012 when the member for Woodridge was in this place. He took a holiday in 2012.

Mr Mander: He was the member for Greenslopes.

Mr BLEIJIE: That is right; then he went to Woodridge. I can remember the comments that he would make about guillotining debates. He basically said that it was corruption; it was a dictatorship. The member for Woodridge would say all these sorts of things. Hasn’t it changed now that he is back on the ministerial leather in this place? Guillotining debates, I am sorry to say, is the norm now unfortunately. It appears to be the norm. I take the hand signal interjection from the member for Scenic Rim. Good luck to Hansard on putting that in there! What the member was trying to say with his two digits was that there have been two debates on the guillotine. I say to the honourable member for Scenic Rim that there have been a lot more.

Not only have we had debate guillotined; we have had motions to debate those particular guillotines guillotined. We have had people cut short midsentence. I am waiting for the member for Woodridge to jump up and move the motion that I no longer be heard, as the Minister for Tourism did to the member for Coomera, who was halfway through his contribution. We were having a debate about members having an opportunity to debate in this House, and halfway through the honourable member’s contribution he was cut short without any further debate just because the Minister for Tourism, the member for Cooper, did not like what she was hearing.

I look across the chamber and I see the former leader of the House, the member for Sandgate. He would never have done this. Those in this place will know that when it comes to complimenting the Labor Party I do not dish compliments out often. It is rare.

Mrs Frecklington: I have never heard you do one.

Mr BLEIJIE: I am sure I have done one or two, but I will pay tribute to the former leader of the House because I do believe that he had respect for this place and for this institution.

Mr Mander: That is why they dumped him.

Mr BLEIJIE: I take that interjection. Perhaps he had too much respect for the institution—not Labor’s current disrespect for the institution—that he no longer serves as Leader of the House. I heard the member for Sandgate say, ‘Just you wait,’ so I suspect he is going to speak and tell us how important it is to guillotine this debate. He has changed his moral fibre and his view. Perhaps he has changed his view on all these things.

Mr Mander: You will have to withdraw the compliment.

Mr BLEIJIE: I will if that is the case. The reality is this: there are 93 members in this place. The Premier got up this week and talked about young Elizabeth, the five millionth Queenslander to be born. Elizabeth deserves a voice in this place. The five million Queenslanders deserve a voice in this place. I say: let young Elizabeth be heard in this place. If they want to come in here and say how great it is that we have five million Queenslanders and use this place of debate, this House of democracy, then let it show. They are guillotining debate and stopping healthy debate on important legislation. This is very important legislation.

I would say to the Leader of the House it is important because I believe everyone should be heard. This House should not rise until every member who wants to speak has had an opportunity to speak in this place. That is why they are elected. If that is not the view of the government, then why do we sit? Why do 93 members of parliament come to this place? Is it just because the Labor Party say, 'We want you to speak from nine to five?' The community has changed. People work longer than nine to five. Just because we have a lazy Labor government does not mean every other member in this place should be subjected to the same laziness and arrogance that we have seen from the Labor Party.