




Speech By
Tim Mander

MEMBER FOR EVERTON

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MOTION

Business Program

 **Mr MANDER** (Everton—LNP) (Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (11.27 am): I rise to speak against the motion. This week we have some very important revenue bills that talk about the state finances and it is important that we get the opportunity. Every one of the opposition members, if they want to speak on these bills, deserves the right to speak on these issues to represent their electorates. After hearing the Treasurer's ministerial statement this morning, I cannot think of any other title to call her other than the 'Comical Ali' of the Queensland parliament. I will remind members of 'Comical Ali'.

Mrs D'ATH: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. Those comments are unparliamentary and should be withdrawn.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Stewart): I ask you to withdraw.

Mr MANDER: I withdraw. I will refer to the propaganda king of the Iraqi war, a man who was commonly known by the term I just mentioned, who—despite bombs blowing up around them dropped by American jets, despite having tanks rolling into the streets of Baghdad and despite behind him while being interviewed a statue of Saddam Hussein falling over—said, 'There's nothing to see here!'

Mr DICK: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. This is a debate about a procedural motion moved by the Leader of the House. This is not relevant one iota to the debate in terms of what happened in the Iraq war 28 years ago.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister. In accordance with standing order 118, I ask the member to come back to the motion, please.

Mr MANDER: Mr Deputy Speaker, I will explain how it is relevant. Despite everything that was going on at that comical stage of the Gulf War—things going on around him—the minister for propaganda said otherwise. We have a Treasurer who is ignoring the metaphorical bombs that are around her in the economic sense. We want to speak about the serious issue of the state finances this week, but we are not getting the opportunity. This Treasurer is ignoring all the independent advice that is coming from respected sources—from economic experts who talk about how the Queensland economy is going backwards. We have already mentioned the CommSec State of the States report, which shows that Queensland has dropped—

Mr DICK: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. This is nothing more than an abuse of the parliamentary standards. This is entirely out of order and irrelevant.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Minister, if you rise on a point of order, you need to make it precise. Is it a point of order around relevance?

Mr DICK: Mr Deputy Speaker, it is entirely irrelevant.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: I ask you to come back to the motion.

Mr MANDER: It is one of the few times that I agree with the Minister for State Development. This is an abuse of privilege. This is an abuse of process from this government.

Mr DICK: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I ask the honourable gentleman to withdraw. That is entirely inappropriate. It is not what I said. I take personal offence to it.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The minister finds the comments you have made offensive. I ask that you withdraw.

Mr MANDER: I withdraw. They are so sensitive today.

An opposition member interjected.

Mr MANDER: I will take that interjection. They did not like hearing the truth. They do not like the Queensland public hearing about how they are doing everything possible to stop debate in this House.

This week, there are important elements to speak about in relation to the state's finances. We have mentioned the CommSec State of the States report, which shows that we have gone from fifth to sixth. When we compare the states with each other, those economic powerhouses of South Australia and Tasmania are now beating Queensland. We have small business surveys that say that, with regard to small and medium sized businesses, this is the least popular state government. Why? Because those businesses are concerned about the union influence on this government. We need go no further than the Minister for Transport and Main Roads to see how union officials have influenced his decision-making. Businesses are also concerned about the amount of red and green tape that this government has imposed on them. It is making their lives more difficult.

Yesterday, the infrastructure institute of Queensland said there is a lack of investment in infrastructure in this state. Of course, Queensland has the worst unemployment rate—equal with WA—in the country. Despite the fact that the national unemployment rate under the economic management of a coalition government is going down, our unemployment rate is going up.

This motion is an abuse of the parliamentary process. Every member of this House has the right to get up and question the economic credentials of this government, because there are many others who are doing it—people who are experts in the field. It is not one group of people who are saying it; it is two, three, four and five. This Treasurer ignores the facts.

Mr Janetzki interjected.

Mr MANDER: I take that interjection from the member for Toowoomba South. There is a continuing trend. We have the right to ask questions. We have the right to take the time, because our constituents want to know what this government is doing with their money. I will tell the members opposite that they are not doing a very good job.