




Speech By
Hon. Grace Grace

MEMBER FOR MCCONNEL

Record of Proceedings, 22 October 2019

MOTION

Premier and Minister for Trade, Finding of Contempt

 **Hon. G GRACE** (McConnel—ALP) (Minister for Education and Minister for Industrial Relations) (12.32 pm): I rise in this House to speak in support of the motion. Obviously, when we get Ethics Committee reports like this there is no doubt that the parliament respects the findings, but every day of the week I will stand up in this House and defend the Premier. I will defend her integrity and character every day of the week. I believe that the people of Queensland will do exactly the same. I have known the Premier for many years. Her values and the manner in which she conducts herself are second to none when it comes to integrity.

Those opposite want to throw mud continuously. Week after week, we have had nothing in this House other than those opposite asking questions—and if members do not believe me they should read in *Hansard* the questions that they have been asking—that are only about throwing mud. That is all it is. They have not stopped. Whether the accusations are sustained or not, that is all they do. We are getting to the point where we believe that is all they are good for. They want to be the alternative government in this state, but for weeks of sitting in this House there was not one question on policy or on what is happening in government. It has been nothing but mud throwing. After a while, it starts to stick. Members have commented that it is uncommon for this to occur.

The Deputy Premier and member for South Brisbane outlined the Premier's background. When everyone in this House heard the comments, they motivated a reaction in us all. I say to the students in the gallery, 'Always oppose hate speech, because it moves from one element to another.' It starts on one character, one organisation or one body and quickly it can come and get you. We on this side of the House unreservedly oppose hate speech. I was just as appalled as the Premier in relation to then senator Anning's comments.

Following the Ethics Committee report, the Premier rose in this House, unreservedly apologised and took full responsibility. That is the character of the Premier. In this report, she also outlines quite openly that she was motivated by the abhorrent nature of this speech. It was counter to the most basic human rights, including equality and freedom from discrimination, that the Premier holds dear. Her motivation was not to undermine the parliament but to stamp out hate speech, and that she did. Her conduct did not involve any element of dishonesty or fraud. She was motivated to stop these kinds of comments in the public arena.

She states that at the time she was unaware that her actions could constitute a contempt of parliament. As I said, today she has unreservedly apologised and taken full responsibility. That is the character of a good leader. That is a reason she is premier of this state and why she is a woman who will go down in history as the most ethical, transparent and best premier this state ever had.

When the committee brought down its response and findings, it made it clear that it acknowledged the mitigating factors in that she did not intend to commit a wrongdoing but was only motivated by that hate speech. The Premier's conduct openly in public did not contain any element of corruption. She

was responding to calls from this House, from those opposite and from this side of politics. At paragraph 142(c) the committee says that she was led to believe that she had the support of the House in her actions. It was raised by the member for Warrego. We cannot escape the fact that both sides of the House raised this issue as being abhorrent and called for the actions the Premier took. I respect the Premier immensely. The people of Queensland respect the Premier immensely. She has apologised. She has taken responsibility. She is a great leader.