



Speech By  
**Steve Minnikin**

**MEMBER FOR CHATSWORTH**

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Record of Proceedings, 12 February 2019

**MATTER OF PUBLIC INTEREST**

**Member for Whitsunday**



**Mr MINNIKIN** (Chatsworth—LNP) (2.45 pm): We need to talk about the member for Whitsunday.

**Ms Farmer** interjected.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Ms Pugh): Minister!

**Honourable members** interjected.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER:** The House will come to order and the member will have his speech heard in silence.

**Mr MINNIKIN:** We do need to talk about the member for Whitsunday.

**Ms Farmer** interjected.

**An opposition member** interjected.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER:** I cannot believe I am seeing this. I am on my feet. I will start naming members if this continues.

**An honourable member** interjected.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER:** I am literally in the middle of speaking and you are interjecting when you are not even in your seat. I will have to start naming members if this continues. We have two more statements to go.

**Ms Farmer** interjected.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Minister Farmer, you are warned under the standing orders.

**Mr MINNIKIN:** Thank you for your protection.

**Ms Farmer** interjected.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Minister Farmer, you are warned under the standing orders.

**Mr BLEIJIE:** I rise to a point of order, Madam Deputy Speaker. You had just warned the member prior to warning the member. Under the standing orders, it is open to you to now expel the member for at least an hour or so.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you very much. I do not need your guidance, member for Kawana. As you just said, it is open to my interpretation.

**Mr BLEIJIE:** I have a point of order, Madam Deputy Speaker. You had warned the minister under the standing orders and the minister continued—

**Ms JONES:** Madam Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER:** I will finish listening to the point of order from the member for Kawana, thank you, Minister.

**Mr BLEIJIE:** You had warned the member under the standing orders. She then straight away started interjecting again despite your ruling.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER:** I appreciate your point of order. I will now hear from the Acting Leader of the House.

**Ms JONES:** Madam Deputy Speaker, I think you have it all in hand. As you say, it is open to your interpretation. The member for Kawana behaves that way every sitting week.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER:** As I said, the minister has been warned. It is completely up to the chair as to whether the person is removed. The minister has been warned. The warning has been noted, I am sure.

**Mr MINNIKIN:** The member for Whitsunday has been kicked out of the LNP for conduct that does not meet the standards set—

**Ms Farmer** interjected.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Minister Farmer, I am on my feet. Minister Farmer, you are ejected from the House for 30 minutes.

*Whereupon the honourable member for Bulimba withdrew from the chamber at 2.47 pm.*

**Mr MINNIKIN:** He has in fact been kicked out of the LNP for conduct that does not meet the standards set by the Leader of the Opposition. The people of Whitsunday deserve to know the facts. The member said he was not afforded natural justice and he did not get a fair go. That is completely wrong.

The truth is that the member has been fairly dealt with by the LNP. Ultimately the people of Whitsunday will decide whether they think he is suitable to represent them in this House, but these are the facts. Three weeks ago the Leader of the Opposition received a very serious complaint against the member for Whitsunday. The complaint detailed how the member for Whitsunday harassed and intimidated a young woman on a remote property in country Victoria. She was only weeks out of high school. His conduct was described as 'predatory, sexual, unhinged and intimidating'. She says the experience has scarred her emotionally.

When the Leader of the Opposition received the complaint, she immediately instructed the LNP state director to investigate. The disputes committee, as established in the LNP constitution, was directed to open an investigation. The committee received the original documented complaint as well as a further statement and other evidence. The member was summoned to appear before the committee. He was provided with the statements and evidence that had been submitted to the committee. The member was given an opportunity to be heard. He ignored the request and two following requests to respond to the complaint.

The disputes committee considered all of the evidence and decided that the complaint in fact was substantiated. This was relayed to the member for Whitsunday and he was again asked to make a submission on the finding. He again chose not to make a submission in his own defence. The disputes committee referred its findings to the state executive of the Liberal National Party with a recommendation. The state executive accepted the recommendation and voted unanimously to terminate the party membership of the member for Whitsunday.

Since then, there have been more disturbing developments. The member for Whitsunday made the astonishing and reprehensible decision to release a photo of his victim to the media. He should be condemned for the way he treated this young woman and then selfishly breached her plea for privacy. His actions are contemptible.

I want to applaud the Leader of the Opposition for her handling of the issue. The Leader of the Opposition made the right decision to order the investigation into the member's conduct. Every leader faces tests. The Leader of the Opposition passed this test because of the strength of her convictions. She has set high standards and she held the member for Whitsunday to account for his actions. I commend her for doing the right thing.