




Speech By
Hon. Grace Grace

MEMBER FOR MCCONNEL

Record of Proceedings, 16 November 2021

MATTERS OF PUBLIC INTEREST

Coronavirus, Vaccination

 **Hon. G GRACE** (McConnel—ALP) (Minister for Education, Minister for Industrial Relations and Minister for Racing) (2.10 pm): I tell you what, Mr Deputy Speaker: it really grates on me when we sit on this side of the House and we are lectured to by those opposite on transparency and integrity!

Opposition members interjected.

Ms GRACE: We listened to the Leader of the Opposition in silence. I demand the same respect from you guys.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly): Order, members! Please put your comments through the chair, member for McConnel.

Ms GRACE: We never interjected until it was absolutely necessary because of the rubbish that we were hearing from those opposite. What do we get from those opposite time and time again? We hear the word 'crisis' and that 'we've given up on this'. Not a shred of evidence is ever given in relation to any of the accusations by those opposite.

They come into this House and they want to lecture us on health—how we turned on the people that we represent. When they were elected, the number of health workers who were dismissed and sacked and the treatment of the Public Service by those opposite will have them sitting opposite on those benches for another 10 years, let me tell you all!

They will never forget the treatment they received. The audacity of the Leader of the Opposition—who remembers a time when he sat around a cabinet table—to come in here and talk about customer and service delivery when thousands upon thousands of public servants were unilaterally sacked by those opposite!

There is one issue that they cannot bring themselves to talk about—one of the most important issues in a world health pandemic.

Ms Bates interjected.

Ms GRACE: I hear the member for Mudgeeraba, who was the first nurse Campbell Newman sacked. He went on to sack many more, but the member for Mudgeeraba was the first nurse he actually sacked.

Ms Bates interjected.

Ms GRACE: We keep hearing from the member for Mudgeeraba. Our economic recovery, as we heard from the Treasurer, has been outstanding. We have been able to create more jobs in this state than in any other state in Australia. Our unemployment rate is the second lowest in the country. We have brought about business confidence. All of those things have been totally ignored using the words 'crisis', 'transparency' and 'integrity' and, oh my goodness, their bleeding heart for the media—'the poor media is copping it'!

You really have to swallow hard to accept anything that the Leader of the Opposition says because they cannot bring themselves to talk about the one issue that is important at the moment for the safety of Queensland and our economic recovery—and that is vaccination. That is the issue that we need to talk about. They come in here and talk about everything else.

Mrs Frecklington interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Nanango, you are on the speaking list. You will get your chance.

Ms GRACE: When in government they trashed estimates—absolutely trashed it. They held them over two days, yet they come in here and talk about the estimates process. In the middle of the night they sacked their own parliamentary committee chairs because they did not like what they were doing. They came to government with a 66-seat majority, and never in Queensland's history has a government been tossed out after one term. They want to talk about arrogance and they want to talk about culture, yet the manner in which they carried themselves when they were in government was absolutely appalling. I have heard the stories. It was absolutely a disgrace. The Leader of the Opposition was around the cabinet table at that time.

Let us talk about what matters. You do not go to Mackay and have a fundraiser with George Christensen—the fellow who is an anti-vaxxer and peddling misinformation. You go to Mackay and you do not even talk about vaccination. Show some leadership. We have leadership, for example, in the mayor of Goondiwindi. He used to be the leader of the opposition. Mayor Lawrence Springborg talks about having a community 'on board with vaccination', about having a 'good public health program' and about 'council leading the charge', and he says, 'I cannot speak highly enough of our local business community.' What a difference between that leader and the current leader of the LNP! There is absolutely no leadership being shown by those opposite. They come in here and whinge and whine and do nothing but complain. It is a disgrace.

(Time expired)