



Speech By
Jarrold Bleijie

MEMBER FOR KAWANA

Record of Proceedings, 23 February 2021


APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) (2020-2021) BILL

APPROPRIATION (2020-2021) BILL

Consideration in Detail (Cognate Debate)

Appropriation (2020-2021) Bill

Education, Employment and Training Committee, Report

 **Mr BLEIJIE** (Kawana—LNP) (3.53 pm): Just like no child safety advocate takes this minister seriously because she is a failed child safety minister and just like no youth justice worker takes this minister seriously because she is a failed youth justice minister, small business will not take the minister seriously because she will be a failed small business minister. She is moved from ministry to ministry and failure to failure. That is all this minister has in common.

Ms FARMER: Madam Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I take offence at the member's comments and I ask him to withdraw.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mrs Gerber): The minister has taken offence. Do you withdraw?

Mr BLEIJIE: I withdraw.

Ms Bates interjected.

Ms Farmer: I take offence.

Mr BLEIJIE: At what? How do you take offence at someone standing up and wanting to speak?

Ms Farmer: The reason you have no women—

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Members, cease the cross-chamber chatter.

Ms Farmer:—is because you are a patronising—

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Cease your interjections!

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: Madam Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I take offence and ask the member to withdraw.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Bulimba?

Ms FARMER: I think there is a point of order that I have already made and I ask you to rule on it.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Bulimba, you are asked to withdraw. Do you withdraw?

Ms FARMER: I withdraw. Could I ask—

Mr BLEIJIE: I said nothing. I cannot withdraw if I did not say anything.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: The member for Kawana withdrew his comment.

Opposition members interjected.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Kawana, you made a gesture. I ask you to withdraw.

Mr BLEIJIE: I withdraw. Let us talk about the estimates process. The minister who just spoke talked about the great questions that the government members asked. They were drafted by her office. If they were such great questions drafted by her office why did she have to read the answers? If they are such great policies, every time she got a dorothy dixer why did she have to ask her director-general to tell her what to say? It is because she is a failed minister. She does not know what she is doing. She never has and never will. They will keep moving her from portfolio to portfolio because she fails in everything she touches in government. That is the reality of the minister who just spoke.

Let us talk about Minister Grace Grace, another failure who is moved from portfolio to portfolio, bearing in mind that she is a former QCU heavyweight union official. That is what Minister Grace Grace was.

Mr HARPER: Madam Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order on relevance. He has completely lost it.

Mr BLEIJIE: Madam Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. The members are using standing orders in a disorderly manner. There is actually a standing order against abusing the standing orders. I was speaking about Minister Grace.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Kawana, I will take some advice. Member for Kawana, I have ruled on the point of order. Let us move on.

Mr BLEIJIE: The Minister for Industrial Relations was asked questions about crane truck operators, and this shows how the government operates and the uneasy cosy relationship that they have with the CFMMEU in Queensland. The CFMMEU put up a Facebook post about crane operators and a type of crane that we have been using for 30 years in Queensland without incident. Neither director-general nor any department official could say that there has been an incident with any of those cranes.

During the caretaker election period, overnight the government shut down all the cranes in South-East Queensland because the CFMMEU put up a Facebook post saying that they were not safe. It just so happens that none of the businesses using those cranes had a little cosy deal with the CFMMEU as part of their certified agreement, so overnight they shut down every crane operator using those particular cranes. Of course, it was a workplace health and safety issue. The minister said that it was a safety issue and that just because an incident has not happened does not mean that it will not. If only they had been that proactive in the youth justice space for the past six years. They are banning cranes for something that may happen but that all of the research and engineering said had not happened and would likely not happen. That related to the crane operators.

Then, of course, I tabled a public interest disclosure. I assume that public interest disclosure is from many of the inspectors currently working for the government in the department of industrial relations. There are over 100 pages of information with respect to the uneasy cosy relationship between the Office of Industrial Relations and the CFMMEU, including issues of secret phone calls and workplace health and safety officials going to sites despite there being no safety breaches reported but just because the union had asked workplace health and safety to do it.

How are businesses meant to have confidence in an independent workplace health and safety body when there are allegations that they are at the beck and call of CFMMEU officials in Queensland? That is wrong, which is why it is currently before the Queensland Crime and Corruption Commission being thoroughly investigated. However, they were dismissive of that issue. The minister dismissed it. Her own department is complaining about it, but she will not listen to her own departmental employees because she listens to the unions. If she goes against the unions, that threatens her preselection.

She will always back the unions rather than her industrial relations workplace health and safety officials. I say to the workplace health and safety officials that are the whistleblowers in her department and this government: please keep emailing the documents to me, because the more you send to me, the more I can keep referring to the Crime and Corruption Commission, as I am currently doing. They have it under investigation at the moment. That is the reality of Minister Grace Grace and how she runs the department. Other than a royal commission, some light should be shone on Workplace Health and Safety and the Office of Industrial Relations. That is the best form of disinfectant.

I remember that when I tried to table this document every Labor committee member tried everything they could to make sure that document did not see the light of day. I know why. If you read it, you will understand why. They wanted to go and have a private committee meeting: 'Let's discuss it.' They were filibustering. There is no-one in this place who knows more about filibustering than me. I know a good filibusterer when I see it, and Grace Grace was on fire that day. I can tell you that. She was on fire that day, more than me. We will keep highlighting these issues. The estimates process is broken and needs urgent reform.