




Speech By
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MEMBER FOR COOPER

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PRIVATE MEMBER'S STATEMENT

The Gap, Doherty Family

 **Ms BUSH** (Cooper—ALP) (2.20 pm): When we think about the suburb of The Gap in my electorate of Cooper, we think of a quiet, leafy and friendly suburb, and The Gap is of course all of those things as we know. It is a suburb filled with families, where parents ride their bikes with the kids down to soccer on the weekend, head out to the dog park and catch up with friends over a backyard barbecue on a Sunday afternoon.

However, The Gap is no ordinary suburb and last week I was just so excited to host an in-conversations evening with Brisbane author Sandy Hogan when she shared the research that ultimately went into her published work around one of these local families who lived in The Gap in the sixties and who, in addition to being an ordinary family who went to work and went to school and caught up with friends, were in fact ASIO spies. Sandy's book *With My Little Eye* shares the story of Dudley Doherty, a gentleman who had a somewhat—and I use that term loosely—usual childhood and upbringing but who, through a series of events, went on to have the most extraordinary life once he was recruited by ASIO to gather and report on intelligence against suspected Russian agents.

What makes this story even more fascinating is not only that we could have an ASIO spy living in The Gap but that Dudley in fact recruited his entire family into the firm, as he called it. His wife, Joan, was responsible for listening in and transcribing conversations between suspected Russian undercover agents who were living in Brisbane at the time. Unbelievably Joan did not speak a word of Russian, and that is just the beginning of this extraordinary story.

This side of the chamber has fought hard to criminalise wage theft and to restore fair working conditions, so all of my colleagues may need to avert their ears for this next piece of information when I tell them that Dudley also went on to recruit his three young children who were all under 10 years of age at the time to also provide spy services for ASIO. He would take the children to public marches and protests and position them in a way that, to the average person, would look like a proud father taking photos of his children. However, he was actually surveying and taking photos of particular political agents. And my children complain if I ask them to pack the dishwasher!

Truth is stranger than fiction and it is stories like these that capture and add depth to our suburbs. The story was made public earlier this year as a result of one of the Doherty daughters, Sue-Ellen, wanting to share this extraordinary, thrilling and often funny story. It is a wonderful read and I would encourage people to pick up a copy and support a great Brisbane author. I also want to thank Mary Ryan's bookstore at Milton for hosting this with me. Mary Ryan's is one of just a few independent bookstores here in Brisbane. It is a fantastic venue in an iconic location at Park Road in Milton—a great venue celebrating an extraordinary Brisbane story.