




Speech By
Tim Mander

MEMBER FOR EVERTON

Record of Proceedings, 25 February 2021

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY

 **Mr MANDER** (Everton—LNP) (5.06 pm): I am proud to rise in this address-in-reply after being re-elected in the seat of Everton for the fourth time. It is something that I am proud of. This seat had traditionally been a Labor seat leading up to 2012. In the 30 years before that, there had only been one term with a Liberal Party member in the seat of Everton so it was great to be re-elected. It has been an interesting journey over those four elections. The margins have changed a little bit over that time. I was first elected in 2012 with a 13.2 per cent margin. I openly admit that Humphrey B Bear could have won that seat had they had the LNP brand next to them.

My greatest accomplishment was actually winning in 2015 when the tide went back out again. Since then, it has been great to establish myself even further in an area that I grew up in. It is an area where I went to school and an area where my family was brought up. My mother still lives in a retirement village there and my dad is buried in that electorate. My family has been totally invested in that area for basically all of my life so it is a great privilege to be able to represent that area and continue to be the local member there. I acknowledge that there was a small swing against me.

Mr Fumer: Yes, 2.7.

Mr MANDER: It was 2.7 per cent. I will take that interjection, and because this was a COVID election—

Government members interjected.

Mr MANDER: Let us just call it for what it was. It was a COVID election where we had members on the other side of the House and the government being elected when they did not live in the electorate and in fact I do not know if they live in the same region, and where nobody knew them from a bar of soap—

Mr Fumer interjected.

Mr MANDER: I will take that interjection from the member for Ferny Grove who does not live in Ferny Grove.

Mr Fumer: That's right and I'll admit that.

Mr MANDER: What is your point?

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Krause): Member for Everton, address your comments through the chair.

Mr MANDER: Thank you for the direction, Mr Deputy Speaker. There was a small swing against me. I know that the Labor Party candidate who ran against me has actually got this false encouragement and she thinks she is going to come back and win this seat. I notice her around the corridors of power here. Where do all failed Labor candidates go? They go to ministerial offices. I have two working in ministerial offices at the moment—this one and the one before. The one previously did not have the

courage to come back. I think this one might. She actually thinks it was because of her that there was a small swing against me but we all know that it is because they scared the living daylight out of the older people in our electorates.

Those older people will come back to us. If we look at the seat of Nicklin, the current member will not be there again; there is no doubt about that. Marty Hunt is waiting to come back. There are a few other examples of that as well. We look forward to that happening in 2024.

I want to thank my volunteers because we do not win elections without having a body of volunteers behind us. I want to thank those people who were booth captains who manned the pre-polling booths. I ask the government if they have any influence to please stop those ridiculous hours for pre-polling when there are two men and a dog there at seven o'clock at night. It is such a waste of money. We need to have more truncated pre-polling times. It is important; I totally support it, but we have to have realistic hours as well. I want to thank those people who manned those pre-polling booths as well as the booths on election day. I thank the letterbox droppers and those who manned the sign sites. Thank you very much for the support.

I want to make special mention of a couple of people who were magnificent: Chris and Brian Kennedy and Alan Hird who looked after pre-polling. That was a huge commitment and I thank them for that as well as Daniel Lane who helped with sign sites. There is also 'Bronco Bruce Hooker' who is infamous in my area. He sits on the corner of the Jinker Track and Old Northern Road from about three o'clock on a Saturday morning making sure that his Labor opponent does not beat him there. I thank Annette Tidbury as well.

I want to thank the executive members of my branch: Alex, Michael, Kristen and Camilla. I will not give their last names because there is a chance of retribution from those on the other side if they know who they are.

Ms Pease: That is ridiculous.

An honourable member: Seriously?

Mr MANDER: Some of them work in government and the last thing they want anybody to know is their identities. I also want to thank the staff in my office—

Government members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Krause): Order! Members on my right. Your interjections are not being taken.

Mr MANDER: I want to thank the staff in my office as well who are just unbelievable: Sarah, Tarryn and Beth. They did a great job maintaining my office whilst I was not there which was, unfortunately, quite often with the role I was in. They provide a professional, friendly service. That is our little motto: we serve our electorate. That is what they have done magnificently and they are a big reason why I have been re-elected.

Of course, I want to thank my family. As has already been mentioned by a number of people in these speeches, we cannot give the time that is required without the support of our family. I thank my wife, Gayle, very much for the support she gives me. My children are now grown up and have moved out. We had three grandchildren born in the three months leading up to the election. One, Peaches, was born on election day. That was one good thing about election day. It is great to be a grandfather of five grandchildren.

Mr Hart: I highly recommend it.

Mr MANDER: I take that interjection from the member for Mermaid Beach.

Mr Perrett: Burleigh.

Mr MANDER: Burleigh, sorry.

Mr Hart: You need glasses.

Mr MANDER: I do. The member is too far away. It is a new dimension and dynamic to life. I am very privileged to have that as well.

I want to go back to what I briefly mentioned earlier. The 2020 election was a COVID election. It will go down in history as a COVID election. In two weeks time we will see in WA the same impact—in fact, an impact far worse than what happened here in Queensland. This is because when a government is in power, when they govern through a crisis, they are in total control. They are on the news every day. They are controlling government expenditure, which we knew was used under the guise of advising people about what was happening but it was really a publicity stunt for the government. Millions and millions of taxpayers' dollars were spent to promote the government and now it has stopped—funny, that—after the election. Suddenly everything is all okay again now.

An opposition member interjected.

Mr MANDER: That is exactly right. I take that interjection. Those things are a fact. In fact, the new Labor sitting members admitted this in their maiden speeches. They all admitted it. They said everybody came up to them and said, 'Thank you for keeping us safe. Who are you?' 'I'm on Annastacia's side.' That was the major criteria. They did not even use their own names. They managed to scare the living daylights out of people; they thought that was the only side of politics that would keep them safe. I give them credit; they were successful.

They were successful in scaring the living daylights out of people, but that will not last long. When that is taken away over the coming months and over the next four years, people will see this government for what they are, which is economically incompetent with the highest unemployment rate on average in the country last year. We had the highest unemployment before COVID, we had the highest unemployment during COVID and now, again, we are battling one other state to see who will have the worst unemployment rate. We continue to be beaten comprehensively by New South Wales and Victoria. Considering what Victoria has gone through, it is quite incredible that they can still be rated above us. Whether it is in business confidence, bankruptcies or unemployment, we are lagging at the bottom of the ladder.

The private sector, the business sector, are aghast that they will have to put up with this government for the next four years. Yes, they will come out to the government's press conferences and they will say what they have to say because they know this is the government of the day and they have to work with it. However, if they come into the boardrooms when we speak to them afterwards, they will tell them what they really think about this government. They are worried sick about our economic future and the ability of this government to navigate our way out of this. It is something to be seen.

I predict that over the next four years we will see something similar to that which happened in the four years leading up to the 2012 election. Gradually over that period those opposite will become absolutely toxic. Who could forget the Anna Bligh days with the health system that she herself said was an absolute basket case? They were her words. Who could forget the asset sales after promising they would not happen? But they did happen. Who could forget the health payroll disaster?

Ms Bates: Jayant Patel.

Mr MANDER: I take that interjection from the member for Mudgeeraba. Who could forget the Patel controversy?

Ms Bates: The Tahitian prince.

Mr MANDER: Who could forget the Tahitian prince?

Mr Perrett: And the failed Traveston Dam.

Mr MANDER: I take that interjection from the member for Gympie. The failed Traveston Dam project again scared the living daylights out of people. These types of things will happen again and there will be a tsunami of support for us. These people think they are safe on eight and nine per cent, but we will have a tsunami of support come our way once again when people realise how bad this government is.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr MANDER: Mr Deputy Speaker, I am finding it hard to hear myself over the din on the other side.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Everton, I highly doubt that.

Mr MANDER: During the last term I was proud to be the Deputy Leader of the Opposition. I was proud to work with the then opposition leader, the member for Nanango. I was proud that we were thought leaders; we came out with policies that these people have never even thought of. If it were not for the opposition—

Government members: Ha, ha!

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Members on my right.

Mr MANDER: We were an opposition that led and the Labor government followed. There is no greater example of that than the air conditioning in schools policy. What an absolute classic backflip. We knew this was something that the metropolitan and South-East Queensland schools wanted and parents wanted. We championed that despite the ridicule we were put under by the government: it was unrealistic, it was unaffordable, it was ridiculous and all that type of thing. We kept with it and what did they do? They carried out the greatest backflip since the Adani backflip. That is what they did.

There was real-time fuel price monitoring. There were swimming lessons in schools that the government backed down on after we championed the issue.

Mrs Frecklington interjected.

Mr MANDER: There were many. What galls me is that, as we start talking about serious issues of youth justice and protecting DV victims, the government is now looking at the policies that we championed over the past 12 months. Everything this government raises in terms of coercive power, GPS trackers and so on were championed by us 12 months ago. Members of the government now come out and try to pretend it is their idea. They are always followers. They cannot lead on anything. I am proud of our record with regard to policy development and what we now have forced this government to consider. It has been quite a feat.

I am also really happy to be back in the portfolio areas of housing and public works and sport and racing. I was the minister for housing and public works. A lot needs to happen with regard to reform. I mentioned housing when speaking to the estimates committee report. This government is great on rhetoric but terrible on delivery. The result is that our most vulnerable people struggle to get accommodation, be it in social housing or affordable housing.

In public works, the QBCC unfortunately once again is a basket case under this government. I do not know how many people have approached either the former shadow minister, the member for Burleigh, or me just beside themselves with regard to the incompetence of the QBCC. I cannot begin to talk about it. It needs a broom to be swept through it. One very worrying issue is the impact of the Minister for Public Works, Minister de Brenni, on the QBCC. We want to talk more about that in the future, but that is a very worrying thing.

I am quite concerned about the sports portfolio. Something requires further investigation. I remember what I promised for my electorate with regard to sporting clubs. I wanted to give the Albany Creek Excelsior Football Club \$350,000 for a multipurpose room, the Everton Park Bowls Club \$300,000 for a shade over its bowling green, the Everton Park Wolves AFL club \$200,000 to refurbish its canteen, the Mitchelton Football Club \$400,000 for new female dressing rooms, Pine Hills Football Club \$100,000 for a lighting upgrade, and the Wantima Golf Club \$230,000. I list them all because, unfortunately, those needs are still unmet. We had the example at the last election of the former sports minister coincidentally getting a lot of his projects approved. I am sure it is a coincidence. When we look at the sports grants that were allocated, apparently the department did not know what it was doing and made mistakes so the minister had to intervene and advise it of what it did wrong. Obviously it did not give enough money to Labor electorates! After intervention by the minister, the percentage of grants awarded to ALP electorates suddenly increased from 44 per cent to 68 per cent. Isn't that amazing? In contrast, the percentage of money going to LNP seats decreased from 43 per cent to 28 per cent. If there is something that does not stink about that, there are lots of questions to be answered by the former sports minister.

It is very convenient in the estimates process, when we are talking about last year's expenditure and expenditure moving forward, that the minister is not there to answer questions. The current minister says, 'That wasn't me; that was the previous bloke.' We then cannot question them. That is another joke in terms of the estimates process.

I look forward to getting stuck into that, to continuing to work for my electorate, to keeping this government accountable and to exposing them for what they are—frauds. Members of the Labor government are frauds. They deserve to be exposed, and they will be exposed by this opposition. I look forward to that. I congratulate our new opposition leader and deputy opposition leader.

Government members interjected.

Mr MANDER: Unlike the Labor Party, our leaders and cabinet are not decided by factions. We have a true democratic process. There are some people in this cabinet who would not be there if it were not for factional support. There are some people sitting in those seats opposite—

Honourable members interjected.

Mr MANDER: Just look at them! Who would employ them? It is embarrassing. They are only there because they got factional support. For the member for Pumicestone, it was her third attempt. They just go anywhere to get a job, because of their union factional support. It is all about, 'Right, it's your turn. You're the left, you're the right, you're the middle, you're the old guard or the mudguard or whatever you are.' It is an absolute joke. The longer I sit in this House—

Mr WALKER: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order on unparliamentary language.

Mr SPEAKER: No, I did not hear any unparliamentary language.

Mr WALKER: He called people 'mudguards'.

Mr SPEAKER: I am happy to review *Hansard* at the appropriate time. I will obviously endeavour to check that there has not been any unparliamentary language. I did not hear it. Did you take personal offence to any matter?

Mr WALKER: I did take personal offence.

Mr SPEAKER: Was the comment directed at you?

Mr WALKER: The member was pointing at this side of the House, calling us mudguards.

Mr SPEAKER: There is no point of order. Please resume your seat. I ask the member to ensure that his comments are being directed through the chair as has been the general guidance to members in the House.

Mr MANDER: Thank you for your guidance, Mr Speaker. With six seconds to go, it is great to be back. I am not dead yet. We will keep this government accountable over the next four years.

(Time expired)

Mr SPEAKER: Member, you may not have expired but your time has.