



Speech By
Tim Nicholls

MEMBER FOR CLAYFIELD

Record of Proceedings, 23 February 2021


APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) (2020-2021) BILL

APPROPRIATION (2020-2021) BILL

Consideration in Detail (Cognate Debate)

Appropriation (2020-2021) Bill

Legal Affairs and Safety Committee, Report

 **Mr NICHOLLS** (Clayfield—LNP) (6.42 pm): I will make some comments in relation to the report of the Legal Affairs and Safety Committee, in particular in relation to the Attorney-General and justice portfolio. When we look at the report, at the budget highlights for justice services and at the questions we asked which were answered by both the Attorney-General and officers of the department, one word comes to mind: sclerotic. That is, it moves at glacial speed. Nothing happens fast in this department. All of it seems to take forever. Some programs were set up in 2013—the review of the Property Law Act, for example. Some \$360,000 has been spent. Two eminent academics provided a comprehensive report to the government in 2017. We are yet to establish a committee to investigate the changes. We are in 2021, and the government says in answer to questions that it hopes to have something in place by 2024. Congratulations! It has taken 11 years to fundamentally look at one piece of legislation. We know that the Trusts Act, the Succession Act and the Body Corporate and Community Management Act are similarly under review. Someone has been appointed. I think the director of the Office of Liquor and Gaming Regulation has been appointed to look at the BCCM Act, and the director of the BCCM body corporate mob has been put in charge of looking at the Property Law Act. Talk about being all over the shop! Talk about a waste of money!

The budget highlights state that the government will solidify changes and recommendations implemented over the last three years in the coronial system, but there is no more money for any more coroners. The backlog that is still there, that is growing day by day—regrettably—is not getting any better. There is more funding for registry staff but not for the appointment of more coroners from the magistracy to actually undertake more coronial inquests. One quick look at the Coroners Court website shows how long some of those cases are taking. It is a tragedy because, as we all know, justice delayed is justice denied, and that is happening more and more. Nothing sets that out more than the tragic case of young Mason Jett Lee which took far too long to come to a conclusion.

The other point we have been discussing all day is this government's inability to have a youth justice policy that works and to stick to that policy for any time period. The budget highlights states—

- continuing to embed appropriate diversion intervention programs to support defendants in the criminal justice system ...

There is not one mention of looking after the victims of these crimes! There is not one mention of what they will do to make sure the laws are appropriate for the increasing incidence of youth crime throughout this state. That work, again, is sclerotic. It will take forever.

We asked questions of Mr MacSporrán from the CCC in relation to the practice of ALP hacks—Cameron Milner and the bloke who used to be the member for Waterford—hanging around at level 41 of 1 William Street. While Mr MacSporrán did not comment particularly in relation to that matter, he clearly said that it presents a corruption risk, as was the use of emails. We have our old friend the member for mangocube sending them off to stacia1. Again, it is a clear corruption risk in this government.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly): The member will use correct titles.

Mr NICHOLLS: Yes, the Premier, whose email address was stacia1. We had then also the complete waste of money with the old Labor mate Peter Carne, the former Public Trustee, who sat on the public payroll for 12 months after being given a show cause notice. He collected \$385,000 and also billed the taxpayers of Queensland another \$37,500 for education. This is for a fellow who should already have the skills, qualifications and experience for carrying out the job. Then, on the day before his show cause notice was due to expire, he tendered his resignation. There were no comebacks to the people of Queensland and no advice or evidence as to what was being done. The estimates process, for me, highlighted the ongoing sclerotic nature of the Attorney-General's department.

(Time expired)