




Speech By
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MEMBER FOR KAWANA

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MATTERS OF PUBLIC INTEREST

Trad, Ms J, Ministerial Indemnity; Caloundra Youth Remand Centre

 **Mr BLEIJIE** (Kawana—LNP) (Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (2.00 pm): It gives me great pleasure to be the first MPI speaker today, as my leader is downstairs, giving me 10 minutes which, of course, will still not be enough time for all the integrity issues that I have to go through, but I am happy to be joined by so many of my colleagues in the chamber.

Let me start with the former deputy premier Jackie Trad, who, as I have said, still haunts this place like a ghost, pulling the puppet strings. This morning when the Attorney-General was on her feet speaking and waving her arms did everyone see Jackie upstairs pulling the strings? I was waving to Jackie upstairs when she was pulling the strings—telling them when to open their mouth. That is what we have here: the Attorney-General, Shannon Fentiman, signing off on legal assistance for her factional Whistler skiing mate Jackie Trad.

Attorney-General Fentiman said bizarrely this morning, 'There is nothing to see here.' This is what I would say: there is something to see all right—a dodgy government spending taxpayers' money to protect a mate. The Attorney would have us believe that there is nothing to see here—that this is nothing out of the ordinary. What a load of rubbish! There is something to see all right—a dodgy government using taxpayers' money to protect a mate.

The Attorney-General would have everyone believe that this is not out of the ordinary to how other attorneys have given indemnities in the past. Let me tell the Attorney-General how it usually works. There are two forms in the guidelines—one is the indemnity to which we have said every former minister is entitled. It covers civil proceedings, defamation, CCC inquiries—and haven't they had a lot of them on the Labor Party side! I know why the Attorney said this morning that she has been handing out indemnities left, right and centre, starting with 'mangocube Bailey' at the start of this term and all the other issues before the CCC. She has been busy signing. It is probably no surprise that she forgot in estimates that she did not sign the original Jackie Trad indemnity and had to correct the record because her hand has been developing callouses with the number of indemnities she has been giving to Labor Party ministers and former ministers.

Here is how it works. Let me educate the members opposite. A former minister or a current minister writes to the Attorney-General. The Attorney-General seeks the Crown Solicitor's advice and the Crown Solicitor says, 'It is open to the Attorney-General, pursuant to the guidelines, to issue that indemnity.' The indemnity is separate to legal assistance. The indemnity is if you have a finding against you and there is payment, such as a defamation claim. I will put on the record that I have been subject to one of those particular issues. I went through the process and there was a settlement. Then Labor leaked what the settlement cost was. That is fine.

Legal assistance is when taxpayers fund the legal advisers—the lawyers. That is a second application or, as the Attorney explained, a collateral application. That is what she described in estimates. She signed off on the collateral application. Clause 12 of the indemnity guidelines specify—

The State will not provide Legal Assistance to a Minister for the purpose of initiating or continuing separate legal proceedings by or on behalf of the Minister ... unless special approval—

non-defined special approval—

in writing has first been obtained from the Attorney-General.

Here is what happened. Jackie Trad got the indemnity for the CCC investigation. We have no problem with that. She then wrote to her mate Attorney-General Fentiman and requested legal assistance so she could institute a proceeding in the Supreme Court to hide a CCC report. That is unprecedented. The Attorney would have everyone believe this morning that this was nothing out of the ordinary. It is extremely out of the ordinary. It is extraordinary that the Attorney would sign off on that. It is basically funding a former minister using taxpayers' money to hide a CCC report. It begs the question: what is in the report? What is in the report that Jackie Trad is so desperate to keep secret from the people of Queensland?

The Attorney-General may think that she can get away with saying, 'There is nothing to see here.' We will not accept that. There is everything to see here. It is dodgy, it smells fishy and I think it is rotten. That is why she should front up, tell the people of Queensland how much taxpayers' money has already been expended on Jackie Trad's legal case and how much it is expected to cost. The Attorney-General would be getting briefed every single day about how much. She would know exactly in her mind. She could have said it this morning, but they just say, 'It is before the courts.' Rubbish. This is parliament. Parliament should make the decision. If the Attorney-General is not going to explain it to the public then they should legislate to make sure that this report of Jackie Trad's gets published and not try to keep defending Jackie Trad and being overpowered by Jackie Trad. The report should be public. It should have been public a year ago when the CCC actually finished it.

I will move on to the Caloundra youth jail. Mr Deputy Speaker, here are the results of an RTI application that I made on the Caloundra youth jail, yet the government would have us believe that they were only thinking about the jail and consulting the community—that they had not made any decisions. There are contracts in here! I am going to refer to every page, Deputy Speaker. It is not a prop; I need to refer to it.

There are contracts signed in here for air conditioners, for fences, for barbed wire. This looks more like something that was a done deal. The member for Caloundra puts out a leaflet 'The facts—forget the spin' in which he tried to convince his community how great this youth jail was going to be in the electorate of Caloundra before he realised the Caloundra community did not want it. Why did he realise that? The member for Ninderry and I stood up on behalf of the people of the Sunshine Coast, on behalf of the people of Caloundra, and told them what is actually in it. Then of course the government decided against it, but they spent a million dollars—wasted a million dollars—constructing this thing and never proceeding with it.

We never wanted them to proceed with it. The LNP were opposed to this youth jail in the heart of Caloundra from day one. We never changed our position, but if they had consulted before they started building it they would not have wasted a million dollars. Imagine how many nurses could be employed at the Sunshine Coast University Hospital if the government did not waste this?

Youth crime is a huge issue on the Sunshine Coast. It is a huge issue around Queensland. The member for Caloundra emailed the minister's office and said, 'I have a strong feeling that some of the angst can be relieved through some simple architectural tweaks.' The member for Caloundra wanted to architecturally tweak the jail so it did not look like a jail! What was he going to do? Put up a pink wall on the outside of it or something! What was he going to do?

An opposition member interjected.

Mr BLEIJIE: He does. He knows jails, but he wanted to tweak it so it did not look like a jail. Thankfully the department said, 'No, thank you. We'll design the jail because it's a jail.' The member for Caloundra in an email to the department talked about 'community manufactured outrage'. He said that his constituents were manufacturing this outrage. He said it was all fake—'manufactured outrage'. The member for Caloundra, Jason Hunt, said in another email to the minister, 'I would really like to nail the member for Kawana.' Let's not think about nailing people. Let's think about the Caloundra community. Let's think about how we can resolve the issues of youth justice rather than trying to nail people. Considering the fact that the government did not proceed with the jail, who nailed whom? That is the reality.

Interestingly, Kim McCosker had her car stolen at Pelican Waters. I went public with Dan Purdy, the member for Ninderry, about the outrageous youth crime in Pelican Waters. There is an email in this RTI pack where Jason Hunt emailed the minister's office when I went public about that particular incident, and Jason Hunt—who has plenty of photos with Kim McCosker, using Kim McCosker's profile on the coast—said to the minister, 'Unbelievably, the member for Kawana is talking about this issue.' It is so bad the member for Kawana is talking about stolen cars in Pelican Waters!

I wonder if he has told Kim McCosker. I wonder if he shared that little email with Kim McCosker and others. He is flouting the Sunshine Coast. He is going around the Sunshine Coast saying that he is tough on crime and he knows all about this, but the RTI reveals the real member for Caloundra and his intentions. He believed in this jail so strongly that he started building it. He not only started building it; he wanted to design it. That is how beautiful he thought this jail was!

(Time expired)