



Speech By  
**Jarrold Bleijie**


**MEMBER FOR KAWANA**

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Record of Proceedings, 14 October 2022

**MOTION**

**Days and Hours of Sitting and Order of Business**

 **Mr BLEIJIE** (Kawana—LNP) (Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (4.31 pm): Honourable members will have heard of Friday knock-off drinks at five o'clock. Today the Labor government are changing that. It is not five o'clock; it is now one o'clock: one o'clock, finish work and have some drinks. Do honourable members know why? We know the CFMEU are the Labor Party's biggest donors, so they are probably learning something from the CFMEU, who now have a habit on a Friday of either calling a strike or some industrial action. They are only learning from their industrial paymasters. Members would already be able to see most of the CFMEU thugs down at the pub at this stage.

For goodness sake, only two weeks ago they negotiated with our Manager of Opposition Business to sit three full Fridays to make up for the official mourning period due to the passing of the Queen. Now all of a sudden that has changed. I think it is because they have experienced sitting from one o'clock to now, 4.30 pm. They say, 'Oh my gosh! Why are we here?' We know the Attorney-General bemoans being here past midday. Look at her now. 'Why am I here?', she is asking herself. I say to the Attorney-General that she is here because she is being paid nearly \$350,000 a year to be here. That is no chicken change or short—small change—whatever the terminology is. It is a lot of money.

**Mr Crisafulli:** Chickenfeed.

**Mr BLEIJIE:** Chickenfeed, that is what I was looking for. That is no chickenfeed for the Attorney-General to be here. We want to be here, Mr Deputy Speaker.

**Government members** interjected.

**Ms Fentiman:** How long has it been?

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Krause): Members, it is difficult to conceive of the fact that I could barely hear the member for Kawana just then for all the noise coming from members on my right.

**Mr BLEIJIE:** I stopped because I wanted to hear the Attorney-General's interjection. I did hear the Attorney-General saying earlier, 'We want to finish for drinks at Star.' The Premier is a frequent visitor to Star. Whenever the red carpet is rolled out on the Gold Coast the Premier is there.

**Ms Fentiman:** For someone with cash-for-access fundraisers at the penthouse restaurant!

**Mr BLEIJIE:** I take the interjection.

**Mrs D'ATH:** Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. The member is seriously straying away from the motion before the House and I ask that he be brought back to the motion.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Member for Kawana, the motion is about sitting hours of the House. Could you remain relevant to that?

**Mr BLEIJIE:** Mr Deputy Speaker, I put to you that I am debating the fact that the government wants to finish at one o'clock in the afternoon because they have events to attend.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Member, for Kawana, you do not need to put anything to me. Just remain relevant to the motion.

**Mr BLEIJIE:** I put it to the Leader of the House. The government are lazy. That is it. This motion says they finish at one o'clock on a Friday, because they are lazy, because they have a leader, a Premier, who has checked out of her job. That is why. They cannot go from two weeks ago negotiating a full day's work on a Friday to all of a sudden, at 4.30 pm on the first Friday we are sitting these extended hours, debating a motion to finish on the next three Fridays at one o'clock in the afternoon. I put to the House that the reason they are doing it is the Premier has checked out; the government have checked out. Do they not have a legislative agenda? Why are they afraid of sitting on a Friday? What are they afraid of?

We know that this House should be sitting. The reason we should be sitting as often as we can is there are serious issues that this House needs to debate. That is why the opposition always, at every opportunity, debate and fight against the curtailing of democracy in—

**Ms Fentiman:** But nothing so serious that would warrant a private member's bill!

**Mr BLEIJIE:** We will fight against this curtailing of democracy any day of the week. One of the reasons I would put to the Attorney-General is we need the time in the parliament to correct the mistruths of the government like we heard today—

**Ms Fentiman:** Did I miss a private member's bill?

**Mr BLEIJIE:** It is bizarre.

**Mr Crisafulli:** In the last three weeks when the forensic services lab was imploding and you were nowhere to be seen.

**Mr BLEIJIE:** Four weeks—I do not know what Attorney has had four weeks off in a long time. The Attorney was nowhere during the DNA debate. Not only has the Premier checked out but also the Attorney has checked out—where, I do not know. We have to use the time to correct mistruths like we have seen today. We need to have the opportunity to show and correct the Attorney-General—

**Mr HINCHLIFFE:** Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I was quite keen to hear the contribution from the member for Kawana, but it was hard to hear it over the hectoring that was going on from the Leader of the Opposition.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** There is no point of order, member for Sandgate. Resume your seat, please.

**Mr BLEIJIE:** Parliament is used for all the opportunities. I see here in this debate the government are proposing to extend the sitting hours on a couple of the nights so they can clock off at one o'clock on the Friday. The Leader of the House would say that there is additional time for motion debates and so forth. If they were fair dinkum about opposition or crossbenchers having a more opportunity to speak in a sitting, then they would have more motion debates, more matters of public interest and more private member's statements.

As I was saying before the point of order was taken by the honourable minister, the opportunity for us in parliament and all these different avenues for the opposition is limited. We need every opportunity, as I said, to correct mistruths of the government such as what I was about to say before the point of order was taken. When the Attorney-General made a speech earlier—and I am going to be writing to the Speaker about this—she misled the House when she talked about a function at the Star at the Gold Coast. Star did not pay a cent for any function that I went to at the Gold Coast, which the Attorney-General was talking about previously. It is disgraceful that they would use this parliament in that way. What I said—

**Mrs D'ATH:** Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. This is in no way relevant to the motion before the House. I ask that the member be brought back to it.

**Mr BLEIJIE:** I was taking an interjection from the Attorney before.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order, member for Kawana. Member for Kawana, I have cautioned you to remain relevant to the motion, which is about the sitting hours of the parliament. Could you please direct your comments to the motion?

**Mr BLEIJIE:** We will be opposing the motion, which curtails the sitting hours. We will be opposing the motion to curtail—

**Mrs D'Ath:** It does not curtail the sitting hours at all. It does not curtail the hours—390 hours.

**Mr BLEIJIE:** Let's get to the point here, shall we? On the government's own motion we are knocking off at one o'clock on a Friday—

**Mrs D'Ath:** There are 390 hours.

**Mr BLEIJIE:**—because, as I say—and I will repeat it through the interjections of the Leader of the House—this government and this Premier have checked out. This health minister should check out. For the sake of patients across Queensland, I say to the health minister that she should check out.

**Mrs D'ATH:** Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I take personal offence to that and I ask that it be withdrawn.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Member for Kawana, the Leader of the House has taken personal offence at your comments. I ask that you please withdraw them.

**Mr BLEIJIE:** I withdraw. The opposition would like more time between one o'clock and five or six o'clock on a Friday to talk about the health crisis in Queensland overseen by the health minister. We can offer a different point of view on the motion. I say to the health minister: the opposition would like the opportunity to sit between one o'clock and six o'clock on a Friday. We do not have the opportunity to talk about the issues that are important to the people of Queensland.

**Mrs D'Ath:** Yes, you do. Read the motion.

**Mr BLEIJIE:** I did read the motion. Mr Deputy Speaker, the health minister is talking to me, not through the chair, and I am responding to these interjections.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order, member for Kawana.

**Mrs D'Ath** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order, Leader of the House! Leader of the House, it would assist if you would cease quarrelling with the member for Kawana across the chamber and direct your comments through the chair.

**Mr BLEIJIE:** I make the point that the government are afraid of democracy and afraid to turn up to do the job they are paid to do. I also note that the government are curtailing and guillotining this motion debate, which finishes at 4.50 today. The point is that this government has checked out. This Premier has checked out. If the Premier's priority is to finish at one o'clock on a Friday so she can go off to a red carpet event at Star casino, that is her prerogative. We will not stand for it.