




Speech By
Jarrold Bleijie

MEMBER FOR KAWANA

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COMMITTEE OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Report, Motion to Take Note

 **Mr BLEIJIE** (Kawana—LNP) (Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (3.50 pm): It appears that the only thing that happens at these estimates now is the Labor members protect the ministers. They protect the ministers because they do not trust that the ministers will be able to answer questions. They protect the ministers because they do not think the ministers know how to answer the questions. There were no attacks on public servants; there were attacks on ministers for not knowing their responsibility in their departments. There were attacks on ministers for not being up-front with the estimates process. There were attacks on other Labor Party committee members because they were protecting the ministers.

A minister ought not have the protection of the chair or Labor Party members. They go on about the estimates in 2014 where they said it was cut down to two days. Okay, we changed it, but then you look at the time when ministers were actually in the chair, in the firing line, and it was 10 hours. I remember sitting there for two days straight, a minimum 10 hours—10 hours of full questions. I do not think I have ever told this story, but I remember what happened and I know why Labor wanted to change it so dramatically and why they do it now. I remember sitting there, seeing the then opposition leader, Ms Palaszczuk, struggling to keep up. I was giving very short answers, yeses and noes. I saw her struggling to keep up, so I text messaged—

Ms Farmer interjected.

Mr BLEIJIE: Here we go. Here is the protection racket of the then opposition leader, on cue. I texted one of our members at the time saying, 'Stop asking Dorothy Dixers. Just give all the time to the Labor Party.' Anyway, the chair went to the LNP and the LNP member said, 'No, we are okay; we are comfortable. Give it all to the Labor Party. Give them more time.' It went back to then opposition leader Palaszczuk and she said, 'No, it is the LNP's time.' I said, 'No, we are giving it to the Labor Party.' The then opposition leader, Ms Palaszczuk, had no questions ready to go. She could not think on her feet to ask questions to me at the time to keep the time going. I have never seen an opposition leader plead for the government Dorothy Dixers to continue and for the government to have more Dorothy Dixers.

Look at the health committee which had about six hours. Divide that by two, because there was also the environment portfolio, to get three hours for each. So you have the health minister there for three hours. Then you take the three hours, divide it by two—the LNP and crossbench would have got about an hour and a half out of that. Take the crossbench out of that and we would have had maybe an hour if we were lucky. Considering the health crisis we have at the moment, an hour to interrogate the health minister is not enough. Then you take all the deliberate interruptions from Labor Party members on the committee and the time goes down even further. It is not a democratic system we have at the moment. They deliberately run down the clock. They deliberately hide the minister. I can understand why they would want to hide and protect health minister D'Ath because she had a lot of answers to give that day, but unfortunately time did not permit it.

Look at the issues we have seen this week. I cannot wait for estimates next year when we prosecute the issue of personal conflicts of interests, putting belongings into sheds then giving health department leases for vaccine clinics. I cannot wait for estimates next year when the opposition should be afforded more time because the health minister has a lot of explaining to do. However, as I suspect will happen, health minister D'Ath will not be at estimates next year in the health portfolio. She will not be in the health portfolio—

Mr Powell interjected.

Mr BLEIJIE: I take the interjection. Member for Glass House, the Premier did not actually quite say that. The Premier said this morning that the health minister will be the health minister. Guess what—of course the health minister is going to be the health minister. What she did not say was who would be filling the role of health minister. She did not say that health minister D'Ath is going to be the health minister at the start of next year. It is clear the health minister has had her time. It is clear that the Labor Party backbench are over the health minister. It is clear that the Christmas present that the Labor Party want the Premier to give the Labor backbenchers is a new health minister. It is clear that Queenslanders have lost confidence in Yvette D'Ath to manage the health portfolio. It is absolutely clear she is out of her depth and does not want the protection of the government members because she has lost the confidence of the Labor Party for her to manage the health portfolio.

(Time expired)