



Speech By  
**Ray Stevens**


**MEMBER FOR MERMAID BEACH**

---

Record of Proceedings, 22 June 2022

## COMMITTEES

### Estimates Hearings

 **Mr STEVENS** (Mermaid Beach—LNP) (6.51 pm): Well, the member for Mermaid Beach is on his feet. I have seen a few things in this House in my 15 years here and this is the height of arrogance and hubris by the government and the Leader of the House in terms of pushing this matter through in a late motion when normally these matters, as we all know, go through the committee system for acceptance and commendation to the parliament to adopt. That collaborative approach has worked admirably over many years, and I do not see any problem with that being continued. All of a sudden we have this new, arrogant third-term government more interested in being on the red carpet than in the efficient and effective operation of the parliamentary process with the portfolio committee system.

In terms of the portfolio committee system, unfortunately this government seeks to hide and cover up and make the members of the opposition rubberstamp its deceit and dishonesty through the numbers of government members on those committees. As members would be aware, the voting numbers on portfolio committees are 4-3, so any attempt we make to keep the public informed through the media and other processes is downgraded and stamped on, with the chairman's casting vote in the portfolio committee. Is it any wonder that the estimates process is being subjugated here by this government to make sure it is in line with its own agenda and hiding as much as it can from the public of Queensland?

I would like to remind members of the estimates process being very successful, despite what the chairman of the Economics and Governance Committee said, in establishing the almost corrupt behaviour of former chief of staff David Barbagallo through the estimates system. Basically, it came through the estimates. He quickly got shunted off to a job somewhere else and they moved on. By the way, that other wonderful icon of the Labor Party, Gordon Nuttall, was discovered in the estimates process, and those opposite brought back the parliament to cover up the lies that he made in those estimates committees.

This is absolutely horrendous to me. This Leader of the House was one of the squawkers—I do not think that is unparliamentary—about Jeff Seeney's approach to the estimates when he compressed the estimates process into two days. What he did in those two days was ensure that everyone got more questioning time. Then premier Newman was questioned many more times than this Premier will be questioned. Then treasurer Nicholls—

**Mr Powell** interjected.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Ms Lui): Member for Glass House, you are warned.

**Mr STEVENS:**—was questioned a lot more than this Treasurer will man up to, and I can assure you that this time at estimates there will be a lot of questions about this budget bill and how he will dodgy up all of these different movements to get a profit at the end of the year.

We will be looking forward to the estimates process. It should go through the committee system. Those opposite just ignore the committee system, and they treat it with disdain. It is in effect the upper house of the unicameral Queensland parliament. Unfortunately, the government members want to use

their numbers to shut down portfolio committees. If we have issues in relation to the estimates or any other issue, they shut them down in the interests of secrecy and hiding matters so that the truth cannot get out to the public by them blocking these matters in the portfolio committees. We are not going to be a rubber stamp in portfolio committees for any deceit or dishonesty or any hiding of facts that committee members may want to highlight. We will always pursue the fact that we want those portfolio committees to act in a proportionate and appropriate way and in the interests of the Queensland public.

The Leader of the House comes in here and moves this motion without any notice of note to give us the time to work out why she is doing this in this manner. It should have gone, as it normally does, through the portfolio committee system, which had worked fine. I looked at the program on our agenda that the deputy chairman had done, consulting with the Parliamentary Service, and we had no problems with what we were going to do. There would have been some argy-bargy about the matter, but it did reflect other issues from years gone by, and we would have liked the opportunity at that portfolio committee to discuss those matters in a reasonable manner. It has not gone there. It has gone straight to the House for decision on these matters. That is absolute arrogance from a third-term government which treats all of the traditions and the parliamentary operations with disdain.

I concur with the Manager of Opposition Business. This is a totally inappropriate motion to be putting through this parliament in the final hours of this parliamentary budget week. We move quite clearly into matters of the opposition leader's reply tomorrow. In the opposition leader's reply there will be many matters in terms of health and financing issues which he will be raising to answer all those broken promises, extra taxes, extra debt—all those things that are going to help ruin Queensland's economy, and you can guarantee—

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Member for Mermaid Beach, I ask you to take your seat. Under the provisions of the business program agreed to by the House, the time allocated for debate of the motion has expired. I will now put the question.