




Speech By
Hon. Shannon Fentiman

MEMBER FOR WATERFORD

Record of Proceedings, 23 February 2022

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Comments by Member for Kawana

 **Hon. SM FENTIMAN** (Waterford—ALP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice, Minister for Women and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence) (10.07 am): Yesterday the member for Kawana, a former attorney-general of Queensland, used parliamentary privilege to discuss matters currently before the Supreme Court. Let me be clear, his comments, calling on the Premier to intervene and order a report be released prior to the decision of the court, would absolutely amount to contempt if said outside this place. I note that subsection (1) of section 233 of the standing orders explicitly states—

In general, members should exercise care to avoid saying anything inside the House which would be regarded as contempt of court outside the House and could jeopardise court proceedings.

Mr Bleijie interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Kawana, you will cease your interjections.

Ms FENTIMAN: As a legally trained former attorney-general, he should know better than to call for such a massive overreach of executive government. I also note that the member had the audacity to invoke the principles of Tony Fitzgerald in calling for this interference. If the member had any regard for the legacy of the Fitzgerald inquiry, he would know that Fitzgerald himself wrote in that inquiry—

The separation of judicial power from legislative and executive power is fundamental to the system of checks and balances designed to achieve a stable democracy. The distinction should not be blurred ...

He went on to write—

The primary responsibility of the judicial system is the provision of speedy and efficient justice according to law, and—

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Members to my left, there is one person in the chamber who has the call and it is none of you. Attorney-General, you have the call.

Ms FENTIMAN: I am quoting from the Fitzgerald report—

... its capacity to perform that function is diminished by any requirement that it perform other tasks on behalf of the Executive.

The member for Kawana, in calling for the Premier to intervene in a matter before the courts, has failed to respect the most basic principle of our legal and political system. It seems that the member for Kawana, not content with already being universally scorned by the judiciary, is intent on securing his title as the most unprofessional and unknowledgeable person to hold the office of Attorney-General in this state's history.