



Speech By  
**Jarrold Bleijie**

**MEMBER FOR KAWANA**

---

Record of Proceedings, 22 August 2023


**APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL**

**APPROPRIATION BILL**

**Consideration in Detail (Cognate Debate)**

**Appropriation Bill**

**Education, Employment and Training Committee, Report**

 **Mr BLEIJIE** (Kawana—LNP) (Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (3.50 pm): With reference to the education estimates, I reflect on the comments made by the member for Redlands about behaviour. I say to her that 'behaviour' also applies to the chair giving equal opportunity and not interrupting, as was the case. Those opposite might not like the questions; they might not like us prosecuting the issues. There is something I do not accept under the estimates process we have. We ask a question and the minister does not give the answer, but when we ask again in a different way, because we are demanding an answer, we are told, 'No, it is okay. They have decided not to answer the question.' It used to be the case that directors-general and ministers were transparent in an estimates process and they would give information, but under this government that is not the case. I was thrown out of that committee at the end of the hearing—

**Ms Richards** interjected.

**Mr BLEIJIE:** I take the interjection from the member for Redlands. When I mentioned Rebecca Young, her competitor, the chair threw me out. I was thrown out because I mentioned the LNP candidate for Redlands—a little sensitive, I suspect.

Through the estimates process I exposed, through the industrial relations minister, that WorkCover had hired an ex-bikie—an ex-criminal—to give motivational speeches. Is it any wonder that the department—the minister is an ex-union official herself—would hire ex-bikies to deliver motivational speeches? They said that he had reformed, but last year he committed an assault—

**Ms Grace:** Disgusting. You should be ashamed of yourself.

**Mr BLEIJIE:** I take the interjection from the minister: disgusting. This fellow was convicted last year of assault occasioning bodily harm in the minister's own electorate, in the Valley. He put someone in hospital for four days. Then the department hired him to deliver motivational speeches to public servants. That is the disgrace. It is an absolute disgrace.

What also is a disgrace is that for years the minister kept telling me that I should not be mentioning Helen Burgess, a senior officer in the Office of Industrial Relations, and the cosy relationship between the OIR and the CFMEU. It was exposed not with my complaint to the CCC but through a Queensland Industrial Relations Commission judgement. Had that judgement not been released in March,

Queenslanders would not know that Helen Burgess had allegations that were substantiated. The allegations that she used her personal mobile phone to receive a complaint from the CFMEU about SEQ Formwork was substantiated. Not only did she receive photos from the CFMEU to her personal mobile phone; she then on-forwarded those to another senior officer's personal mobile phone. She just did not happen to use the 'official mobile phone'. That was substantiated. Then when you read the court case you see that it just so happens she does not have that mobile phone anymore. She could not tell the Queensland Industrial Relations Commission what else was on the phone because she just happened not to have that particular personal mobile phone anymore.

We also exposed that when the Queensland Industrial Relations Commission handed down that judgement in March this year, SEQ Formwork—suddenly, out of the blue, three years later—received a letter from the QBCC questioning whether the director was a fit and proper person to hold a directors licence. Was it just a coincidence that SEQ Formwork made complaints about the Office of Industrial Relations—and senior officer Helen Burgess in the Office of Industrial Relations—and practices between the Office of Industrial Relations and the CFMEU? Those allegations were made in 2021. The department wrote back to me to say that none of the matters were substantiated. Then there is a court case saying that they were substantiated. I think that warrants a far more thorough investigation by the Crime and Corruption Commission. Suddenly, three years later, after the matter is finished, the QBCC get involved, and now they are wondering whether this person is fit and proper. The department could not tell me who referred the matter to the QBCC from workplace health and safety. Something is going on in the Office of Industrial Relations. This minister does not support her independent workplace health and safety officers.

*(Time expired)*