




Speech By
James Lister

MEMBER FOR SOUTHERN DOWNS

Record of Proceedings, 2 April 2025

MOTION

Queensland Redistribution Commission, Appointment

 **Mr LISTER** (Southern Downs—LNP) (5.57 pm): This is a shameful act by the Labor opposition in Queensland to besmirch the reputation of a fine public servant in Queensland. The implication is that somehow the appointment of Mr Sosso should be different from, say, judicial appointments. The previous government is on record as having appointed magistrates and judicial officers who had been failed Labor candidates or who were related to serving MPs and ministers at the time. I listened to the member for McConnell and those who spoke before her. If that is the standard they felt was appropriate in terms of independence, bipartisanship and inability to be influenced, how could they possibly have any problems with Mr Sosso, who has, as far as I am concerned, an unblemished record?

What those opposite choose to put forward as a snippet of a process which they say is critical of Mr Sosso is very misleading. It was mentioned earlier—I think it must have been the member for Waterford—that the attorney-general at the time, the Hon. Paul Clauson, appointed Mr Sosso. They also besmirch the government of which Mr Clauson was a part and Mr Clauson himself. I will remind the House that Mr Fitzgerald was complimentary of the cooperation he did get from the National Party government during the course of the Fitzgerald inquiry. It was called by the Bjelke-Petersen government. Every single request that the commissioner made for alterations or amendments to the Commissions of Inquiry Act were done without question and every single indemnity that was sought by the commissioner from the government was approved without rancour—in fact, even without an assessment of the details, such was the arm's length approach that they took. I did not see the Labor Party institute a commission of inquiry into corruption when they were in power earlier.

As previous members have said, the zonal system was introduced in 1949 by the Hanlon government. At that time you had four zones: south-east, coastal, western and northern. There was a difference between the electorates that Labor felt they could not win and the electorates that they aspired to win or held of three to one—12,000 in some and 4,000 in another. That was a Labor design, and for members of this House to ignore the origin of the zonal system is very one-sided and is part of this obscene attempt to besmirch the reputation of Mr Sosso.

Mr Head interjected.

Mr LISTER: I take that interjection from the member for Callide. The member for Waterford talked about lining the pockets of mates—that must be rebutted. Talk about lining the pockets of mates—the Labor Party made an art form of that! The number of union bosses and spouses of union bosses and mates to whom they owed favours because they did not get a good preselection or because they did not win who found themselves on statutory authorities, in judicial appointments and in other influential jobs—sometimes making hundreds of thousands of dollars a year—is a matter of public record. I have not seen anything in the government which I support to suggest that we are into that kind of thing; it is the Labor Party that have made an art form of looking after mates. It has enriched the union movement

and the bosses and given them almost unchallenged power through the amendments that they made in this place around industrial relations legislation and to the appointments that they made to various instrumentalities.

I might say, I remember the member for McConnel arguing with me that it was not inappropriate to appoint a union boss or a former union boss to conduct a review of industrial relations legislation in this place. Let's be clear: what Mr Sosso is accused of is nothing. For his reputation to be besmirched in this place is a disgraceful stunt designed so that the mere appearance of impropriety will somehow discredit the forthcoming redistribution. There is no suggestion that the Electoral Act will be altered to require a differential in enrolments other than what we already have now. What are they talking about? This is just another attempt to smear and to create the appearance of impropriety so they can direct mail our letterboxes and create trouble.