




Speech By
James Lister

MEMBER FOR SOUTHERN DOWNS

Record of Proceedings, 30 April 2025

**CRIME AND CORRUPTION (RESTORING REPORTING POWERS) AMENDMENT
BILL**

 **Mr LISTER** (Southern Downs—LNP) (4.12 pm): I follow my esteemed colleague the member for Gregory, and I want to associate myself with his very observant remarks about the link between integrity or, as we are looking at here, the lack of integrity in the past decade of the Labor government, and the failings in delivery for places like the member for Gregory's electorate and like my electorate of Southern Downs. We see those failings of a decade of mismanagement and the poor priorities of a government focused on hiding from the people of Queensland things they did not want them to see. They left us with poor roads, hospitals falling apart, declining services and fewer police in our electorate. So I certainly agree with what the member for Gregory just said.

In this bill we are talking about enabling reporting of the CCC reports to parliament. I listened with interest to the contributions of members of the Labor Party in the course of this debate and I was astounded by the brazen hypocrisy of members who would, on the one hand, say that the LNP lacks integrity whilst ignoring what we all see, which is that they went to enormous lengths to hide from the public of Queensland things which they were entitled to know about the dodgy dealings of Jackie Trad and about the appalling conduct of Peter Carne.

It took an LNP government to come into this House and do what Labor could not do: move a motion to have those reports released. Within an hour or so they were with us, and what a disgraceful catalogue of misconduct they revealed. We can infer nothing else but that Jackie Trad is a bully. Her treatment of the director-general of the Department of the Premier and Cabinet, according to him, was completely out of line. I hear the Labor Party wringing their hands over the treatment of workers, respect at work and so forth. However, what did they do about Jackie Trad? Not only did they do nothing about her, kowtowed to her and made her the leader of their band; they also sought to protect her not just in the report but to fund, at huge expense to the taxpayer, ultimately successful efforts to conceal from Queenslanders the things they were entitled to know.

So the Labor Party has absolutely no record to point to when it comes to integrity. Everything that the members opposite have said in relation to integrity in this House should be taken with a very big grain of salt. I particularly condemn them for the torrent of invective that they applied to the good Attorney-General and Minister for Integrity, the Hon. Deb Frecklington, whom I see is coming into the chamber now. What those opposite had to say was entirely hollow, and I will stand beside Deb Frecklington any day of the week rather than the record—

Mrs Frecklington interjected.

Mr LISTER:—and I mean that sincerely—of the Labor government that preceded us.

I heard members of the Labor Party talk about concern for the reputation of individuals who might be adversely named in these reports. They are very fond of quoting Fitzgerald. I remember very clearly at the time of the Fitzgerald inquiry Fitzgerald saying that society lives with the risk that persons may be accused and prosecuted wrongly and that their reputations may be damaged in the process.

However, the expectation is that if they are innocent they will be found so. He made the specific point that it was folly for society to be unduly constrained by the fear for someone's reputation in deciding whether or not to prosecute them and that the prosecution should occur or the release of information should occur when it is merited in the public interest, and I am quite certain that this bill provides for that.

We heard a large amount about workers' rights and women's rights. I ask: where were the rights of the workers who had to endure the misbehaviour and misconduct of Peter Carne? What was the Labor Party doing about that? Nothing! It is another example of the difference between pronouncements, ideology and spin for the day because they want to 'tell the punters a story that they will believe' and actual action. The vast gulf between the two has been laid bare by this bill and the revelations that have occurred thanks to this government coming to power.

We talk about women's rights. This bill speaks to the vital issue of maintaining DNA evidence for all of those poor and misgoverned women—and I say that sincerely because for 10 years they were misgoverned by the former government, which laughed at the then LNP opposition when we suggested at that time that there needed to be an inquiry into the DNA debacle. Obviously even the prodigious spin capability of the Labor government, with their phalanx of busy social media propagandists and media people, was not enough to prevent that from happening, and aren't we glad that that happened? Where was the Labor Party standing up for women then? Where was the Labor Party's protection of women who had been raped and sexually assaulted who knew that their perpetrators were out free because of a miscarriage of justice? It was talk, talk, talk. It is all the Labor Party ever does.

They talk about industrial relations. During my time here, which is briefer than some—I think I have been here for seven or eight years—I have never seen the Labor Party embark on any industrial relations legislation reform which did not have the sovereign purpose of enriching the trade union movement and entrenching the power of the union bosses, who decide who gets to sit in this place and who gets to be a minister or the premier when they are in government, at the expense of the rights and choices of workers. They did everything they could to marginalise alternatives—in fact, even outlaw alternatives such as the Red Union. We need to see this in the context of the Labor Party, which is nothing but a mouthpiece and a puppet of the trade union movement, who come in here and disingenuously say that they are for workers when in fact they use workers as a pawn to enrich themselves, to enrich the trade union movement and to make sure they are able to sit with the levers of government for as long as possible. I have said this so many times in the House I might as well have been talking to the wind because it is a language that the Labor Party does not understand.

I wholeheartedly support this bill. I reject the outrageous attacks on the Attorney-General and the arguments which those opposite have advanced which are entirely hypocritical when we set them beside their conduct and their actions despite what they say. I commend the bill to the House.