



COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

PROOF

MATTERS OF PUBLIC IMPORTANCE

Commonwealth Integrity Commission

SPEECH

Wednesday, 16 February 2022

BY AUTHORITY OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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Questioner	Responder
Speaker O'Brien, Ted MP	Question No.

Mr TED O'BRIEN (Fairfax) (16:34): Few issues expose the rank hypocrisy of the Labor Party more than the Commonwealth integrity commission. The coalition has already furnished detailed legislation for such a commission, and the only reason it's not proceeding is that the Labor Party refuses to support it.

Mr Dreyfus: Ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha!

Mr TED O'BRIEN: We even have the shadow Attorney-General laughing and scoffing at the proposition of a Commonwealth integrity commission. I would have respect for the Labor Party—I truly would—if their opposition to our legislation were based on an alternative piece of legislation. Have they furnished one? No. Does the shadow Attorney-General wish today to furnish an alternative piece of legislation? No, because they have nothing. They have nothing more than two pages of talking notes, no doubt handwritten by the Leader of the Opposition when he was at school, along with his economics dissertation. That's all they have. There's only one party that is truly holding this back more than anything, and that is the Labor Party, together with the little pixies at the bottom of the garden with whom they dance hand in hand, the Greens.

If there is an organisation in this country which should never, ever dictate on integrity, it is the Australian Labor Party. I'm not just talking here about the Craig Thomsons, the Sam Dastyaris, the Obeids or the Ian Macdonalds. There's an insight here that hasn't been raised yet. If you think about everyone they've had lined up from the other side to speak about integrity today, there's something missing. We've had members from Victoria, the Northern Territory and WA. Guess who's missing. The shadow Attorney-General is already squirming. Guess who's missing from this line-up. There is no Queenslander from the Labor Party speaking to this.

So where are the members for Moreton, Griffith, Rankin and Oxley? They're all in their suites under their desks. They're rocking back and forth with their hands over their ears saying, 'I can't hear this; I can't hear this.' I'll tell you why: because the Queensland Labor government is burning in an inferno of misconduct, and those opposite know it. They come here today with all the motherhood statements about integrity in office, yet they failed to mention the very jurisdiction in this nation which is burning because of its lack of integrity, and that is the Queensland Labor government. They know it, and that's why the shadow Attorney-General has fallen silent with his head down at the desk. He knows as much as the rest of them do that the Queensland Labor government is in deep trouble.

We have a conga line of people, all statutory office bearers or former office bearers in Queensland, running from the Queen Street Mall all the way to 1 William Street. Guess what they're doing: they are blowing the whistle on the lack of integrity in the Palaszczuk government in Queensland. What do those opposite say about that today? Nothing.

Mr Dreyfus interjecting—

Mr TED O'BRIEN: Oh, they're blaming News Corp. There you go—good old News Corp. We'll take the News Corp option from the shadow Attorney-General. They know that it is ridiculous.

Here we have a situation. Just imagine the integrity commissioner, Dr Stepanov, who's been asking tough questions of the Labor government in Queensland because of their use of lobbyists in the executive building during the last election campaign. She makes a complaint about one of her staff members, and what happens? Within two weeks, her office is raided and a laptop that she had asked to be investigated and forensically examined is taken and allegedly wiped. What was on that laptop, I wonder, Premier Palaszczuk? What lack of integrity is your office representing, and why do your federal colleagues come in here and stay silent about your state, your jurisdiction and your government? (*Time expired*)

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Irons): The discussion has concluded. Before we go on to the next piece of government business, I would just like to remind members that we're not at the football; we are actually in

the chamber of the House of Representatives. I particularly remind the shadow Attorney-General that I've seen better behaviour from him before.