

LIBERAL PARTY POLICIES

Statement

HON NORMAN MOORE (Mining and Pastoral - Leader of the Opposition) [10.12 pm]: For the benefit of the parliamentary secretary, I say that when the Liberal Party announces its policies, she will know what they are, because they will be formulated through a proper process within the Liberal Party, announced as Liberal Party policy and published accordingly. The parliamentary secretary and anybody else who is interested will be able to read them and know exactly what the Liberal Party's policies are.

I say to the parliamentary secretary, following her comments tonight, that she needs to recognise that within the Liberal Party people are entitled to have a point of view, and they are entitled to express that point of view. Hon Anthony Fels expressed a point of view in this Parliament. The parliamentary secretary made the comment that he should do it publicly. He cannot do it any more publicly than in this place. Therefore, he has made a public comment about a view he has on workers' compensation, and he is perfectly entitled to express a point of view, unlike people on the parliamentary secretary's side of the house who are so tied up by the caucus arrangements of the Labor Party -

Hon Kate Doust: Do you agree with his position?

Hon NORMAN MOORE: No, I do not. However, that will be sorted out in due course. At least members on this side of the house are entitled to have a point of view personally and to express it. On the Labor Party side, if people go against a caucus decision, they are expelled. Therefore, what is the point of people in the Labor Party even having a brain? They do not need to use it; they just go along with what people tell them to go along with. That is being facetious, and I know that all members are entitled to have their own input into the party's policies. However, when they are determined, they are stuck with them. One of the virtues of being a Liberal Party member of Parliament is that we are entitled to have a point of view of our own. There will come a time when the party determines policies, and some members will not agree. They will not be expelled if they say so, because that is what is called democracy. This is a democratic party.

Hon Kim Chance: Until payback at preselection time.

Hon NORMAN MOORE: That has been known to happen. A person in the Liberal Party has to justify his point of view. If his point of view is diametrically opposed to the party, he may not be endorsed. In the Labor Party, such a person is expelled. It is not a matter of being disendorsed. Expelling a person is a very serious business. Nobody wants to get expelled from any organisation. I have not seen anybody expelled from the Labor Party since Ron Thompson, MLC, was expelled for expressing some views about the Labor Party's attitude to homosexuality. He called the Labor Party in those days a spiritual spittoon, as Mr Deputy President (Hon George Cash) would well remember. As a result of his views, he was no longer acceptable as a member of the Labor Party and was expelled. In my view, he was a good member of this house. That is how long I have been around, because I can remember him!

For the information of members, I have been given the job of overseeing the development of Liberal Party policy. Members will see between now and the next election a magnificent set of Liberal Party policies that will be very attractive to the Western Australian community. When they come out and are published, members opposite will know about them. They can then say that they are the Liberal Party's policies, because they will be public. That is not to say that anybody who does not agree with every point will be expelled from the Liberal Party. We accept the view that people should be able to express their point of view. People are entitled to do that.

I am concerned about the speech made by Hon Kate Doust tonight because she is going down the same path that Hon John Bowler did during the last state election. One of our endorsed candidates in the south west said two years before the election that it might be a good idea if a couple of local authorities were amalgamated. John Bowler wrote to every local authority in his electorate before the election saying that the Liberal Party had a plan to get rid of 44 local authorities. We tried to find out where he got that idea from because no-one could remember anybody saying anything about it. It transpired that one of the candidates in the south west had said that some thought should be given to the amalgamation of some local authorities. That translated into a letter to every local authority in John Bowler's electorate that we were going to get rid of 44 local authorities. The great irony of that is that he became the Minister for Local Government and Regional Development and put in train a process that is recommending the amalgamation of local authorities! What is the Labor Party's view on that? He abused us without any justification whatsoever and then became the minister and put in train a process to do exactly what he accused us of wanting to do. I hope that members opposite are not going to try to do the same thing.

Let us get this absolutely straight: Hon Anthony Fels has publicly put forward a view in this house that he thinks there is probably a better way of looking after workers' compensation. He is talking about providing benefits in

another way. Hon Kate Doust has a strange view of the world that says that everything must be set in little boxes and that there must be legislation to make people do things and that individuals cannot think for themselves because they are incapable of thinking for themselves. That is why the Labor Party got rid of workplace agreements - because they think that workers cannot make up their own minds and that they need unions and the government to look after their interests because they cannot look after themselves. That is what members opposite think. They denigrate workers; they think that they are stupid and cannot think for themselves. In fact, they can. Hon Anthony Fels is putting forward a view that workers can think for themselves and that, if they were offered workers' compensation in some other form, it might work better. I do not think that it would, but he is entitled to that point of view. For Hon Kate Doust to denigrate him is beneath her normal performance, quite frankly. Please be assured that that is not Liberal Party policy; it is Hon Anthony Fels' point of view expressed publicly, which he is entitled to do. When the Liberal Party announces its policies for the next election, members opposite will know exactly what they are and they can tell everyone whether they agree with them or not.

Hon Kate Doust: Normally we get hold of documents that fall off the back of a truck.

Hon NORMAN MOORE: I cannot find any documents that have fallen off the back of a truck because I cannot find any documents! This is the whole point. That is why I have taken on the job of producing some documents. The member will regret the fact that I am the shadow minister for policy development because there will be some fantastic policy development in the Liberal Party in the next 18 months. It will be the best policy we have developed for many, many years. It will be policy that will be attractive to the community because it will reflect what the community wants. It will not be the head in the sand stuff that members opposite go on with. The reason why members opposite have survived from an industrial relations point of view is that the federal government has put in place industrial relations legislation that works for the working people of Western Australia - it is not the tripe of members opposite that they brought in when they first became the government. If the government's system were in place across the state of Western Australia, the resource sector would be in diabolical trouble. It just would not cope.

Let us not talk about the government's policies on industrial relations because we know that they are ineffective and would not work, certainly not in the resource sector of Western Australia. Without the federal government's industrial relations legislation, which has been in place for a couple of years, the resource sector would have serious difficulty in carrying out the task that it does. Let us understand that.

There will be a point of difference between the two parties at the next election and members opposite will know about it at the time. Members opposite should not run out there and say that because Hon Anthony Fels said something, it is Liberal Party policy; it is not.

Hon Kate Doust: I said, "Is that Liberal Party policy?"

Hon NORMAN MOORE: I can tell the parliamentary secretary that it is not, but that will not stop her saying that it is. It did not stop John Bowler saying that the government would get rid of 44 local authorities when we said that was not true. An election is not due at the moment; therefore, perhaps the parliamentary secretary will do the right thing and acknowledge that what I am saying is correct.