

MEMBER FOR BALLAJURA

Personal Explanation - Corruption and Crime Commission

MR J.B. D'ORAZIO (Ballajura) [2.49 pm]: On Wednesday, 16 August 2006, I was summonsed to appear before the Corruption and Crime Commission, and I appeared on Friday, 25 August 2006, in relation to a matter involving Bayswater panel beater Pasquale Minniti. I was examined in relation to a meeting that I had with Mr Minniti on 10 May 2006, associated phone calls made to me by Mr Minniti and a phone call made to Sergeant Hailes by me. The accusations made by implication in the media and by others that there was an attempt by me to have my fines remedied in any way are false. The evidence presented to the Corruption and Crime Commission clearly shows them to be fanciful.

I have known Pasquale Minniti for 20 years. I did not request, receive or want any help from Pasquale Minniti. For the record, my fines, which resulted in my licence suspension, were paid within hours of my becoming aware that they were outstanding on Monday, 26 April, and my fines suspension was lifted immediately. My argument with the Fines Enforcement Registry was that it had not followed the law in suspending my licence. I took the registry to the Supreme Court. The matter was heard in front of Justice Templeman on 8 May. The matter was adjourned. An affidavit, sworn by me on 7 May, was presented as part of this case. I will table the affidavit for all to see. The affidavit included the two infringement notices with the correct current address, the cheque butts showing payments made and the notices sent by the Fines Enforcement Registry to the wrong address in Noranda. Therefore, the suggestion that Pasquale Minniti could help me in any way is fanciful.

Pasquale Minniti's phone call was made after 6.00 pm on 8 May. I met him at his panel beating business on 10 May, something that I had done on numerous occasions. Mr Minniti is one of those people who is obsessed with knowing people of influence. The meeting with Mr Minniti was relatively short and we did not discuss any matter that was improper, as the evidence given in the Corruption and Crime Commission showed. Mr Minniti then left numerous messages on my phone. I returned just one phone call to him. Did I do anything wrong? The answer is, no. He insisted that I ring Sergeant Hailes and I agreed in order to get Mr Minniti off the phone. I rang the policeman at the police station in normal working hours and through the normal channels. The staff put me through. Nothing improper was discussed as shown by the evidence given on Friday at the Corruption and Crime Commission. Nothing else happened, except that I received more phone calls from Mr Minniti. Did I know Mr Minniti was engaged in activity that the Corruption and Crime Commission may deem to be corrupt? No. Did I know Mr Minniti was under surveillance? No. Did I ask Mr Minniti for help? No. Did I do anything that I would not do with any other elector? No.

The fines that resulted in my licence suspension were paid on 26 April, two weeks before Pasquale Minniti's first phone call. All the documentation in relation to these fines were in the affidavit of 7 May which was argued in front of Justice Templeman on 8 May, prior to any approach from Mr Minniti. I ask again: did I ask for any help from Mr Minniti? No. Did I receive any help from Mr Minniti? No. Did I receive any help from any police officer? No. Could any help be provided, even if someone wanted to provide it? No. So what am I accused of? Nothing. Am I guilty of bad character judgment? I may be, but hindsight is a great thing. Does this make me an improper person to be in Parliament? Of course not. I look forward to the report of the Corruption and Crime Commission into Pasquale Minniti and his activities.

This matter has been a nightmare for me and my family. I look forward to putting it all behind me. I table the affidavit to the Supreme Court.

[The paper was tabled for the information of members.]