

ROBBIE KATTER

Member for Traeger



MEDIA RELEASE

17 September, 2018

KATTER SAYS LABOR MPS GETTING NERVOUS OVER PREMIER'S 'PISASALE-ESK' LEADERSHIP STYLE

The Katter's Australian Party says the Queensland Premier is now running the State in the same manner that Paul Pisasale ran Ipswich Council and that Queensland is entering a new era of political instability and bullying – similar to the last 12 months of the Turnbull Government – with Labor MP's raising their concerns over the Premier's leadership and political judgement.

KAP State Leader Robbie Katter says the attempt by the Premier to crush the KAP in Queensland by starving it of staff resources had backfired and opened discussion by her Labor Parliamentary colleagues about her political judgement.

"The Premier gets on her moral high-horse when it comes to people like Paul Pisasale, then she turns around and punishes people who don't agree with her political views," he said.

"The Premier is clearly so concerned about her own position that she's willing to undermine the values of our democratic system to protect it.

"She obviously won't tolerate any kind of dissent and I'm sure that's raising concerns within her own party room."

Mr Katter has backed warnings by the Queensland Council for Civil Liberties (media release attached) that the Premier's action contradicts standards set by the Fitzgerald Inquiry and sets a dangerous precedent.

"It is pretty clear that under Mr Pisasale, Ipswich ran as a dictatorship where every attempt was made to crush those who spoke up against what was going on in Ipswich," he said.

"This is also Malcolm Turnbull Mark-two. We have had members of the Labor Party come to us in the last fortnight to raise serious concerns about the Premier's decision.

"In terms of taking a dictatorial approach, the Premier is the new Paul Pisasale in Queensland. She is running Queensland like a dictator and a one person band – just like Paul Pisasale did in Ipswich and just like Malcolm Turnbull did in Canberra. And we are now starting to see the same warning signs of leadership rumblings.

"I'm expecting we'll see Labor members begin to put more pressure on the Premier to stand down as the full impact of her decision is felt.

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“The Premier’s actions call the entire Labor Party’s credibility into question and to limit the damage they must respond by forcing her to stand down.”

Mr Katter confirmed today that he had taken legal advice that the Premier is in breach of sections 60, 78 and 415 of the Criminal Code by withdrawing staff from the KAP.

“The legal advice is clear,” he said.

“I have referred this matter to the Crime and Corruption Commission and I have asked for an immediate investigation in to the Premier’s actions.

“We will not let this matter rest because freedom of speech is at the heart of our democracy in Queensland.

“This goes far beyond the KAP losing staff. It’s about the sort of political leaders Queenslanders can rely on.

“Any leader who tries to shutdown dissent with threats and intimidation will pay the ultimate political price at the hands of Queenslanders who know they deserve better.”

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QUEENSLAND COUNCIL FOR CIVIL LIBERTIES

Protecting Queenslanders' individual rights and liberties since 1967

Watching Them While They're Watching You

3 September 2018

MEDIA RELEASE BY TERRY O'GORMAN VICE-PRESIDENT, QUEENSLAND COUNCIL FOR CIVIL LIBERTIES

The Civil Liberties Council has called on the Premier Anastacia Palaszczuk to immediately reverse her decision to strip Katter's Australia Party of its three parliamentary staff and two extra electorate officers following KAP Senator Fraser Anning's contentious maiden speech in the Federal Parliament.

Civil Liberties Vice President Terry O'Gorman said the Premier's stance was completely contrary to one of the major pillars of the Fitzgerald Inquiry report delivered to the Queensland Parliament in July 1989.

Mr O'Gorman said that Tony Fitzgerald QC looked at then Labour Opposition complaints that the Bjelke-Petersen Government throughout the 70's and 80's had vindictively cut Labour's parliamentary staff as a means of stifling Labour's criticism of Government excesses.

In the chapter of Fitzgerald's report dealing with The Role of Parliament Fitzgerald said:

- In order to be an effective forum, Parliament must have sufficient resources to enable it properly to research topics and evaluate Government proposals. Parliament can easily be prevented from properly performing its role by being denied time and resources. Any Government may use its dominance in the Parliament and its control of public resources to stifle and neuter effective criticism by the Opposition.
- Non-government party members must be provided with appropriate resources and detailed information to enable them to supervise and criticise, just as Governments naturally are well equipped and staffed.
- Without information about Government activities and research staff to properly assess it, the opposition party or parties have no basis on which to review or criticise the activities. (Emphasis added)¹

"For the Premier to cut KAP's State Parliament resources because a Federal KAP Senator in the Federal Parliament made an appalling maiden speech referencing the 'final solution' in his criticism

¹ See Report of a Commission of Inquiry (Fitzgerald Report) 3 July 1989 at page 123 – 124.

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of Muslim immigration is illogical and fails to heed the lessons of the Fitzgerald Inquiry.” Mr O’Gorman said.

Mr O’Gorman said that the Premier was not a Member of Parliament at the time of the delivery of the landmark Fitzgerald Report and perhaps is unaware of the history of the Bjelke-Petersen Government preventing the then Labour Opposition from doing its job by stripping it of Parliamentary resources.

“But there must be older members of the Labour Party organisational wing and Branches who remember that era who should speak out against the Premier’s fundamentally wrong and anti-democratic measure in stripping KAP of necessarily Parliamentary resources” Mr O’Gorman said.

Mr O’Gorman said that the Premier’s own justification for the move is inherently contradictory while supposedly supporting free speech and then punishing State KAP for the actions of its Federal body in exercising free speech.

The fact that the Premier has stripped State KAP of Parliamentary resources after pressure from the LNP with Deputy Opposition Leader Tim Mander saying the LNP had ‘shamed’ the Government into taking this action suggests petty politics and a desire to diminish KAPs public profile is behind the move, Mr O’Gorman said.

While the Civil Liberties Council was ‘awfully appalled’ by Senator Anning’s speech and equally critical of Federal KAP Leader Bob Katter’s support for Senator Anning, the protection of free speech means having to cop the drivel in Anning’s maiden speech.

**Mr O’Gorman can be contacted during business hours on 07 3034 0000
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