



Adrian Pederick MP
Member for Hammond

House of Assembly
5th June 2014

Housing Trust Tenants Association
Motion

Mr PEDERICK (Hammond) (12:08 :55): I wish to support the motion by the member for Morphett:

That this house—

(a)condemns the Housing Tenants Association for their despicable scare campaign and their misleading and deceptive conduct during the March 2014 election; and

(b)calls on any member of parliament who assisted the Housing Trust Tenants Association in this campaign in any way, to apologise to the thousands of South Australians who were caused great distress as a result of this disgraceful campaign.

I would like to ask the member for Frome what he is going to do in relation to part (b) of this motion, because he distributed these letters throughout his electorate.

He actually made comments to media outlets that denied it was a scare campaign. Well, it was an absolute scare campaign. It had absolutely nothing to do with our policy in regard to public housing. I must say that the constituents of Frome, and the constituents right across this state, need to know why this stuff can be put out and why it is promoted by people who are now ministers of the Crown peddling this absolute nonsense across the state. I will just read our policy about the Liberal commitment to our Housing Trust tenants in South Australia. It states:

The State Liberals are committed to ensuring social housing continues to be provided to those who need it most.

The State Liberals are also committed to providing affordable public housing for people in need, while reducing waiting times for all those who are eligible for housing assistance.

The State Liberals will ensure that social housing is managed better than it has been under the Weatherill Labor Government and will support residents to strengthen and build better local communities.

The State Liberal Party does not support, and never has supported, the introduction of a bedroom tax.

The State Liberals have ruled out any policies that would force the removal of tenants from their Housing Trust homes, despite the recent fear and smear campaign by members of the Labor Party claiming the contrary.

The only exception to this is those disruptive tenants who make their neighbours' lives a misery. The overwhelming majority of public housing tenants just want and deserve to have a peaceful and secure home. This is what they will get with the State Liberals.

The State Liberals will also ensure our housing assets are managed more efficiently—we will make better use of untenanted properties.

If elected, a Marshall Liberal Government will work with Housing Trust tenants to ensure their rights are upheld, their voices heard, and better outcomes for tenants are achieved.

So, there is our policy, in black and white, and it was on our website prior to the election. I think that it is an absolute disgrace that Julie Macdonald and the so-called Housing Trust Association (and it might be a group of one; I am not sure) put out this absolutely alarming letter to at least 790 homes in my electorate. I had to do what I could to work with the local councils to find out the addresses. I could not get access to the names; I could write only to the resident, which is fair. So, I have to wonder: how did the Housing Trust Tenants Association get the names of these people. I saw some of the envelopes, handwritten addresses on envelopes, written to these tenants. Did they not think that people would come to me about this issue? Well, of course they did.

I remember one lady, aged I think about 83, who came into my electorate office, and she was literally shaking. I hope that those on the other side who masterminded this dirty tricks campaign, and Julie Macdonald, are proud of that. That is only one; there were others who came into my office as well. But this one lady stood out. She was physically standing there shaking. It is beyond reproach that the Weatherill Labor Party will do anything it takes to get into power and scare the bejesus out of elderly citizens, and that is exactly what they did—our elderly and needy and people who need that housing support. Yet they are out there on the streets telling them that they are going to be kicked out of their homes. It was a disgraceful pack of lies; that is all it was. It was an absolutely disgraceful pack of lies. To see that women in my office, and it was heartwarming, to say the least, to me that I could—

An honourable member: Heartbreaking.

Mr PEDERICK: Heartbreaking, sorry—using the wrong words. What I am trying to say is that it was—

The SPEAKER: Also, with 'beyond reproach', I think you meant 'beyond the pale'.

Mr PEDERICK: It was heartwarming that I could talk with her and work with her and convince her that there were no such plans by the Liberal Party in this state. I find it one of the most terrible acts, apart from the other acts of the Labor party over the years—their

dirty tricks campaign, Family First T-shirts, the Write to Isobel campaign, which I believe was authorised by Kyam Maher at the time, who is now a member in the other place.

Mr Pengilly: Don't forget what they did to Habib.

Mr PEDERICK: Yes, I am just getting to that—and then the bit about Can you trust Habib. That was an absolutely disgraceful campaign. The campaign by the Housing Trust Tenants Association, the Can you trust Habib campaign and all the other dirty tricks of the Labor Party in this state show how far they will go to keep power. It is no wonder we now have a select committee set up in the other place to look into electoral matters, and there is a bill to have a cross-party standing committee of parliament to look at these matters as well.

You do not wonder why the people of this state treat politicians as they do when you see what goes on. It is not just what went on during the election with all the dirty tricks but also what we have seen since. We have seen a former SAS soldier, a Liberal who has served here for 17 years, cross the floor to take his 30 pieces of silver.

Getting back to the matter in hand, I wonder what members opposite will do about all the pain and suffering that they caused people across this state who have to use public housing. As I said, the elderly, who are physically scared and mentally scarred, fear being kicked out of their homes or having to pay a bedroom tax because they might have a spare bedroom—a third room or a second room—in their housing trust accommodation that they do not vitally need to use. It goes beyond the pale, Mr Speaker, as to what lengths people will go to win elections.

I hope Julie Macdonald is proud of herself. She got the result she wanted: she got the Labor Party re-elected in South Australia. I am sure the appropriate kudos or benefits will be funnelled her way, whatever they are. They will be sorted out in back rooms full of smoke.

Members interjecting:

Mr PEDERICK: They are telling me they are healthy on the other side, now, that they are smoke free. Okay, I believe that. What I would like to say to the other side is that you need to find your hearts. You need to think about the people of this state, not just the political outcomes you look for. Think about the disgraceful things you do to mislead the people of this state about what you stand for. You have been making out that you are Family First candidates, and trying to link a candidate to a bullet-ridden place in Beirut. It is absolutely disgraceful activity.

Some people say to us on this side that we do not get on because we are the good guys. Well, I am glad I am with the good guys. I am really pleased that I am with the good guys and that I do not have to stoop to such disgraceful acts. It has happened in federal campaigns as well where there were accusations that the member for Boothby was in Fiji when, obviously, he wasn't.

Mr Gardner: There's a link to that.

Mr PEDERICK: Yes, there's a link—a link to the present member for Elder. They will stoop to all levels. There is no end to the depth that Labor will stoop to get their outcomes in this state, and it is time it was sorted out and it is time action was taken.