

CLIVE PALMER — LEGAL ACTION

**240. Ms E.L. HAMILTON to the Attorney General:**

I refer to reports today of a \$300 billion claim by one of Clive Palmer's business entities, which has listed a former Liberal Party Attorney General as one of its lawyers. Can the Attorney General outline to the house the legal actions taken by Mr Palmer and his companies against the taxpayers of Western Australia and how this government has responded to them?

**Mr J.R. QUIGLEY replied:**

I thank the member for the question.

I am conscious that I am answering on limited time in question time —

**The SPEAKER:** Excellent!

**Mr J.R. QUIGLEY:** So I will not give the detail of all the actions that Mr Palmer has initiated. There are 14 in all—not all the 14 are involved in arbitral proceedings, not the \$300 billion claim he has now put in. Of those 13, four have been settled; all have been withdrawn or discontinued and only in relation to four have we recovered any order for costs. He is resisting all orders for costs.

I was shocked to see on the front page this morning that he has initiated a \$300 billion claim using as his solicitor and counsel a former Liberal Attorney-General of Australia and a Liberal Attorney General of Western Australia. Might I just say this about his representation: a little while ago, we were served with a notice of intention to bring proceedings under the free trade agreement for \$30 billion, being the original arbitral award, plus costs and damages. Since the former Liberal Attorney General has come on board, that has increased tenfold to \$300 billion.

We know that the Liberal and National Parties are friends of Mr Palmer and work in lockstep with Mr Palmer. We know this. Indeed, we know that in 2020, after we passed the legislation, a Miss Caroline Di Russo, who describes herself as a businesswoman and an unrepentant nerd, published an opinion piece entirely supportive of Mr Palmer, and after publishing the opinion piece totally in support of Mr Palmer, the Liberal Party elected her its state president—in the full knowledge that she is an ally of Mr Palmer. As for the National Party, we know that former Leader of the National Party Brendon Grylls was flying all over the state in a plane with Mr Palmer. We have these people in absolute lockstep.

Several members interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Order, please, members!

**Mr J.R. QUIGLEY:** Now we have the bizarre situation of the former first law officer of the commonwealth—think about that—a former Liberal Attorney-General, now out of Parliament and assisting Mr Palmer in his rapacious attack on all Australians. It is very, very troubling that the Liberal Party and the National Party are so supportive of Mr Palmer.

Several members interjected.

**Mr J.R. QUIGLEY:** Yes—the Liberal Party and the National Party are in lockstep support of Mr Palmer. They laugh about their friendship with Mr Palmer; they are so unashamed of it that they laugh about their friendship with Mr Palmer and their support of Mr Palmer.

There are some very serious questions arising out of what I read on the front page of the paper this morning—very serious questions. The questions are as follows. Did the former commonwealth Attorney-General, who is now acting for Mr Palmer, whilst he was Attorney-General receive any briefings on the Mineralogy amendment act, bearing in mind that that act was passed in 2020 and the former Liberal Attorney-General was in office until 2021? We know that he was supporting Mr Palmer at that time because he signed the intervention to the High Court in support of Mr Palmer. The first question is: did he, whilst he was federal Attorney-General, receive any briefings or papers in respect of this action?

**Dr A.D. Buti:** What's his name?

**Mr J.R. QUIGLEY:** He is so infamous; his name is well known to every Australian.

The second question is: during his period in office as the commonwealth Attorney-General, did he receive any briefing papers regarding Mr Palmer and the Mineralogy amendment act? These are serious questions about conflict. Thirdly, was he in cabinet at any stage when the Mineralogy amendment act and Mr Palmer were discussed? These are very serious and important questions that the Liberal Party has to answer. It has to answer this because this goes right to the integrity of government. Did the first law officer of the commonwealth use knowledge that he received as the commonwealth Attorney-General in securing this brief to act for Mr Palmer on this outrageous claim against Australia?