

Question without Notice from Sharkie (Mayo) to the PM re National Integrity Commission, 16 March 2021

QUESTION

Date Tuesday, 16 March 2021
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Questioner Sharkie, Rebekha, MP
Speaker

Source House
Proof Yes
Responder Morrison, Scott, MP
Question No.

National Integrity Commission

National Integrity Commission

Ms SHARKIE (Mayo) (14:14): My question is to the Prime Minister. On 29 March 2018, the Attorney-General told the media that the government was considering detailed models for a national integrity commission. It has now been 1,111 days since that public statement. Prime Minister, where is the National Integrity Commission Australia was promised?

Mr MORRISON (Cook—Prime Minister and Minister for the Public Service) (14:14): I thank the member for her question. I will ask the Minister representing the acting Attorney-General to respond further to the question. As the Attorney-General at the time said, that is the case; we have prepared that model and engaged in the consultation process and that consultation process is continuing. But what is clear is that the proposal that the government has put forward is not supported by other members, either of this chamber or the other chamber. We are very determined to proceed with the model that we've set out. We believe that that provides the best way of handling the issues, but if the parliament is not prepared to support that legislation then that puts us in a rather difficult position in terms of being able to proceed. I will ask the minister to add further.

Mr DUTTON (Dickson—Minister for Home Affairs) (14:15): I thank the honourable member for her question and recognise the genuineness of her concern in relation to the integrity commission. I think it's important for our country, as we've seen in other states and territories, to get the design right of an integrity commission. The Prime Minister pointed out that there is an exposure draft out at the moment which has had over 300 written submissions and 40 consultations in terms of meetings and roundtables that have taken place. We will follow that process through, hopefully in a form that can be supported in the parliament.

I'll just make this point, because I know the honourable member and others have had a keen interest in this for a while. This integrity commission deals with serious corruption. That's the proposal here. What we need to be very careful about is that we're not straying into a space where we might compromise a criminal investigation or a successful prosecution against somebody in relation to a sexual assault matter.

Opposition members interjecting—

The SPEAKER: Members on my left!

Mr DUTTON: You can scoff at that, but that's the foundation of the legal system in this country. If the Leader of the Opposition is proposing a departure from that then he should make that very clear. But this government is going to make sure that we continue the process with the integrity commission, and it shouldn't be used for political purposes by those opposite.