



16 January 2008

The Hon (sic) Frank Sartor MP
Minister for Planning

Dear Minister

You are such an asshole, Frank.

I have addressed you as "The Hon" to be strictly correct but, after your dishonest and offensive interview on 702ABC this morning, wonder whether anyone else in local government will bother to do so. There wasn't much honour evident from you on the airways today.

We have obtained the interview and extracted the following observation to a question by someone called Chris. He had asked (something which is clearly a prickly topic for you, your changed attitude to the inherent conflict of interest involving the developer/private certifiers relationship) and you said this:

"There is no way anyone I can find apart from the Local Government Association (who) wants to go back to the days where you had the old, fat Council building surveyor turning up when he felt like it to check your concrete pour, and having a system that was itself quite corrupt. There is still corruption in local government now, one of the biggest levels of complaint to ICAC in fact local government. So the fact that there are professional people out there who can certify something and do the job professionally, and most of them do it well, that is here to stay".

I challenge you to debate this with me. Remember here that you are talking about relatively recent history, this decade in fact) and you will not be able to establish that anything you have said here (apart from the percentage of complaints to the ICAC which are invariably found to be incorrect) is correct.

Apart from your demonstrably false assertion characterising professionals working in local government as building surveyors as old or fat, or exercising a discretion on critical inspections, your claim that the system itself was "quite corrupt" is maliciously wrong. You know that, Frank and that's why I feel comfortable describing you as an asshole. Bastard just didn't seem to do it, and a two word response to you, as appropriate as it may have been, won't do.

You know that the overwhelming majority of complaints to the ICAC about councils and, particularly, council employees are found to be without substance. Yet, you choose to ignore this as part of the government's sad and offensive onslaught against councils and council employees to deliver to the big developers what they want - a greater role for the private certifiers you have already described as possessing an inherent conflict of interest. Shame on you.

To suggest also that "there are professional people out there who can certify something and do the job professionally" assumes that those who are carrying out the certify role are not "professional people" or, even if they are, they don't "do the job professionally". You know this to be a lie, you asshole.

I understand why your change of heart on this inherently corruptible system embarrasses you. It should. But the correct response is not to deny the groundswell of opposition to this system (because there are many organisations opposed to private certifying in addition to the Local Government Association, and you know it) but to respond to it and restore development control to local government where it can properly be carried out by professional employees without a vested and financial interest in the developer.

Wanker.

Yours etc

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ian Robertson', written in a cursive style.

Ian Robertson
Secretary