



Speech by

BILL FELDMAN

MEMBER FOR CABOOLTURE

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ADDRESS IN REPLY

Mr FELDMAN (Caboolture—ONP) (Leader of the One Nation Party) (4.48 p.m.): Mr Deputy Speaker, it would be remiss of me at this stage not to ask you to pass on my congratulations to the Speaker upon his elevation to the esteemed position which he now holds. On behalf of Pauline Hanson's One Nation, I take this opportunity to thank the Governor for the delivery of his speech in opening this Parliament.

What an exciting time it is. The 49th Parliament will see us through the millennium. I am very conscious of this occasion in more ways than one. This would have been my maiden speech in this Assembly had it not been for the fact that the Heiner matter took precedence during the confidence debate as I sought to establish the moral stance of the Honourable the Premier. It is to his credit that he came forth and tabled the documents that I, on behalf of One Nation, and in the interests of fair, open and honest Government, sought. That first speech is now there in history and can never be changed. It is a decision that I, as Leader of Pauline Hanson's One Nation Party, took and still stand by. The jury is still out. The legal minds are still pouring over that documentation and that which is still to come. So do not rest easy.

I stand here today proudly representing Pauline Hanson's One Nation Party as its parliamentary leader and as the elected representative for the seat of Caboolture. I am very conscious of the trust bestowed in Pauline Hanson's One Nation Party by a quarter of the Queensland electorate during the 1998 election. It is my earnest desire that One Nation and my 10 duly and democratically elected parliamentary colleagues will honour the trust bestowed upon us. I congratulate them also on their election. The election result has sent shock waves not only throughout Queensland but also throughout Australia. It has been described here in this Parliament as a train—one that has run over a few prominent names. Honourable members, I am here to testify that that train is still on track.

There is a great sense of betrayal felt out there by ordinary Australians in the political process. Australians are no longer hearing the voices of their politicians on the floor of Parliament. We, Pauline Hanson's One Nation, are here to provide that voice in this Parliament. I came to this Parliament with 25 years of policing experience behind me. I have seen the torment of the victims of crime first-hand. I have had the dire duty in too many instances to return to those very same people to deliver a message from Government that their case has not been proceeded with, or a nolle prosequi entered due to the minor nature of their complaint. We want to see victims of crime dealt with in a just and compassionate way. This is dealt with in Pauline Hanson's One Nation's families, youth and community care policy, which was launched during the election campaign but of which we heard little—not unlike the rest of our policies. At the end of the day, however, it is the police who must look the victim in the eye and try to justify what was done in another jurisdiction, and sometimes it is a little hard to take.

My time in the Queensland Police Service has seen me serve in various parts of the State both in and out of uniform. I arrived in Caboolture in 1986. It was then a growing country town, being serviced at that time by the former member, Mr Bill Newton, whom some members on this side of the House will probably remember. During my time there I watched that town grow into a city. The police division population grew from some 25,000 in 1988 to some 65,000 now. I saw the staffing level at the police station grow from some 15 to 35. However, during those turbulent growing years I lost 15 of my police colleagues to the debilitating disease of depression and stress and watched them leave the service on medical grounds as they struggled but failed to cope with the spiralling crime rate and the

lack of resources and infrastructure, and they succumbed to the pressure. Now, due to the Caboolture watch-house, which is attached to the Caboolture station, that sometimes copes with up to 13 prisoners, the new courthouse next door and an ever-increasing population divisionally, this station is well and truly due for an upgrade and extra staffing, or the tragedies of the past may very well again become the reality of the future for Caboolture.

I commend the insight of the former Labor member for Caboolture, Mr Jon Sullivan, as he joined with me in calling for a 24-hour police station on Bribie Island to cope with the ever-expanding population in this vital holiday destination. This island paradise has grown to be one of the leading canal estates on the Sunshine Coast. However—and I would remind the Minister for Police of this if he was here—only seven police staff that division, whose population swells from some 16,000 to 50,000 during the summer seasons. This station is about to cave in under the pressure of looking after this growing population. We do not want a repeat of Caboolture station's experience, when we saw the police cave in under similar pressure. The elderly and other permanent residents of the island deserve the best standard of crime prevention that we can give, and that is a 24-hour police station and 18 police officers to support this great tourist and holiday destination—the doorway to the passage, the Sunshine Coast and the Glasshouse Mountains hinterland.

I thank all my friends and workmates who supported me and for their generosity to me and to my family. Due to my long association with the Queensland Police Union of Employees as a branch president/secretary at Caboolture, Redcliffe and Deception Bay, and as a conference delegate over some 15 years, I will certainly not forget them. I know of their worries and concerns, for they were my worries and they were my concerns only a mere two months or so ago when I, too, was in uniform. I will not let them down in this place. I know also that their interests are being well served by their president and general secretary, both good friends of mine, Gary Wilkinson and Merv Bainbridge.

I was the first police liaison officer for Caboolture, working at the Wamuran Neighbourhood Watch, assisting that small community to solve its crime problems. I commend the principle of neighbourhood watch as a crime preventive method within our communities. It is great to see communities fighting back and winning back their streets and areas by being more vigilant and watching over their neighbourhood watch areas. I would thank all those who work in neighbourhood watch and have crime prevention in their hearts. I thank them for their support.

I was also the Adopt-a-Cop at the Morayfield State School for some 11 years, lecturing and moulding those young minds to be more community minded. I would like to thank all those parents, teachers, children and professionals who knew me from that sphere. I thank them for their support and I acknowledge them here. I also recommend that program as a crime prevention method.

I also had a long association with the Caboolture Cricket Club, playing at first-grade level and coaching junior cricket sides at club, zone and State championship level. I want to thank all those unpaid, overworked and extremely dedicated coaches, managers, parents and children who play sport of all kinds and who supported me during this campaign. I had a similar association with indoor cricket up to a State level—a sport not duly recognised to any great extent in the corporate sector, but which I commend to that sector for the due recognition that it deserves. I also mention all those juniors who achieve at that level in that sport.

Unless one is involved at a grassroots level of the community, and unless people can see that one is out there actually doing something, one fails to gain respect from that community. I am not talking about being on a board somewhere and not doing anything; I am talking about actually being involved with people, being involved in their homes, having them come to my home, dealing with their problems—prior to trying to stand for office—and being involved out there where the hurts really are, sharing in the heartache of these people and their real problems.

I would also like to thank all those Christian friends of mine out there as well and remind them that, yes, contrary to any other rumour, Parliament still does commence with prayer. I especially commend those who perhaps, in this politically correct time, find difficulty with some of the problems being faced by communities, some with abortion clinics lurking in their residential communities, close to preschools and State schools. I urge them to keep up the good fight; keep up the silent, non-violent, peaceful and principled vigil for which Australians have been renowned—and for winning.

Truth, integrity and honesty have a way of prevailing in the end. We know what that end will be. We at Caboolture do have our problems. We have had the northern bypass of the Caboolture central business district on the books for the past 15 years or so. I am pleased to see that, finally, something has started to happen; the plans are now being settled, some community concerns are being addressed with representatives of the airport, corporate park, the Caboolture Show Society and the Friends of Lagoon Creek. Soon the central business district and King Street will be free from the effects of heavy transport, petrol tankers, B-doubles, quarry trucks and the carriage of dangerous goods by heavily laden semitrailers through the centre of this town and through the streets of the central and western residential fringe of the city. This, too, should assist in the revitalisation of this part of the city centre and bring small business back into this part of town. As the northern side of the city expands and

grows, small business, which is the backbone of any town—and Caboolture is no different—will return. These businesses are fighting back and attempting to retake their market share—a share taken with the development of the Morayfield Shopping Centre complex.

The bypass will divert traffic, especially the heavy transport, north of the Caboolture township and link up with the Bruce Highway. As I said, that was an old diamond trotted out for years by both parties, with the building of the Caboolture Hospital, the four lanes to Bribie Island and the rail link to Redcliffe. I have seen the hospital built, will experience the building of the northern bypass and I am currently witnessing the staged upgrade of the four lanes to Bribie Island. But the rail link to Redcliffe is something that I do not think I will ever see.

As I said, Bribie Island Road is about to be upgraded to four lanes. Sections of four lanes are already being completed and are currently being used as passing lanes. Thought and conjecture still exist, however, about the Ningi township—whether to bypass that town or to upgrade the road through it. Lobby groups are forming and I expect to be inundated with concerned constituents. That, ladies and gentlemen, is why I am here. I am sure that, between the departments, those groups and me, sanity will prevail and a resolution will be reached.

The debate in the House last night was of particular concern to me, as it would have been to the honourable member for Nicklin, I am sure. We both have an interest in the development of a site in the Beerburrum State forest for a shooting range, which may house some three to four clubs from both our electorates. Yes, the sporting shooters and respective pistol clubs deserve a place to practise and to hone their sporting skills. A future Commonwealth or Olympic champion may well rise from that very club. This is a major sporting club in my electorate and deserves all the support that I can give it.

I would now like to thank all the One Nation branch members from Caboolture and Bribie Island who worked tirelessly over the weeks and months leading up to the election day. I personally thank the brave and dedicated 400 or so who, despite the Caboolture Show being on that night, despite the State of Origin football being played that night and despite another party's rally also being on that night, filled the Morayfield Community Centre to capacity to hear Pauline Hanson and several candidates, including myself, speak. That truly shows the fibre of One Nation dedication. My special thanks go to Nick, Dot, Alan and Iris and the executive, to Karen, Brian and Arn for the use of their trucks and camper, which spread the word around the town during the campaign, and to Marriette for her help and her insight. To all my booth workers and to the State executive, I say: thanks, I would not be here now were it not for your dedication.

My thanks now go to my family. I thank my wife Gail for her love and loyal dedication as I stood for this office. The tears of despair, joy and triumph were all worth it. She stood by me through thick and thin over 21 years in the Queensland Police Service. Now a new era has begun. To my children, Dannielle and Luke, I express my sincere thanks for their persevering with me during these last few months. It was not easy for them when I was a police officer. Although I pray the road will be a little easier for them now, there are those of little conscience who will still continue to place obstacles in their path. We have always been a close family, enjoying not only our faith but our sport together as well. I hope to still coach and play a little cricket as well as attend to my other duties. So I say to Luke and the Caboolture Cricket Club that we may still yet have a coach.

In closing, I would like to make the point that I will serve to the best of my ability my whole electorate—I stress, my whole electorate—and represent them without favour on the floor of this House, and truly voice their concerns, worries, fears and expectations within these hallowed halls.
