



Speech by

Mr D. BRISKEY

MEMBER FOR CLEVELAND

Hansard 5 August 1998

STRADBROKE FERRIES

Mr BRISKEY (Cleveland—ALP) (7.27 p.m.): Before I raise the matter that I wish to speak about tonight, I advise the member for Caboolture and all other One Nation Party members in this place to look under their own beds for communists first before they come in here looking for them. Their own candidate, Bluey Bostock, who stood against me for the State seat of Cleveland, is a former member of the Communist Party.

I rise tonight in utter disbelief. Last Wednesday morning at 7.30, when the school students from North Stradbroke Island within my electorate went to get on the 7.30 water taxi to come to the mainland to go to their high school, they were told, "No, you cannot get on the water taxi." That is outrageous. If it were a Monty Python skit, we would all stand here laughing, but it is not. Those students were told, "No, you cannot get on the water taxi. You have to get on the barge." As honourable members would be aware, it takes 20 to 25 minutes on the water taxi and an hour and sometimes more to get to the mainland on the barge.

When their parents rang up in utter disbelief and anger, one of the parents was told, "Adults going to work are more important." I just could not believe it. Those high school students were on their way to the Cleveland State High School, Carmel College, Redlands College and Ormiston College. Some of them had already caught a bus from Point Lookout, which takes anything up to an hour because sometimes it has to drop people off at Amity. They got to Dunwich to catch the 7.30 water taxi and were told, "No, you cannot get on it." What were they to do? Were they to catch the barge over and be half an hour late for their connecting bus to their school, or were they to go home? Some of them would have had to go home to an empty house because both their parents work. It is outrageous and unbelievable that students would have to miss out on a day's school. So what did they do? Some of them went home because it was pointless going over to the mainland and standing around at Cleveland with absolutely no way of getting to school. And if they had walked to the independent colleges, they would have taken half a day to get there.

I just could not believe this. As a parent of school-aged children, it is beyond my belief that a student could stand at a bus stop, for instance, on the mainland and say, "Listen, I want to get on this bus to go to school" and have the bus driver say, "No, you cannot get on. You are not important. Your school education is not important. Go home, or catch the next bus, or walk." If that happened on the mainland we would be up in arms, and I think that we should be up in arms because of this outrageous situation. Stradbroke Ferries have told those students, "No, your education is not important. Go home, or catch the barge and walk to school. We do not care about your education." That is exactly what Stradbroke Ferries told those students and their parents.

Time expired.
