



Speech by

Hon. D. HAMILL

MEMBER FOR IPSWICH

Hansard 16 September 1998

MR SPEAKER'S RULING

Motion of Dissent

Hon. D. J. HAMILL (Ipswich—ALP) (Treasurer) (9.09 p.m.): I am pleased to follow the honourable member for Moggill in this debate. Although we are taking different points of view in this debate, I assure the honourable member for Moggill that I respect his position and, what is more, I will respect him in the morning. However, I do not respect the very narrow and technical argument that the honourable member has tried to run.

This is a stunt. The member for Moggill finished his speech by quoting from King Lear. That demonstrated the little theatrical piece we have had before us this evening—the little bit of theatre that the honourable Leader of the Opposition has been indulging in in relation to this whole issue. The issue is Mr Speaker's ruling of 27 August. In essence, Mr Speaker's ruling was that a remark made generally could not be objected to by an individual member. That is a very consistent ruling that has a set of precedents stretching far back. Even the honourable Leader of the Opposition acknowledges that point.

What is the Leader of the Opposition bleating about? He is trying to construct an argument that the particular circumstances in which the remark was delivered made it not a general remark but an individual remark. I refer to the alleged offending statement in which Premier said, *inter alia*—

"I repeat what I said yesterday: your behaviour—the Opposition's behaviour here is supporting the child molesters and the abusers."

Mr Borbidge: That's not quite correct.

Mr HAMILL: That is what the Hansard records. In all fairness, recourse might be had to the earlier remarks referred to by the Premier. The Leader of the Opposition referred to some comments that the Premier made the previous day, 26 August 1998. Page 1903 of Hansard states—

"Here today those opposite are supporting the abusers. They are covering up for the paedophiles. They are covering up for the abusers. That is what they are doing. They are trying to undermine the inquiry."

At that point the Leader of the Opposition rose and objected in the same way that he is objecting to the Premier's remarks of 27 August wherein he claimed that this was a personal affront to him as an individual and to each and every member sitting opposite. That is the problem.

Mr Speaker, I believe that you have brought great dignity to the office of the Speaker. I know that one of the rulings you hold dear relates to your comments about the manner in which honourable members ought to address each other in the House. Yesterday, Mr Speaker reminded all honourable members of this. He drew all honourable members' attention to the fact that honourable members do not call each other "you" or "your" when referring to an individual and when referring to another member of this House should refer to that member as the "honourable member for Surfers Paradise", or the "honourable member for Gregory", or to whomsoever we are referring.

The problem out of all of this is the delusion of grandeur of the Leader of the Opposition. It would appear that every time a comment is made that the Opposition is "such and such", it becomes a matter of personal affront to the Leader of the Opposition. We have the poor man's "Sun King". The honourable member for Surfers Paradise is the poor man's Louis XIV, who said, "L'etat c'est moi"—"I am the State. Everything about the State refers to me." In this case, the poor man's Louis XIV opposite

says, "I am the Opposition. I am the whole Opposition. You refer to the Opposition, I take it upon my shoulders. I am affronted, I am affronted."

I suggest that this whole motion is an affront to this House, it is an affront to Mr Speaker and it deserves the contempt of all members of the House. This is nothing but a stunt. It does not deserve respect. I suggest that this is just a petty example whereby the Opposition is seeking to stir up strife for a cheap headline out of question time and draw respect away from the Chair.

Time expired.
