



Speech by  
**Mr DENVER  
BEANLAND**

**MEMBER FOR INDOOROOPIILLY**

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Hansard 30 July 1998

**AMENDMENT TO STANDING ORDERS**

**Mr BEANLAND** (Indooroopilly—LP) (9.54 a.m.): The Opposition opposes this proposed amendment because we believe that the current Standing Order 123A is appropriate. One should not forget that the Speaker can still exercise his powers under Standing Order 126, which is a most appropriate Standing Order that has been used in this place on many occasions. Standing Order 126 states very clearly that if the Speaker is having problems with control of the House, he or she simply rises in his or her place, members must be silent and take their seats, and the Speaker immediately gains control of the House.

The proposal put forward by the Government in relation to Standing Order 123A would considerably weaken the current situation. The Leader of the House has made some adjustments to allow an "and/or" situation to prevail. Nevertheless, the Opposition believes that the new Standing Order could be used against Opposition members unfairly and to the advantage of the Government. The Opposition believes that, over the years, the current Standing Order has given the Speaker appropriate powers. We believe that it has been used wisely by Speakers and, I am sure, will be used wisely by yourself, Mr Speaker. Although some Opposition members and Government members might not like it from time to time, it is an appropriate Standing Order that has stood the test of time.

This motion represents a considerable weakening of the current position in that no penalty is provided for. The penalty in the current Standing Order 123A removes the privilege of members to be able to come into the House and vote. It is terribly important that a penalty attaches to any loss of privilege in this place. Only through that loss of privilege, namely, the ability of members to vote, will members gain some decorum within this place.

The fact that the Speaker will be able to suspend a member from participating in debates may not be seen as something of great moment by some members. However, the loss of voting privileges would certainly do that. I do not believe that this addition to Standing Order 123A will give the Speaker the ability to discipline members in this Chamber. The issue of discipline and the control of members is important. And in relation to non-disciplinary matters, such as gaining control of the House, the Speaker is already able to do this under Standing Order 126. That is why Standing Order 126 was included in the first place. When there is some problem in the Chamber, Standing Order 126 gives the Speaker the ability to immediately bring control, order and decorum to the House. That is most appropriate and fitting.

There is no basis for this new proposal, and Opposition members are very concerned about it. The term "sin-bin" has been used by the Premier on a number of occasions. I am not sure whether that will do much for the dignity of the House, especially when it is being proposed by someone who brought a huge dummy into the House and paraded it around.

At the end of the day, members are discussing dignity and decorum in this House, and that is a matter for the Speaker. It has been said that Speaker Turner allowed a free flow of debate. All members appreciated that, because they were able to participate in that free flow of debate. Some may argue that things got out of hand, or someone did something that someone did not like—particularly in the case of the dummy—or whatever. But the Speaker always had that ability, and still has that ability, under the current Standing Orders. It is important to bring decorum and dignity to the House without further amendments, such as that being proposed by the Government.

The Opposition is opposed to this motion. I notice that it is somewhat different from the amendment introduced in the House of Representatives. However, I do not believe that the changes that have been made in the House of Representatives have done anything—in fact, they have done little or nothing—for decorum in that particular place. However, the decision is up to members and, of course, to you, Mr Speaker. I am sure that you will exercise wisely the function of your office. Clearly, the current Standing Orders are appropriate and suitable for achieving control and decorum in this place.

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