



Speech by

GARY FENLON

MEMBER FOR GREENSLOPES

Hansard 17 November 1998

MULTICULTURAL SERVICE AWARD

Mr FENLON (Greenslopes—ALP) (7.05 p.m.): It is a great pleasure to rise this evening to acknowledge a group of people whose remarkable achievements were conferred due recognition during a ceremony last night which I had the pleasure of attending. On behalf of the people of Queensland, Peter Beattie presented the Multicultural Service Award to 10 individuals and one organisation who, in a voluntary capacity, have contributed to the development and consolidation of an harmonious multiculturalism and contributed to the reduction of prejudice and discrimination in this community.

In particular, I would like to use this forum to honour the contribution of two of my constituents. Indeed, I am very proud and thrilled that Greenslopes may, indeed, be overrepresented in this respect with two very fine citizens to whom I am about to refer. They are Mr Daniel David and Mr Laurie Rosenblum, whom I have had the privilege to know for many years now. I know Mr David's humble dignity would leave him somewhat bemused and embarrassed at being mentioned here, but I think his contribution to Queensland is, at the very least, worth committing to posterity in the pages of Hansard.

A man who by temperament eschews publicity, Mr David is the founding member of many organisations in Brisbane. Now in his mid sixties, he is the immediate past president of the Brisbane Council for International Students, a voluntary organisation which provides services and assistance to overseas students and their families. His involvement in that organisation in its various incarnations extends back as far as 1956, a time when a white Australia ethic was still very much entrenched in the consciousness of many Australians. In 1959 he assisted the Rotary Club of Brisbane in launching the International House project and worked tirelessly as the President of the Overseas Student Association to make it a reality. This is characteristic of an indefatigable and enthusiastic involvement in a multicultural life of the State—a committed enthusiasm that meant that he would roll his sleeves up and that is underpinned and nourished by the vision of a more mature Australia, an Australia not only more embracing in its acceptance of migrants and refugees, but better integrated and reconciled to the realities of its geographical location.

In a radio broadcast on Radio Australia in 1960, he announced that the destiny of Australia was intimately linked with that of Asian countries. Almost 40 years ago in 1959, again on Radio Australia, he was marked as a fool for appearing to make this call in terms of appealing to Asian countries to send their children to Australia for higher studies. Today we have more than 100,000 students from overseas studying in Australia and, despite the perennial howls and narrow jingoism that would white picket fence us off from our near neighbours, it is my position and proudly that of this Government that these people contribute immeasurably to the life of our nation. In addition to his work with underprivileged migrants of varying ethnicity, Mr David has sought to ameliorate the conditions of the less privileged strata of the white society and, indeed, the wider society in Australia by work with the Biala drug and alcohol service. I am very proud to refer to Mr David's contributions here.

The other person who received an award yesterday, as I indicated, was Mr Lawrence Rosenblum OAM. Fifty years is a long time for most of us, but that is the time Lawrence Rosenblum, better known as Lawrie, has served the Australian community. He is still doing so even stronger than ever, with a great commitment and dedication. Indeed, I am proud that he is one of my near neighbours.

Mr Rosenblum is a champion supporter of multiculturalism. Over the years he has established and involved himself in countless campaigns to secure the rights of Aborigines and other ethnic minority groups in Queensland and Australia. He organised and took part in many community education programs and conducted lectures on issues of race relations. He also raised funds to further the cause of equality among all Australians.

Mr Rosenblum is the founding member and current President of the Queensland Jewish Board of Deputies, which is the umbrella group of Jewish organisations in this State. In this capacity he is also a member of the Executive Council of Australian Jewry. Mr Rosenblum is also a founder of Australian Advancing Multiculturalism and Reconciliation and is an original signatory to the charter published by Alliance—Community Against Racial Discrimination.

Time expired.
