



Speech by

Hon. K. LINGARD

MEMBER FOR BEAUDESERT

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APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL APPROPRIATION BILL

Committee (Cognate Debate)

Estimates Committee F

Report

Hon. K. R. LINGARD (Beaudesert—NPA) (3.32 p.m.): Today is the celebration of my 15 years in Parliament. In those 15 years, one of the most delightful things has been the building of at least 20 schools in my electorate. My electorate originally started in Springwood and came down through Woodridge/Kingston to Beaudesert. It has been an area of amazing growth. One of the delights has been to watch the number of schools that have developed in that area. However, currently we are fighting for a particular high school, that is, Jimboomba high school. I was disappointed to see that, in the last Estimates, Jimboomba high school had not been catered for.

We watched the residential development of Kingston grow until the Kingston State High School had over 2,000 students. We watched that residential development extend through Marsden to Browns Plains and Park Ridge. The growth of that development was easy to predict. However, I have been disappointed that until 1990 it was quite obvious that a high school at Jimboomba would be necessary, not only to cater for the residential development that was coming south but also to take the pressure off the Beaudesert State High School, which has now hit 1,600 students. That is a very small rural school with very limited area. It is not possible to maintain a population of 1,600 students at that school.

In 1990 when the ALP came to office, the Government made a very significant decision. The Minister, David Hamill, who also today celebrates 15 years in Parliament, took Education Department planning branch advice and decided to move the high school from Jimboomba across to a new area called Flagstone Creek, which is south of Greenbank and where, in the future, there will certainly be significant development. I disagreed with that decision of the Education Department planning branch and the Minister, David Hamill, who said at that time that he could not guarantee the growth of Jimboomba. Anyone who has ever been through Jimboomba would know that originally it was a hotel and a dance hall. Now, over 25,000 people live at Jimboomba. It is much, much larger than Beaudesert. We can expect the residential development to continue to extend from Park Ridge towards the south and towards Beaudesert. That growth will naturally come. It does not matter what sort of industries are put at Beaudesert and Jimboomba; the growth will come there in the same way that it will come to Beenleigh. As the main roads follow the Mount Lindesay Highway and the south-east motorway, that is where the growth will be.

The difficulty of moving the high school site from Jimboomba across to Flagstone Creek is that we have to wait for Flagstone Creek to develop a population that is large enough for a high school to be viable. The Camira bypass has not gone ahead and the area behind the military camp at Greenbank does not have developed main roads, thus we do not have the growth at Flagstone Creek to cater for a high school. The ALP and the Education Department moved the site across to Flagstone Creek, an area that does not have the growth in population needed for a high school. As a result, we now have the unbelievable situation of Beaudesert having over 1,600 students in a most limited area of land and we are unable to provide relief in the northern area.

The Education Department planning branch has been adamant that it will not build a high school at Jimboomba. However, the facilities branch has decided to buy land at Jimboomba and get ready for a high school. Now we have a split between the planning branch and the facilities branch.

Unfortunately, the planning branch is supported by the ALP. The Education Department is saying to Jimboomba students that they must travel north to Park Ridge, while saying to students in Canungra that they must travel across to the Gold Coast. There is no way that students in Canungra and Jimboomba, who have always been linked to Beaudesert, want to travel to the Gold Coast or to Park Ridge. The coalition decided that those students would be allowed to attend the Beaudesert State High School and that we would not say to those students that they must move back to the Marsden, Loganlea and Kingston schools—schools that have decreased in size because they have been left in a vacuum.

The Beaudesert State High School will continue to grow. There is massive growth in the number of Year 10s and Year 11s. The numbers will soon swell because of a very high retention rate. The Year 10 students will be retained and go into Year 11. As a result, the Beaudesert State High School will become larger and larger. I now receive from the planning branch the theory that large high schools are good and necessary and that unless a school has a large number of students that school will not have a top drama department and a top arts department. I probably pushed that theory when I ran a school of 2,000 students. The Education Department must consider the issue.

Time expired.
