



Speech by

Mr S. SANTORO

MEMBER FOR CLAYFIELD

Hansard 20 October 1998

LECKIE ROAD CONNECTION

Mr SANTORO (Clayfield—LP) (7.03 p.m.): I wish to this evening raise an issue which, because of the decision by the Minister for Transport and Main Roads, will again become contentious within my electorate of Clayfield. I am referring to the Leckie Road connection as a transport corridor which, because of its very existence, represents the very real threat of a motorway or major road being built through prime residential areas of my electorate.

The existence of this transport corridor has for many years cast a pall of uncertainty over the suburbs of Woolloowin, Kalinga, Eagle Farm, Lutwyche and parts of Clayfield. It depressed real estate values and inhibited the willingness and ability of local residents to buy, sell and, most importantly, renovate their family homes to better suit their lifestyle. In recognition of these factors and in response to the aborted attempt by the previous Goss Labor Government to construct a motorway utilising the Leckie Road connection, the coalition State Government, at my urging, earlier this year made and implemented the decision to sell off the Leckie Road connection. This was, of course, a pre-election promise and I was proud that it was being delivered.

This decision by the coalition Government was greeted with appreciation and enthusiasm by the local community. However, the Government changed in June this year and I immediately sought the assurance of the new Government and the new Minister that the coalition's decision to sell off the transport corridor would be honoured. I sought these assurances on 4 August 1998 when I stated in the Parliament—

"... I want to place on record my desire and that of my constituents to have that process of selling off that corridor expedited and concluded as quickly as possible. I ask the new Minister for Transport to act with due

haste and diligence in terms of maintaining that commitment and the decision by the previous Government."

I sought the assurances in the Parliament again on 16 September during the debate on the Transport Legislation Amendment Bill, when I again stated in the Parliament—

"On 4 August I asked the Minister whether he would expedite his decision and thereby provide some assurance to my constituents that the sale of the land is going ahead.

... my constituents require the Minister to take some action. The sale of those properties will certainly reaffirm the new Government's attitude towards the decision of the previous Government to sell those properties. I ask the Minister to be kind enough to address that issue in his reply."

The Minister responded that he would reply to the questions raised during the consideration of the earlier mentioned Bill at a more appropriate time. On 5 October I wrote to the Minister and, amongst other things, said to him—

"I also enclose for your consideration the Hansard record of a speech which I delivered in the Parliament on 16 September 1998. You will recall that in your reply to the contributions made by Members, you mentioned that you would be replying to our representations in due course. I will be grateful for your views and responses to the issues which I raised in my speech."

To date I have received no reply to my questions either in the Parliament or in my correspondence, which says plenty about the Minister's manners and lack of professional courtesy as well as his unwillingness to assist the community I represent in the Parliament. I remind him that when I was a

Minister I always responded to his correspondence with courtesy and promptness.

During the Transport and Main Roads Estimates committee hearings on Thursday, 1 October, Minister Bredhauer, in response to a question from the hard-working shadow Minister, Vaughan Johnson, said—

"The Leckie Road corridor is an important issue. We have no intention to proceed. A number of properties were indicated for sale."

He went on to say—

"I was subsequently approached by the Minister for Public Works and Housing, who indicated to me that he had a need for some public housing, emergency housing, etc. in that area—I am not exactly sure what the needs were. He asked us if we were able to identify three or four properties in that area that we might be able to make available for public housing purposes.

In the process, essentially we have got the best of both worlds, in my view. Those properties will continue to be used for residential purposes, which is an indication that we do not intend to proceed with the east-west corridor, the airport motorway corridor. At the same time we have been able to fulfil a need for public housing. Whilst the houses were not sold to the bidders, we have been able to make sure that those houses continue to be used for residential purposes."

This was a disgraceful answer which represents yet another betrayal by the Labor Party, and in particular by this Minister, of the people I represent and a total cave-in to the "build new roads at any cost" culture.

As long as these properties and the Leckie Road connection remain in the hands of the Government and the department, the threat of a major road or motorway will remain. It condemns my constituents to more uncertainty and more anguish; they do not deserve this treatment, particularly in view of the fact that the coalition Government had delivered to them the pre-election promise and was selling off the Leckie Road connection.

This decision by Minister Bredhauer and the minority Beattie Labor Government again puts the prospect of a motorway fairly and squarely back on the agenda. I call on the Minister to immediately proceed in finalising the sale of the Leckie Road connection as commenced by the coalition Government. I again reaffirm my personal commitment and that of the coalition to sell off the Leckie Road connection.

I have spoken to the shadow Minister, the honourable member for Gregory, who assures me that my determination has his total support. I place the Honourable the Minister for Transport on notice that, unless he delivers on the coalition promise, there will be uproar in the northern suburbs. If he thinks previous Ministers Elder and Hamill had a pretty hard time, he does not yet know what is coming. I will activate the community of the northern suburbs of Brisbane and this Minister, to his and his Government's detriment, even compared with the previous Goss Labor Government, will find out just what community-based protest action movements are all about in the electorate of Clayfield, courtesy of its local member working closely with the local community.
