



Speech by

**Mr S. SANTORO**

**MEMBER FOR CLAYFIELD**

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### LECKIE ROAD CONNECTION

**Mr SANTORO** (Clayfield—LP) (7.19 p.m.): Mr Deputy Speaker, may I take this opportunity to congratulate you on your elevation to the august post that you now hold? I am particularly delighted for you.

**Mr Cooper:** Crawler.

**Mr SANTORO:** I am not a crawler. I am particularly delighted for you, Mr Deputy Speaker, because, during the many and extensive travels throughout the world that you have undertaken, you have taken a great degree of interest—

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr D'Arcy): I remind the member that he has only five minutes.

**Mr SANTORO:**—in parliamentary procedures in the many Parliaments that you have visited, and I am sure that you will serve well in your new post.

I just want to talk briefly this evening about what is euphemistically referred to as the Leckie Road connection in my electorate of Clayfield. Honourable members who have been in this place for a little while will recall that ghastly decision by the then Goss Labor Government to construct an airport motorway right through my electorate. Of course, honourable members will recall that, as a result of concentrated and very focused community action, we stopped that motorway. I again take time out to pay tribute to the persistence and the fighting spirit of my constituents, particularly those members of what became known as the Airport Motorway Action Committee. We mounted a very good campaign and stopped that motorway absolutely dead in its tracks. In fact, that fight at a local community level was the forerunner of many community skirmishes with the then Goss Labor Government that eventually lead to its downfall as it made bad decision after bad decision about road after road. I was very proud to be part of a movement that

maintained residential standards and maintained the residential amenity of my electorate.

In Opposition, I and the shadow Minister made a commitment that we would sell off that transport corridor when we came to Government. After giving very serious consideration to the logistics and the implications of that particular commitment, we made the decision as a Government and sold off the Leckie Road connection. We made the decision to sell off that connection. We made that announcement on Thursday, 12 March 1998. Many people in the community were relieved by that decision. It lifted a veil of uncertainty and anxiety that had been hanging over my constituents for the many years that that connection had been proposed.

The sale of the Main Roads properties started to occur. In fact, I received written confirmation from Main Roads that the properties at 78 Park Road, Woolloowin; 49 Fifth Avenue at Kedron; 18 Arnott Street at Kedron; and 56 Gorman Street, Kalinga were for sale. That was confirmation that the wheels were in motion and that the sale of that transportation corridor was to take place. That in itself was an achievement, because it is not often that major transportation corridors such as that are quickly and easily disposed of by a Government. It required an enormous amount of will expressed by the then Minister, Vaughan Johnson, to override what undoubtedly were bureaucratic drags by well-meaning bureaucrats who like to build roads. In this particular case the Minister and I maintained our commitment and those properties were to be sold.

Honourable members can, therefore, imagine my alarm when I was contacted by a couple of constituents who told me that the "for sale" signs on those properties had been taken down. I feared the worst, but I did not want to go

out and sensationalise the issue. So being the very fair and reasonable person that all honourable members in this place know me to be, I made contact with the Department of Main Roads. I was told by a senior and well-meaning officer that the removal of the signs was part of normal process, that the tenders were in, that the tender documents were now before the Minister and that he had to make the decision to sell the properties. I was told that it was part of the normal tender process and that, as soon as the Minister made the decision to sell off and dispose of those particular properties to the highest tenderer, that process would be concluded and then other properties would go up for sale.

I managed to clarify that and 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 know that as he does so he will continue to please the many residents who were affected by that decision to acquire the properties. As he continues to do so, I make the commitment that I will continue to give him and the Government credit for proceeding with the decision made by the previous Government. We want it done with reasonable haste, but we do not want to flood the market with all of the properties because that would have a deleterious effect on property values in the areas of Woolloowin, Kalinga, Lutwyche and parts of Clayfield. However, we do want to move with reasonable haste because that issue is of great importance to my constituents.

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