



Speech by
**Mr DENVER
BEANLAND**

MEMBER FOR INDOOROOPILLY

Hansard 27 April 1999

MR B. BOTT; PETFORD TRAINING FARM

Mr BEANLAND (Indooroopilly—LP) (7.05 p.m.): In mid-1995, the family of Mr Bradley Bott decided that he should move from the Challinor Centre where he had lived since he was seven years of age to individual support arrangements. Because of his special needs, Mr Bott requires 24-hour support, care and assistance. When selections were made for his two co-tenants, the family was assured that these two gentlemen were compatible with Mr Bott. However, since the move from Challinor in October 1996, issues of incompatibility have arisen at his new home.

Originally the family were excited about the prospect of Mr Bott's new lifestyle. A family member attended meetings and discussed matters regarding his individual development plan, of which nothing has been heard since. Family members are so distressed about the issues and the management direction of the care provider that they have contacted the Minister for Families, Youth and Community Care and Minister for Disability Services on many occasions.

On 10 March this year they wrote a lengthy letter to the Minister's office outlining their concerns about violence to Mr Bott and seeking assurances in relation to his care and safety. Although the Minister has acknowledged the correspondence, no further action has been taken, even though to the family the safety and other issues are more valid today than when they first contacted the Minister's office many months ago and, in detail, some seven weeks ago. I appeal to the Minister to show some care and compassion towards Mr Bott and to urgently take action to resolve this matter to the satisfaction of the family, who are becoming more distressed daily. The family believe that they have been fobbed off over a period, and rightly so.

On 31 March this year, the families of Mr Bott and his co-tenant Mr Sharp again wrote to the Minister seeking her urgent intervention. They requested that the Minister give the matter her personal attention and change the service provider and other current arrangements. On 13 April they again wrote. Unfortunately, after many months, still nothing has happened. The families of Mr Bott and Mr Sharp are becoming daily more alarmed about the care and safety of their loved ones.

The time is now long past for the Minister to show some care and compassion, and to take some action to protect those in her care. It is time for the Minister to start doing some hard work in relation to these matters. These families are desperate for the Minister to rectify this serious ongoing issue, and it is an ongoing issue.

I raise the issue this evening because of the failure of the Minister to act, even though she has been written to on a number of occasions. The matter has been raised with her and her staff, but nothing has happened. The families are desperate to ensure that some matters are resolved. The Minister has all the details and full correspondence on the matter. Other aspects of the matter, which I will not go into here, are on her table. It is for the Minister to resolve the issue.

In the time remaining, I will briefly touch upon the cessation of funding by the Government to the Petford Aboriginal Training Farm. It is only a matter of time before the Labor Government will have to look for alternative rehabilitation and life skills courses for juveniles in far-north Queensland, including those in the Cape communities, once the Petford Aboriginal Training Farm closes.

I understand that several juveniles have been sent from Lockhart River to the Northern Territory to do a training course over several weeks, focusing particularly on animal husbandry. The department will pay for that. Regardless of who pays for it, no doubt it will cost considerably more than if the

Government had maintained its own facility at Petford. Again that highlights what this side of the Chamber has been saying all along, that the Petford Aboriginal Training Farm has a significant role to play in the rehabilitation of juveniles in far-north Queensland—a role that this Government axed without any thought for the future. It is not too late to recommence funding and to provide support services to the Petford Aboriginal Training Farm to ensure that it operates at its full capacity. I am sure that we would all be pleased to see that happen, particularly as the farm supports young people in far-north Queensland.
