



Speech by
**Mr DENVER
BEANLAND**

MEMBER FOR INDOOROOPILLY

Hansard 26 May 1999

CONVICTED CHILD SEX OFFENDERS; NOTIFICATION ORDERS

Mr BEANLAND (Indooroopilly—LP) (5.32 p.m.): I rise to second this motion moved by the member for Warwick. This has been brought about, of course, by the reluctance of the Government to obviously appreciate the significance of this law and, in fact, the complete and utter failure of the current and former Attorneys-General in the Goss Labor Governments to ensure that this law was being applied. Obviously, it was not being applied, because when I looked for the law in April 1997, I was horrified to see that nothing had occurred. After my officers talked to the Director of Public Prosecutions office, it turned out that the law had not been applied, hence the directive that was issued by the Director of Public Prosecutions, which the honourable member for Warwick has just referred to, in April 1997.

It is little wonder that people are now being reported to the Attorney-General. He said that no-one has been reported simply because between 1990 and 1997 the Crown had not sought the courts to direct accordingly, that the Crown had failed in this regard. We hear a great deal from those opposite in relation to taking action against paedophilia. This matter was raised in this House when LCARC reported back in 1998 in relation to the Criminal Law (Sex Offenders Reporting) Bill of 1997, a Bill which was brought into the House by a member on the opposite side of the Chamber. In its report on that Bill, the Legal, Constitutional and Administrative Review Committee indicated that this law was in place. So members opposite cannot claim that they were unaware of this law. They certainly were aware of it. In fact, if honourable members go back, they will find that many comments were made by members opposite when this law was introduced into this Parliament. Again, they cannot claim ignorance of the fact.

It is quite obvious when looking at this law that we do have our own form of Megan's law in this regard. It is a form of Megan's law. Of course, no law is perfect, and I am sure that many people could come up with a better system. Nevertheless, this is a system which works, and works reasonably well, provided we ensure that the Director of Public Prosecutions office, where appropriate, asks the court for this particular law to be enforced. That is exactly what this motion is about this evening. We want to ensure that the Minister responsible—in this case, the Attorney-General—is responsible and ensures, unlike what occurred under Labor between 1990 and 1996, that, where appropriate, the Crown asks the court to invoke this particular law.

I could be rather kind to the Attorney-General in relation to this matter and say that, after seeing the Attorney-General's performance today in this place, perhaps we ought to get the Minister for Emergency Services to declare his office and perhaps his whole area of operations a disaster area. Quite clearly, I appreciate that he would not be aware of it if he cannot even run his own office, as we see in relation to these appeals. Matters of this type should go directly from the Director of Public Prosecutions to the Attorney-General for him to exercise his role.

We hear a great deal of pontificating in this place from the current Attorney-General about the role of the Attorney-General, but in fact he is found wanting on this and in relation to several other matters. His ministerial office is found wanting, as he personally is found wanting in relation to this. If one has a look at this whole area of operation, if one goes back to the actual views of this Attorney-

General in relation to sexual offenders and people of this nature, we find that, when debating this in the 1996 Criminal Code amendments, the Labor Party in this place voted against the second and third readings of those Criminal Code amendments lock, stock and barrel. One can only think that he believes that perhaps the new penalties which are upgraded are too tough and perhaps paedophiles and those sexual offenders who might repeat ought not to have this particular section invoked. That is the only view that one can be led to after seeing that Labor voted against the toughening up of those provisions in the 1996 Criminal Code amendments that came into this Chamber.

If we look at what occurred back when the Honourable Brian Austin was introducing this matter into the Parliament—and the honourable member for Warwick has touched upon this—we find that he said—

"The provision will only be available if the court believes there is a substantial risk that the person will re-offend.

Provisions have been inserted to ensure that such information may only be released in appropriate circumstances and to control the use which may be made of such material."

He went on to say that the Bill has only been amended——

Time expired.
