



Speech by
**Mr DENVER
BEANLAND**

MEMBER FOR INDOOROOPILLY

Hansard 8 December 1999

BILLS: REMAINING STAGES

Mr BEANLAND (Indooroopilly—LP) (11.49 a.m.): It would have been obvious that I would want to rise and speak to the motion moved by the Leader of the House. I have a number of reasons for that. Firstly, this motion exposes the Government's panic in relation to the mess that the Notice Paper is in. Government members have brought that mess on themselves. The Leader of the House is moving the gag. He is moving to rush through quite a large number of pieces of legislation—so many of them that I lost track of the number. As a result, by Friday afternoon at 4.30 p.m., a range of legislation will have progressed through this Parliament, including that of the Vegetation Management Bill, which was introduced a few moments ago. That Bill is to be proceeded with on Friday of this week and be passed by the House by 4.30 p.m.

I well remember years ago when Ministers who now sit on the other side of the Chamber used to complain about this sort of activity that went on then. We are seeing it again under the Beattie Labor Government. That is something we did not see under the Goss Labor Government. We have not seen it for many years. It is not one Bill; it is a host of Bills; in fact, it is exactly half the list of Bills on the Notice Paper. I do not think it can be denied that this Government wants to rush through exactly half the Bills listed on the Notice Paper. The Government has allowed the Notice Paper to get into its current mess. The Government has had ample time to plan the business on the Notice Paper and to work to ensure it gets its legislation through.

Time and time again I have sat here and listened to prepared ministerial briefs being read by Government members on various pieces of legislation. There can be no disputing that. It has gone on day in and day out. On some legislation, the Government had more speakers speaking than the Opposition. That also cannot be denied. In view of the rush to get the Vegetation Management Bill through, one could have expected that some movement may have been made on that today or tomorrow. The fact that that motion deals with half the Bills listed on the Notice Paper shows that this Government is certainly in a panic and has certainly allowed the Notice Paper to get into a state of disarray. That speaks volumes for the fact that the Premier and the Leader of the House have not been able to ensure the orderly process of business.

There is no point in members rising and trying to blame the Opposition for filibustering or something else. That has not occurred. There have been some Bills in which a lot of interest has been shown. The forestry Bill and the primary industries Bill are two of those. Yesterday six Bills went through in matter of a few hours. It was shortly after the dinner break that the final stage of the sixth Bill proceeded through the Parliament. Six Bills went through yesterday in a fairly brisk fashion. Of course, we have seen that procedure occur on other occasions. That is just this week.

Although the Leader of the House has moved this motion, some of the Bills listed may not require a great deal of debate. I am not saying for a moment that they do. If that is the case, they should be allowed to go through in the normal manner. The guillotine should not be applied. This motion ensures that if the Bills do not go through speedily, the guillotine will be applied and they will be forced through. One of those Bills is the Vegetation Management Bill. Another is the Queensland Law Society Amendment Bill, through which this Government is trying to deny members of the public access

to their funds through the Legal Practitioners Fidelity Guarantee Fund. Other legislation will be of interest to a large number of members, who will want to speak. I understand the Education and Other Legislation Amendment Bill is one that will probably not generate a great deal of concern or interest. However, there are certainly others that do. The Water Resources Amendment Bill could quite easily fall into that category.

The Government has lost control. We know that this Government has not been very well focused on legislation for some time. This motion proves it. The Premier and the Cabinet—including the Leader of the House— have simply lost control of the Notice Paper. They do not have a clue about where they are going. It is a decade since I saw something like this occur, when there was a rush to get legislation through in this format. All too often we hear from the Premier about commitments to open and accountable Government. Of course, we all know that the Premier likes to talk about his letter to the member for Nicklin. At the change of Government, the Premier indicated quite clearly that there would be new accountability and new standards. That was part of the Premier's letter to the member for Nicklin in order to attain Government. I am sure that the member for Nicklin is listening to this debate. I point out to him how worthless that piece of paper is and how worthless the Premier's signature is on that piece of paper. That cannot be denied by anybody in this Chamber, including the member for Nicklin and the Premier. Without that letter, the member for Brisbane Central would not have been sitting on that side of the Chamber. What a hollow commitment it is! It is not worth a pinch.

Mr Hamill: A pinch of what?

Mr BEANLAND: It is not worth a pinch of salt.

It shows how easily the Premier makes commitments and then casts them aside. To the Premier it is all just a big stage—a little play acting here, a little play acting there, from the actor. He has no substance at all in relation to these issues. Nothing better describes how he has thrown the baby out with the bathwater in relation to parliamentary standards and the requirement in the letter to the member for Nicklin than this motion. He gave his solemn commitment about parliamentary performances and the ability for members to have ample time for debate on legislation: there would be no guillotine and no action of the type that has been taken today. So much for that!

Instead, we see a Government in panic and the Premier nowhere to be found. He is skulking out the back somewhere. Mr Speaker, I bet you will not see him. He does not have the courage to be here. The great democrats down the back—the whole batch of the Labor Party in this place—are all skulking. They have gone away with their tails between their legs. This motion is nothing more than what we have come to expect from this Government. The Leader of the House likes to come into this place and hold his head up and talk about his proud achievements. This motion will go down in the annals of history as one of the most disgraceful acts ever seen in this Parliament. The Government has lost control of its business and is using the sausage machine to get these Bills, about half of those listed on the Notice Paper, through this place by 4.30 p.m. on Friday afternoon. I am sure all democrats in this Chamber will be totally opposed to this motion. I invite members of the Labor Party to join with the Opposition in voting down the motion moved by the Leader of the House.
