



Speech by

**GARY FENLON**

**MEMBER FOR GREENSLOPES**

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Hansard 3 March 1999

**CORRECTIVE SERVICES AND PENALTIES AND SENTENCES AMENDMENT BILL**

**Mr FENLON** (Greenslopes—ALP) (9.57 p.m.): It is a great pleasure to rise to oppose this Bill and, in doing so, we should really make sure that the Hansard record is absolutely clear. What we have in the Hansard record is just black words on white paper; they do not really show us the full picture. They do not give us the full visage of what is really happening here tonight.

The full visage when we stand back and look at it is something like this: we have the member for Caboolture, the Leader of the One Nation Party, who has on his knee the two puppets, the member for Surfers Paradise and the member for Warwick. There is not enough room on his knee for the member for Moggill, especially since the member for Warwick is a big lad and takes up so much room on the knee of the member for Caboolture. This is really what is going on. We have the puppeteer and the puppets. I was polite. I did not use the words "puppet dummies". I was not going to refer to anything like that.

Historically, what we have here is very clear. The National Party and the Liberal Party are in trouble. They are lost in the wilderness. They do not know where they are. They do not know where they are going. They do not know which leader will lead them out of the wilderness. So they are looking out there into the wilderness, and what do they see? They see the member for Caboolture, and they say, "We will sit on your knee. Take us away from all this. Find us our new path into the future."

What is that path? It is the simple One Nation path. Here we have the epitome of simple One Nation solutions. It is the daytime television, front page of the tacky Sunday newspaper solution. It is the simple solution. If we look at that simple solution we see a person who looks at a court case result and says, "Oh, dear. Wasn't that judge so soft on crime? Wasn't that judge terrible? He mustn't really know what is going on." The person who says that was not in the court to hear all of the evidence, to hear what mitigating circumstances there might be or to hear relevant case law and does not know the full facts of the matter.

**Mr NELSON:** Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. Can we have some relevance here, please?

**Mr FENLON:** The very simple One Nation solution is now being mouthed by the puppet dummies across this Chamber. The puppet dummies are now following the lead of One Nation—when they are not looking for a new leader, anyway.

**Mr Littleproud** interjected.

**Mr FENLON:** I take the interjection. This week we have seen a good example of truth in sentencing. We wondered what punishment the leaders of the ginger group, the members for Gregory and Toowoomba South, would receive. We thought, "What will the leadership of the National Party do to the ginger group?"

**Mr SANTORO:** Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I beg your indulgence with some clarification about the relevance to the Bill of what the honourable member is saying?

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Mickel): Order! I ask the honourable member to return to the subject of the Bill before the House.

**Mr FENLON:** The penalty was that those two members of the ginger group were made to sit next to the honourable member for Clayfield. That is real truth in sentencing.

It is interesting that this new line is coming from the conservatives opposite. Normally we expect more of the conservatives. Normally we expect general respect for all of the institutions in this liberal democracy of ours, but here we have a gesture of complete disdain for the judiciary. Those opposite are basically saying, "We do not respect the judiciary. We do not expect the judiciary to do the job they have been doing historically. We are going to take away from them the responsibility, powers and capacity to make decisions about the context and mitigating factors to provide some variation in punishment from case to case." In that sense those opposite are really destroying the very delicately balanced, finely tuned judicial system we have in this State.

Queensland should be aware. The member for Warwick has been taken away from tinkering on tractors out there on the farm and he is going to be allowed to tinker with the judicial system. It is a very academic tinkering, because those opposite were not prepared to even have a bit of a tinker when they were in Government. We heard all the hairy chested nonsense in the world, but they were hiding under the bed.

**Mr Schwarten:** Having a bit of a tinker under the bed!

**Mr FENLON:** Tinkering indeed. They were all hiding under the big coalition bed together, but they have come out now and they are trying to make out that they are——

**Mr Schwarten:** So they are having a tinker out in the open?

**Mr FENLON:** They are out in the open, but they can do this because they are not in Government. They are not in Government so they can be as hairy chested as they like and it does not make any difference to the public.

Those opposite failed to introduce these measures when they were in Government. It is interesting to see just how hairy chested they were when they were in Government. Let us go back to the Hansard record of when they did have a chance to be even more hairy chested than they purport to be—when the Criminal Law Amendment Bill was debated on 20 March 1997. At that time Mr Foley moved that assaults on any person who is 60 years or more and assaults on any person who relies on a guide-dog, wheelchair or other remedial device be subject to greater penalties. Who resisted that measure? We need to turn over only a couple of pages to see who voted against the motion. The name "Springborg" is very clearly listed as voting against that motion, along with all of his colleagues on the other side of this House. Those opposite had the chance to be tough and to be hairy chested when they were in Government, but the motion was passed only because the member for Gladstone was prepared to vote with Labor on that occasion. That just shows the double standards that exist in relation to this debate.

The other major fallacy in the argument advanced by those opposite during the debate on this Bill tonight is that somehow there is a correlation between locking people up and reducing crime. It has been shown time and time again that the correlation does not exist. We can spend as much as we like but nothing will change unless we really get down to attacking the causes of crime, as this Government is doing. The figures illustrate this.

Annual admissions to Queensland prisons rose by 98% from 1993-94 to 1996-97. What is the correlation? According to the CJC criminal justice system monitor of April 1998, crime levels in Queensland are generally around the national average. There has been no change. Despite the increases, the correlation is just not there already. So those opposite have not learnt from history. They have not learnt from the statistics. They are interested only in trying to recover their lost political ground. They are out there in the wilderness with simplistic solutions. They will continue with the mentality of looking at some court case and saying, "Look how terrible it is. I'm not interested in the facts of the case. I'm not interested in what really occurred. I'm not interested in the mitigating circumstances or anything else. I will adopt the most simplistic, banal, backward approach possible and not be interested in the real facts of the matter."

**Mr Santoro** interjected.

**Mr FENLON:** I am very pleased that the honourable member for Clayfield has suggested that this is a matter for my electorate. Even at dinner time tonight I was out talking to people in my electorate about this issue. I told them that there are two ways of going about facing crime: the hard way and the easy way. The easy way is the tough boy, hairy-chested approach: lock them up and belt them up. That is the very easy way to do it. We are going about it the hard way because we are addressing the crime and the causes of crime.

Before the last election, I had all the hairy-chested, banal stuff in the world circulated in my electorate, but the intelligent people of Greenslopes saw right through it. They have had enough of that rubbish. They know that the way to address crime is by a systematic, intelligent method, not the hairy-

ched, mad approach that we have seen from the Opposition. That is all over. So I am very proud to be opposing this Bill tonight and to——

**Mr Hegarty** interjected.

**Mr FENLON:** And even those old pensioners have more sense than the honourable member. They know that there are even better ways to address crime. It is not the simple solutions. There are better ways to do it than that.

**Mr Hegarty** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Mickel): Order! The member for Redlands!

**Mr FENLON:** It is a great pleasure to support this Bill. I know that sense will prevail. Our approach to addressing the causes of crime will succeed.

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