



Speech by

JEFF KNUTH

MEMBER FOR BURDEKIN

Hansard 2 December 1999

PROSTITUTION BILL

Mr KNUTH (Burdekin—IND) (11.30 a.m.): Debate on the Prostitution Bill has now started. While I realise I am probably just wasting my breath talking to members opposite, I do so on behalf of my constituents who are overwhelmingly against this curse that will be befall our State. How a person, let alone a political party, can support a young girl being lured into a life of indecent abuse is beyond me. Having witnessed the pain, the hurt and the abuse suffered by these women who have had their lives renewed through Christian churches, their testimonies bear witness to the hell that they have had to endure. No doubt many members opposite have been sent literature relating ex-prostitutes' stories—stories of shame, sadness and abuse. Many have become drug addicted to hide the shame and hurt inside in order to try to escape reality.

Is this the sort of legislation a member with some sort of conscience wishes to support? I have spent a great deal of time looking at information across the globe into the effects of legalised prostitution and boutique brothels. Nowhere has it been successful in stopping prostitution on the streets. I challenge any members opposite to bring forward any information which proves that prostitution on the streets has stopped due to boutique brothels. If members opposite can show me that it has stopped, then I will put this speech away right now.

Mr Reeves: Even if we did, we wouldn't.

Mr KNUTH: That is the attitude of the member for Mansfield. Even if he had the information, he would not make it public. That is the attitude. That is what I am up against.

Mr Reeves interjected.

Mr KNUTH: You said it, buddy.

Mr Musgrove interjected.

Mr KNUTH: And did they compel—

Mr REEVES: I rise to a point of order. I find the words of the member for Burdekin untrue and I ask for them to be withdrawn.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr D'Arcy): The honourable member for Mansfield would be aware that that is not a point of order and it cannot be withdrawn in that terminology. I ask the member to put it in the correct terms, please.

Mr REEVES: I find the words offensive and I ask that they be withdrawn.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: The member has asked for the remarks to be withdrawn.

Mr KNUTH: I will not withdraw the remarks because he just said them to me across the floor. He admitted that—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: The member will withdraw under Standing Orders.

Mr KNUTH: I will, under Standing Orders, withdraw those comments. I have spent a great deal of time looking at the information across the globe on the effects of legalised prostitution and boutique brothels. Nowhere has it been successful in stopping prostitution on the streets. I reiterate that because members opposite, no matter what they say, cannot produce the information to contradict what I am saying. As a matter of fact, it has had the opposite effect and has encouraged it. One of the reasons

for this is that girls working the street offer a cheaper price to draw customers away from brothels while pocketing more profit themselves. Regardless of this, we must consider the morals and ethics of what we are considering in this Chamber—that is, the dreadful sale of human flesh.

That is right, and I use that phrase because that is all it is—profiteering from the abuse of young women. Some members may say that it is the oldest profession in the world. That does not make it right. Drug dealing, contract murdering and the Mafia are all old professions. It does not mean that any of these are right. Some might ask, "How else do we stop it?" We can all minimise it by not supporting it.

Mr Gibbs: Keep away from them.

Mr KNUTH: I have kept away from it. I can stand in this House and say that I have never been to a prostitute. I can proudly say that I am one of the morally few debating this issue. That is the least we can do as a Government. If this Bill is passed, where will it stop? Will we see the recruiting of jobs at Jobsearch for young girls and boys leaving school and looking for work? What about articles saying, "Positions vacant—boutique brothels—earn big dollars"?

A Government member: Rubbish!

Mr KNUTH: Do not say it is rubbish. I can tell members right now that that will happen in 20 years' time. Members will see. It will probably be even less than 20 years. I guarantee it.

A Government member: Read the Bill.

Mr Mulherin: Have you read it?

Mr KNUTH: Yes, I have read the Bill. The Bill will not stop the continual spiralling effect—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The member for Burdekin will address the Chair. If the member does not have a speech prepared, he should not go fishing for interjections.

Mr KNUTH: If this Bill is passed, it will open a Pandora's box to an age of sin and depravity not witnessed before in Queensland. What will be next? I will tell this Chamber that it will be the age of consent that will be targeted next. Then we will see young boys and girls aged between 12 and 14 years being abused for evil whore mongering. Do not say it will not happen. Our media has been full of perverted pushers for consent ages to be dropped. Do not dare tell me that it cannot happen, because anyone who looks in Hansard will see that 20 years ago members on both sides were saying legalised prostitution would never happen in Queensland. Well, haven't we changed! Haven't we reached an age of enlightenment? Haven't we progressed from those dark ages of family values and respect for godliness and righteousness?

Many churches and church people have written to me—whether they be Baptist, Anglican, Catholic or Pentecostal. They are all united against this proposed legislation—the illicit sale of human beings by whore mongers who do not care whose life is destroyed as long as they grow rich in profit. Before this Government could pass such anti-family legislation, such as legalised prostitution, I would like each member to consider the following, listening to their consciences: if it were their daughter or son being recruited into this lifestyle, would the member be so keen to support this Bill? Members can say that it will never happen to us, but I can tell members now that, sooner or later, as sure as I stand in this Chamber, it will happen to one of us.

Would the Premier of this State openly let this Chamber know that he would approve of one of his children being exploited sexually for profit? If he will not comment on that, what right has he got to pass legislation that will allow someone else's daughter or son to be recruited for prostitution? This Government is fast becoming the most depraved Government ever to govern this State. As the word of God says, "Be not deceived, for God is not knocked, for so whatever a man soweth, so shall he reap."

Are there any members of this Government who have any financial interests in prostitution parlours? If so, I would ask them to display their expressions of interest and to table those expressions of interest in this Chamber now, because I would hate to know that any member of this Government is pushing this legislation for their own financial gain. If members are and they have put their interests in another name, members will be found out, and I hope that those members rot in jail when they are found out. I was disgusted to hear that big business and profiteers were scrambling to secure licenses when this Bill was being tabled. How disgraceful! The bidding has started. Slavery has resurfaced.

How many of these recruits will still be alive in 20 years? How many will die owing to drug abuse, AIDS and hepatitis? How many wives will suffer because of husbands being lured into these dens of iniquity? How many children will suffer because of parental break-ups relating to prostitution?

Mr Sullivan: So none of this is happening now up in the Burdekin?

Mr KNUTH: We do not approve it.

Mr Sullivan: So it is not happening?

Mr KNUTH: No, we do not have any prostitution dens in the Burdekin. I am standing up for my electorate. My electorate is against this. Many years ago a prostitute did come to the Lower Burdekin. The people of the Burdekin pushed her out of that town. That is how harshly the people of the Burdekin view prostitution.

We know that the results I mentioned will occur because history shows us that they have occurred and continue to occur. That is why our forefathers made prostitution illegal in the first place. It was not something brought in by a bunch of old cronies who did not have any respect for people's lives. They saw these effects in the past and they did something about it. Hopefully in years to come, after the Labor Party has learnt its lesson—after the destruction of so many young lives and families—this issue will be brought back before the Parliament and prostitution will again be made illegal.

The Premier announced that he would give his members a conscience vote if the issue of abortion ever came before this House. Why can he not give them a conscience vote over an issue as contentious as prostitution? No doubt this legislation will result in numerous abortions, too. Members cannot say that will not happen, because it will.

To support this legislation is to rebuke God's law. The Premier stated in the Courier-Mail that Jesus forgave Mary Magdalene, the prostitute. But the Premier failed to mention that Jesus said, "Your sins are forgiven. Go and sin no more. So she took up her cross and followed Jesus to the end of her days."

The Government claims that the Bill has safeguards. All of the other States that legalised prostitution said that they had safeguards, too. What happened to the safety of prostitutes in those States? It is a joke. These prostitution parlours have become dens of corruption, drugs, AIDS, venereal disease, Mafia-style activities and abuse.

Mr Musgrove: Tell us about Russ Hinze.

Mr KNUTH: I know nothing about Russ Hinze. I was not in his party. If the member wants to talk about Russ Hinze, he should go and ask him himself.

All of this is a chance for the Lefties in the Labor Party to get their way, even if it means destroying the conscience of some of their fellow members—even if it means cutting at their very hearts, souls, beliefs and religion. I call upon the moral members opposite not to support this Prostitution Bill. If they support this Bill, they do so by failing God's word. The Bible says that heaven and earth will fade away but God's word abideth forever. The authority of man and political parties is subservient to God. So members will not be failing their party; they will be failing God.

The Labor Party forefathers would be turning in their graves if they could see the so-called Labor Party today—

Mr Barton: Like your grandfather.

Mr KNUTH: The member for Waterford just mentioned my grandfather. He knows damned well that my grandfather, whom he worked with, would never have supported this Bill. That was the old Labor Party. I support the battler, the small businessman and the worker. I challenge any Labor Party member to prove that I do not.

Mr Mickel interjected.

Mr KNUTH: The member for Logan is interjecting from a seat that is not his own.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! I hope the member for Burdekin did not take the interjection. Is the member telling me how to do my job?

Mr KNUTH: I am just saying that the member is interjecting from an incorrect seat.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: The member for Logan will interject from his correct seat. The member for Burdekin does not have to take the interjection—he knows that—and he should not tell me how to do my job.

Mr KNUTH: I was brought up under the bounds of agrarian socialism, but I could never support a party that is blatantly destroying the moral fabric of our society. I call on the members opposite to pray in relation to this matter and to ask their Premier for a conscience vote.
