



Speech by

**JEFF KNUTH**

**MEMBER FOR BURDEKIN**

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Hansard 10 November 1999

### **SUGAR INDUSTRY BILL**

**Mr KNUTH** (Burdekin—IND) (3.27 p.m.): I concur with the comments made by the member for Crows Nest and the member for Hinchinbrook. What they have said just about covers my sentiments with regard to this Bill.

One of the saddest aspects of this legislation is the division that has been brought about between the Canegrowers organisation and the cane farmers. In the Burdekin we had a very sad meeting at which a lot of verbal abuse was directed at Harry Bonanno. This was an indication of the grief and despair that growers in that area felt towards this legislation.

On quite a number of occasions, the Minister has accused me of listening to the ACFA. I am not supporting any particular organisation. The ACFA seems to be more committed to grassroots views than the Canegrowers organisation. I am not knocking the canegrowers. Plenty of canegrowers' organisations throughout north Queensland have done a tremendous job. These groups suggested a lot of amendments, but they were not always in agreement with the Canegrowers organisation in Brisbane.

I know that the Minister believes that the findings of the working party are supportive of this legislation. However, I am saddened that the Canegrowers organisation in Brisbane did not listen to many of its members in north Queensland. The Minister must understand that from Proserpine north the mills are privately owned. CSR is understandably looking after its own interests. The millers felt that the legislation was biased towards the growers.

A lot of growers are very distressed about certain sections of the legislation. I believe that within a couple of years some problems will arise as a result of this legislation. As the only member of the Country Party in this Chamber, I hope that in the near future the Government of the day will review this legislation so that it works for millers and growers alike.

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