



Speech by

JEFF SEENEY

MEMBER FOR CALLIDE

Hansard 9 December 1999

PROPERTY LAW AMENDMENT BILL

Mr SEENEY (Callide—NPA) (10.39 p.m.): Tonight I rise in this Chamber to record my philosophical objection to legislation that puts same sex couples—homosexual couples—on an equal footing with traditional family units. I did so when legislation pursuing this course was first introduced in this House, and I refer to the industrial relations legislation. I did so when the domestic violence legislation was introduced into the House. Members can be assured that I will continue to do so every time that legislation that contains this element is introduced into this House.

I find it quite incredible that some members of the Labor Government consider this feature of the legislation so important as to give it prominence as an outstanding feature of the Government's legislative program. I take a fairly liberal attitude to what people choose to do in private. I do not really care what they choose to do in private. However, I do not believe that we as legislators should be trying to legislate morality. I would urge everyone to exercise a degree of tolerance towards anyone's lifestyle, so long as they, too, respect the views of others and do not cause affront to the community at large. I believe it is another matter altogether to give those lifestyles recognition in legislation.

It is just not acceptable to me personally and I believe, with confidence, that it is just not acceptable to my consistency for homosexual or same sex couples to be recognised and legitimised in this way. I do not believe that it is acceptable for such lifestyles to be given the legitimacy of being included in this or any other legislation on an equal footing and with equal recognition as traditional family units. I do not believe that the people of Queensland as a whole believe that this type of recognition, acceptance and tacit promotion is warranted or acceptable. However, we now find that this element is being included in all legislation. It seems apparent that the issue is being driven by the social engineers of the Socialist Left, who seem intent on forcing their political correctness on the majority of Queenslanders from their position within the Labor Government.

If this Bill is passed in its present form, it will give further recognition in Queensland law for same sex couples. If passed, this legislation will allow same sex couples the same property rights that are quite rightly available to married people and that this Bill extends to de facto heterosexual couples. The previous Goss Labor Government and the Borbidge-led coalition Government both pursued a policy of protecting traditional family values and excluding recognition of homosexual or same sex couples from Queensland laws.

The legislative program of this Government represents a major change, and it is a major change that I will oppose every time it is raised in this House. It represents a major change to the fabric of Queensland society that I do not believe the majority of Queenslanders support. It represents a change that should be rejected by this House, just as the suggestion that homosexual couples are somehow the equivalent of traditional families will and should be rejected by the majority of Queenslanders.

I believe that most Queenslanders would find repugnant the attempts by members opposite to portray homosexual lifestyles as equivalent to that of traditional families and as an equally acceptable alternative for our young people. I wonder how many Queenslanders actually agree with where the Beattie Labor Government stands on this issue. If nothing else, we have been successful in highlighting the fact that this element is being included in the Labor Government's legislative program.

The ALP went to the May 1998 State election promising de facto rights for same sex couples. That position was backed away from very quickly by Premier Beattie in the early days of this minority

Government. Such recognition of those lifestyles has been forced through by the Left Wing and is now included in all legislation. Tonight we again see it in legislation before the House. I believe that this legislation should not be passed when it contains such a significant change to the fabric of Queensland society. It should not be passed when it provides recognition and tacit support for a lifestyle that we all know exists, but which should never be seen as mainstream.

Regrettably, tonight's debate has overtones of political correctness. It seeks to revisit the political correctness that has been rejected, quite rightly, by Queenslanders and Australians in recent times. Undoubtedly, that political correctness will be used to scorn anyone who opposes the agenda of the Socialist Left. That political correctness was and is again being used by the social engineers of the extreme Left to bring about the fundamental changes in the fabric of our society.

I reject the fundamental change of providing legislative recognition to homosexual couples, I know that the constituency that I represent will reject that fundamental change and I believe that the majority of Queenslanders will reject that fundamental change to our society. I have opposed this element every time that it has been included in legislation in this House and I will continue to do so every time it is introduced into this House in the future, despite the pressure that is applied by those who continue to promote a politically correct attitude.
