



Speech by

JEFF SEENEY

MEMBER FOR CALLIDE

Hansard 9 December 1999

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Comments by Deputy Premier

Mr SEENEY (Callide—NPA) (10 a.m.), by leave: Yesterday in this House during question time, the Deputy Premier made a slanderous attack on me claiming that I had no right to represent the interests of my constituents with regard to the South Burnett Meatworks. He claimed that I was a creditor of South Burnett Meatworks. That is simply wrong. I am not a creditor of South Burnett Meatworks. The Deputy Premier claimed that I had never declared to this House my interest in South Burnett Meatworks. He said—

"It is a conflict of interest that the member has never declared to this House but he has a conflict of interest in that he is a creditor."

That is wrong. The Deputy Premier was wrong, and wrong again. Not only is my interest properly recorded in the pecuniary interests register, I informed this House of my interest in South Burnett Meatworks in a speech I made concerning the issue on 26 August 1999. The entire second paragraph of that speech in this House was devoted to explaining in some detail the interest that I had in that plant. For anyone who cared to listen, it is there on the parliamentary record for all to see. I told the House about my interest openly and up front at the beginning of my speech.

For the record, I hold 766 shares in the South Burnett Farmers Cooperative. The shares are non-tradeable, and they have never been tradeable. They have a fixed nominal value of \$2. They represent something less than 0.01% of the on-paper capital value of Murgon Meatworks. That very small interest was declared in my pecuniary interest register and it was explained in detail in the second paragraph of the speech I made in this House.

The Deputy Premier also claimed that I was in breach of Standing Orders. I have researched Standing Orders and I have sought advice from the Clerk of the Parliament. There is nothing I can find in Standing Orders that could possibly be construed as precluding me from representing the interests of my constituents in debate about Murgon Meatworks. I have declared my own personal interest, as I am required to do. In addition to that, I have discussed it openly in the House. Even the most basic research would have shown the falseness of the Deputy Premier's claims.

Normal process would require an apology from Mr Elder in the case of such blatant and demonstrable untruths. An apology from Mr Elder has no value to me, and I will not ask for nor expect one.

Mr SPEAKER: This is not a debate.

Mr SEENEY: I will simply say that I have acted with the utmost honesty and probity in this matter. I will continue to vigorously represent the interests of my constituents. I will not be distracted from that course by Mr Elder's blatant lies.
