



Speech by

JOHN MICKEL

MEMBER FOR LOGAN

Hansard 25 March 1999

CYPRESS INDUSTRY, WESTERN QUEENSLAND

Mr MICKEL (Logan—ALP) (6.38 p.m.): All that tonight's motion from One Nation shows is that its members either read Saturday's Courier-Mail or, more probably, someone read it to them and they have not moved on from that. The fact of the matter is that Tuesday's Courier-Mail showed quite explicitly that the Government is there to protect the cypress pine industry. This issue was mentioned again in Wednesday's editorial of the Courier-Mail. One Nation's attempts to criticise the Government on the future of the cypress pine industry show that its members cannot read the newspapers much beyond Saturday and certainly they do not listen to what is going on in this House.

The Government's position on cypress pine could not be clearer. We need only refer to yesterday's Hansard to find the clearest possible statement on the Government's position on this issue. During question time, the Premier spelled it out in the plainest possible language when he said, in part—

"My Government is committed to the cypress pine industry. It is the lifeblood of many regional Queensland towns."

How much clearer than that could one get? He also said that he endorses the position taken by the Honourable the Minister for Primary Industries. I would have thought that even One Nation members would have been able to work out the public position of the Government on this issue. As I said, the editorial of yesterday's Courier-Mail praised the Minister for Primary Industries. The Minister should be praised because he supports jobs, jobs, jobs. If the One Nation people had been listening at question time yesterday they would have heard the Premier say that the Department of Primary Industries and the Department of Natural Resources are assessing cypress pine resources in the Tambo region in the electorate of Warrego. The member for Warrego did not twig to that because he is only a visitor to his electorate.

The aim of that exercise is to establish a mill in that region with the creation of 15 jobs. Surely even One Nation members can understand that these are the actions of a Government which is planning to expand the cypress pine industry. This is a Government that is leading the way in job creation and giving security and confidence to the cypress pine industry. It mystifies me how One Nation members could miss such an obvious message. Given the clarity with which the Government has spelt out its position, I am staggered at the preposterous position taken by One Nation in failing to grasp the issues.

Dr Prenzler interjected.

Mr MICKEL: I hear the member for Lockyer interjecting. I refer the honourable gentleman to an article in a newspaper which is very close to his heart. The Minister and I are also very fond of this newspaper. I refer to the Fassifern Guardian. On the front page—and not tucked away on a back page—is a most endearing photograph of the Minister and somebody wishing to invest \$30m to \$60m in the forestry industry.

It would behove the honourable gentleman from Lockyer to visit the fair town of Boonah. Surely we would not have to get out a map for our old friend, the honourable member. He should be able to get there. Even if the member could not get someone to read page 1 to him, he could have gone to page 2 and seen an account of all the wonderful investment that is being made in the Fassifern area.

When it comes to forestry we have to talk about logs. We could not get bigger logs than the five One Nation members on the other side of the Chamber. As I look at the opinion poll results published yesterday, I notice that One Nation has dropped 17%. The logs that are going to be rolled out of this place are those five One Nation people over there.

Mr BLACK: I rise to a point of order. I find those remarks offensive. I would ask that they be withdrawn.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! There were no personally offensive words; One Nation was named, so the member cannot take a point of order.

Mr MICKEL: Even my good friend the member for Tablelands had the sense to get out. He knew what bad company he was in. He knows when to come in out of the rain because it is going to rain big time on One Nation. They are on their way out. This motion shows that the One Nation members have nothing positive to contribute in this House. Stick with the Government. We are the ones who are creating jobs in central Queensland. We have the cypress pine industry.

Time expired.
