



Speech by

JOHN MICKEL

MEMBER FOR LOGAN

Hansard 1 December 1999

TOWNSVILLE INDUSTRIAL PARK

Mr MICKEL (Logan—ALP) (6.50 p.m.): The person whom we on this side of the House all feel sorry for tonight is the member for Thuringowa, because quite frankly it appears that he has been left off the speaking list. The area under discussion is in his electorate, and he has been left out of it. It will be his constituents who are going to miss out on the future industrial job opportunities. Of course, anybody missing out on that sort of job opportunity has my sympathy. If allowed to pass, this motion is essentially a political suicide note on the career of the member for Burdekin. He says that he is representing his electorate.

Mr Knuth: You betcha I am.

Mr MICKEL: The honourable gentleman is a genius. He can do anything, except make a living. That is his problem. He says that he is looking into the future and that he really does represent his constituents. What about his constituents who live in Stuart, Wulguru and Oonoonba who would love the opportunity for an industrial estate?

Mr KNUTH: I rise to a point of order. Those constituents are the ones who came to me—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr D'Arcy): Order! There is no point of order.

Mr MICKEL: Every one of those working families up there would love a job and love the prospect of their kids getting a job in an industrial estate. They are going to be denied that opportunity by the member for Burdekin, who is supposed to be their voice in the Queensland Parliament. He demonstrably sold them out. We can see that by the way he jumped up so embarrassed just then, because he realises what he has done—he sold them out in a most unprincipled way. This motion also ignores the fact—it is repulsed by the fact—that Townsville has a good port, a good rail system, a good road system and a readily available and skilled work force. In other words, it is a good long-term job prospect for any family and for the kids of those families.

Mr Knuth interjected.

Mr MICKEL: I can hear the member for Burdekin disagreeing on all those things, because basically he does not like representing the people in Townsville.

Mr Knuth interjected.

Mr MICKEL: There he is again, decrying those people in the most unprincipled way. Let us take the case of somebody wandering into the Townsville City Council or the Townsville Enterprise Board saying, "Look, we would like to invest here in Townsville." If this motion is passed, they would be told by both those bodies, "Yes, that's a wonderful idea. Hop in the car, travel two hours down the road and put the money into Bowen." What sort of logical absurdity is that?

The Country Party has the hop on the National Party, and it shows. I listened to the contribution of the member for Burdekin when he outsmarted the National Party in the sugar debate. He argued with such clarity that an internationally competitive industry like sugar should not be nationally competitive. He brought to that debate the same force and clarity of logic that he brings to this debate. The fact of the matter is that our amendment recognises not only the important contribution of the City of Townsville and the great people who live and work in it but also the important contribution of Bowen. We do not walk away from the fact that Bowen has excellent industrial land and excellent prospects. We need to value add the small crops industry in Bowen. It has already given its name to the mango

and the tomato. It is already nationally renowned. We want to make it internationally renowned. This motion seeks to deny that, and members should be aware of that when they are voting on this.

Mr KNUTH: I rise to a point of order. The member for Logan is misleading the House.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! I will take the point of order, but I would suggest that the member has a good look at Standing Orders.

Mr MICKEL: Mr Deputy Speaker, forgive him. He is brighter than he looks, but then again he would have to be. The fact of the matter is that what we are attempting to do through our Australian trade offices and our Queensland trade offices is ensure that the magnificent primary producers in Bowen are given every opportunity to market their product internationally and to market it nationally. That is the way jobs get created. That is the way we can value add into the industrial giant that Bowen will become.
