



Speech by

**Hon. KEN HAYWARD**

**MEMBER FOR KALLANGUR**

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Hansard 22 July 1999

**UNIVERSITY OF QUEENSLAND; GATTON COLLEGE**

**Hon. K. W. HAYWARD** (Kallangur—ALP) (6.38 p.m.): It is a pleasure to speak to the amendment moved by the Minister. I am sure that at the end of the night it will be supported by every member of this Parliament.

The member for Crows Nest said that he wanted to ensure that this was a constructive debate and that people spoke positively. In general, I think this debate has been a positive one because, in the end, it is about an educational institution that has stood the test of time. It is an important part of education and of the community of Queensland.

Everybody in this House would know a number of people who have been educated at the Gatton college. There are probably a number of members who have been educated there. For instance, former Treasurer Keith De Lacy was educated at Gatton college. I think a lot of students who have gone into agriculture but have not been involved in standard fields of study, such as wool and wheat, have been educated at Gatton college. I think they have also gone into some of the emerging industries such as cotton and macadamia nuts.

As the member for Crows Nest said, let us make this a constructive debate. I think it has been. And let us make it positive. I am sure it has been. But it did not get off to a good start with this press release headed "The Queensland Coalition". Obviously they are at pains to distinguish themselves from the Federal coalition.

**Mr Cooper** interjected.

**Mr HAYWARD:** The member knows what I am going to say. This is constructive debate via a press release. How constructive is this? It is headed "Do Nothing' Beattie Government Risks Gatton College Closure". Seriously, what we have heard tonight from members in this Parliament makes one wonder. In the political context, when one sees a press release like that, it becomes harder and harder to talk about it in a positive way.

I believe that it is important to consider the Senate Estimates debate on this involving the Leader of the National Party in the Senate, Queensland Senator Boswell, who has a different view from that expressed by some members opposite. Queensland Senator Boswell said—

"As I said, I do not completely understand this ..."

We can accept that, because that is him. But then he goes on and says—

"... but surely if the Commonwealth government pays the money then they must have some input into where that money is spent."

Tonight I have not heard anybody on this side of the House talk about where the money comes from to run that important educational institution at Gatton. But in the end, as Senator Boswell says, that is where it comes from.

I return to this press release. It says—

"And if Mr Beattie wanted to really assert some influence with the University, he could tie the State Government's multi-million dollar funding support for a range of initiatives to the guaranteed relocation of the vet and agricultural science facilities from St Lucia to Gatton."

The former Health Minister and I were talking about this before, because we do know about this. We cannot stand over them like that because, in the end, we will get no result.

When talking about this issue, Senator Boswell asked Senator Ellison—and I am not sure what Senator Ellison is, but I get the impression that Senator Ellison represents the Education Minister in the Senate—

"... is it within the responsibility of your department to make a decision whether we are going to have an agricultural college, or are we just going to let it fall over?"

Senator Ellison realises the problem—the issue of dealing with it—and says—

"Senator Boswell, I will take this up with the minister and we will take on board the concerns you have raised."

Serious concerns have been raised by many members tonight. Then Senator Ellison says—

"The Commonwealth could perhaps take up with the university the concerns that you have raised as well."

So in the end, it is time for the University of Queensland itself to realise that it has caused uncertainty in the Lockyer Valley and beyond that, and it is time for it to address the uncertainty.

Time expired.

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