



Speech by

Hon. K. LINGARD

MEMBER FOR BEAUDESERT

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UNIVERSITY OF QUEENSLAND; GATTON COLLEGE

Hon. K. R. LINGARD (Beaudesert—NPA) (6.23 p.m.): Queensland has the chance to build a world-class animal health institute, but to do so it needs the cooperation of the four groups: the Queensland University Senate, the DPI, the CSIRO and, most importantly, the Queensland Government.

The Queensland Government cannot withdraw from this debate by putting up an amendment which says that it is the responsibility of the university senate. In the structure of any university, people must realise that the State Government provides the land, the Federal Government provides the costs of the building and then the university senate runs the whole complex. But it needs the alliance of those four groups and, most importantly, this particular institute needs a co-location and certainly the university senate believed prior to 1995 that that co-location should be at Gatton.

Let me have a look at the responsibility of the Queensland Government in this particular situation prior to 1995 and that of the then Minister for Education, David Hamill. It was his restructure of the university senate which changed the opinion of the senate, and it was his most disgraceful action to increase the number of places, to be provided by the Queensland Government, that caused that difference, because at that time we were allocated places by the Federal Government. We argued continually, but we were given places. Then in that blatant use of ministerial power, the Minister for Education, David Hamill, wrote and said to the Queensland University Senate, "I will give you places as long as you provide the university at Ipswich." That university at Ipswich was to be at the railway yards, and everyone knows that that was not a suitable site. It was a contaminated site. It was historically significant and the university senate did not want to use it.

Such was the embarrassment that finally the coalition Government had to change the site from the Ipswich railway yards to the Challinor Centre. That was a blatant use of ministerial power to bring the places to the fore against the university senate and say, "I will only give you those places if you put the university at Ipswich." That is what is happening here indirectly, because it is the removal of the business facility and the hospitality facility, which is all coming back to Ipswich, which is clearly affecting Gatton. However, that does not mean to say that an animal health institute could not be built at Gatton; it certainly could.

The other thing that the Queensland University has to look at is the problem of transport—people moving to the university site at St Lucia. This is a reason why we should move towards a centre such as Gatton. All the traffic for the university at St Lucia travels through Toowong and Indooroopilly. There have been many significant decisions, but one of the most significant was that a bridge would not be built across the river to Yeronga. That stopped any exit of the student population in that direction.

It was unfortunate that the university senate and the Queensland Government did not go ahead with the purchase of Boggo Road in order to make it into a university site. When one looks at a plan, one sees that the Boggo Road site is extremely close to the University of Queensland. It would have been very advantageous to use the railway station near that site to transport students to there and then move them via a bridge across to the university.

Mr Fenlon: You have got no idea about Brisbane suburbs—no idea at all.

Mr LINGARD: No idea! I was seven years on the university senate and I discussed this with the university senate, yet the member opposite sits there and says that I have no idea.

That was a very significant decision and it is a decision—

Mrs Edmond interjected.

Mr LINGARD: Many, many times.

It is a decision which would have certainly helped in this situation. Unfortunately, now the university senate has been forced to build car parks—monstrous car parks—and continue this flow of students through Toowong and Indooroopilly to the St Lucia site. As the demand for university places increases, there is no doubt that the university is going to have to make some very hard and significant decisions in regard to the faculties that it keeps at St Lucia. If it is the case that sites such as Gatton can be used, I believe that that is the way that we should go.

However, this Parliament should look at the effect that the then Minister, David Hamill, had on this issue when in 1995-96 he forced the senate to use the site at Ipswich and to build a university there by blatantly saying, "You cannot have your university places unless you build this university in my homeland." That is clearly affecting Gatton and, clearly, moving hospitality and business to Ipswich is affecting Gatton.
