



Speech by

Hon. K. LINGARD

MEMBER FOR BEAUDESERT

Hansard 25 November 1999

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

BoysTown; Aboriginal Communities

Hon. K. R. LINGARD (Beaudesert—NPA) (10.08 a.m.), by leave: I wish to repeat statements which have been referred to in this House and in the media as being incorrect. I said that, following a Government review of BoysTown, the Director, Mr Paul Rogers, has been asked to leave. The Minister for Families says that her department did not sack him. That is playing with words, because obviously Brother Paul is a De La Salle brother and the Government does not have the direct power to sack him. I did not mention that word in my statement.

I have also stated that, in 1997, the previous Government had 85 students at BoysTown. The Minister says that there was an average of 45. Yesterday, I spoke to the administration of BoysTown and they ridiculed the Minister's discussion of averages. I have criticised the Government because it has continued to pay for 84 students for the last 18 months, yet at present there are only 26 students. This is a blatant misuse of Boystown and a waste of taxpayers' money.

Much has also been stated by the media about my reference to Old Mapoon. I have lived at Mapoon and I have lived with the Mapoon people. All Aboriginal communities have their huts down along the rivers, and those living near the beach have them out on the beach. Honourable members will see them at Seisia and they will see them at York Island—they will see them at all the islands. They are made of branches, beach material and long swamp barks. They are not permanent homes, although they are a problem in some of the Torres Strait islands where Papua New Guinea people are using—

Mr SPEAKER: Order! This is getting away from a personal explanation.

Mr LINGARD: Yes, Mr Speaker. People from these areas have no concern about referring to those huts as grass huts.
