



Speech by

**Hon. RUSSELL COOPER**

**MEMBER FOR CROWS NEST**

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Hansard 10 November 1999

### **SUGAR INDUSTRY BILL**

**Mr COOPER** (Crows Nest—NP) (3.25 p.m.): I concur with the remarks made by the member for Hinchinbrook. He and the member for Mirani are involved with the sugar industry.

**Mr Palaszczuk:** He is after your job.

**Mr COOPER:** And I hope he gets it. One thing is for sure: he will not let the Minister off the hook. I did not rise in this place in order to indulge in this sort of carry on. As far as I am concerned, this is an extremely important piece of legislation. Members on this side of the Chamber recognise that, in spite of the groans of frustration coming from members opposite.

I want to acknowledge some of the people and the organisations involved. Honourable members who come from sugar electorates have obviously been listening to their constituents. That is their job. When the provisions of the Bill were made known to the constituency, it was probably the first time that the constituents were heard and were given a reasonable run. That is why the legislation has engendered so much comment. The comments made by coalition members and the member for Burdekin have emanated from the concerns of constituents. If we do not voice those concerns we are not doing our job. If those opposite see fit to ridicule members on this side of the Chamber, so be it. If those opposite want to sound off about it, I invite them to go right ahead because I know who will win. The constituents will come first.

We believe that we have made every attempt to get this legislation right. If we have succeeded, we are pleased; if not, we have nevertheless made our point. That is the name of the game.

I acknowledge the member for Logan, who took the Chair during the early part of the Committee stage. The member demonstrated a great deal of patience, because he knows and understands the complexity of this legislation. Members on this side of the Chamber knew that it would be difficult to work our way through this legislation. I pass on my compliments and commendations to the Minister's staff, who have unhesitatingly given advice to honourable members when required.

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