



Speech by

DAVID DALGLEISH

MEMBER FOR HERVEY BAY

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MORETON BAY ISLANDS

Mr DALGLEISH (Hervey Bay—CCAQ) (6.44 p.m.): I rise to support the member for Ipswich West. Much of the anger displayed by land-holders of the southern Moreton Bay islands is the result of many issues—rapidly devaluing properties, stringent building restrictions, lack of infrastructure and services and few services for ratepayers' dollars.

This land is possibly the very last undeveloped waterfront land on the east coast. This land should not be going down in price. There must be a reason for it. The Minister is hiding behind the bureaucracy when he says that everything is okay and that all is above board. He can intervene; he can do something. That is why he is the Minister. He is the most powerful person when it comes to this issue.

These people have their livelihoods to consider. The most valuable asset that any one of us as Australian citizens have is our property, our land, our freehold title. What right do we have to let these people suffer and lose that asset? Mention has been made of selling properties and that the people are getting different prices for their land. They are not selling their properties; in the majority of cases the people are actually giving their land back to the council in exchange for paying off their rates notices. Can the Minister imagine what it would be like to have to hand over his property to pay out his rates? These are senior citizens, elderly people who have worked all their lives and paid their taxes for this Government to do things in central Brisbane. What about the people—the battlers, the working-class people—who have been putting away a little bit for their nest egg? Now their nest egg has been smashed to pieces.

We have seen the investigations and the inquiries. How about using a little bit of compassion and common sense for these people? How about showing some strength and doing something positive? To say that we have no solution to the problem is an absolutely pathetic statement. We have solutions, we have ideas and we are saying to the State Government and the council, "It is time to stick your hand in your pocket and start to support these people." Their properties should be going up in value.

Right across Queensland we see property devaluing. The majority of the property in the electorate of Hervey Bay has gone down in value but the Crown land seems to be maintaining or increasing its value. Isn't that amazing?

These people deserve better. They are being treated like Third World citizens. We have the ability in this House to make a change. We have the ability to do something positive for those people. That may mean setting up a separate council so that they can run their own show over there. That is just another option that could be made available to them. Maybe the Minister needs to talk to the people on the islands and see if they are interested in going along that path. Maybe they should be given some opportunities to voice their opinion in regard to these issues.

Mr Feldman: Use their own rates money.

Mr DALGLEISH: As the member for Caboolture says, they could use their own rates money to carry out development on the islands.

When the landowner of a vacant block located between two houses wants to build his dream home but is told, "No, it's not suitable to build on", that is a load of crap. That is all it is. It is absolutely

disgraceful. It cannot go on. These people need to have this issue put to sleep—finished, no more. It is their most valuable asset.

Mr Mackenroth: Obviously you've been listening to Harry Black for too long.

Mr DALGLEISH: It is their most valuable asset. The Minister has a house and if someone tried to take it off him he would not be sitting down there smiling about it, he would be pretty annoyed.

Mr Feldman: Especially if the council just tried to resume it for \$1,000.

Mr DALGLEISH: If the council offered the Minister \$1,000, would he be happy to let them take his property off him? No, he would not be. So these people have a right to be disappointed, too. When they are paying a minimum rateable amount on their property that bears no relationship to the property valuation, that is another insult. That is a whole separate issue. Those people are getting nothing, absolutely nothing, for their rate money. Maybe they should get a refund for the 30-odd years that they have been paying rates; maybe then they could start to build a life somewhere else. This is not a very positive way to treat the people of Queensland.
