



Speech by

Hon. KEN HAYWARD

MEMBER FOR KALLANGUR

Hansard 22 June 2000

SUGAR INDUSTRY AMENDMENT BILL

Hon. K. W. HAYWARD (Kallangur—ALP) (2.30 p.m.): The aim of the Sugar Industry Amendment Bill 2000 is to enhance the efficiency and international competitiveness of Queensland's sugar industry. Certainly, this Bill demonstrates the ability of this Government to deliver on outcomes that will benefit the sugar industry in the long term. This debate follows the introduction of the Water Bill. Both this Bill and the Water Bill will be exciting for primary industries in Queensland.

I want to take this opportunity to speak about bulk sugar terminals. The transfer of the bulk sugar terminals was a concept devised originally by Mr Ed Casey, who we all know was a Primary Industries Minister in Queensland during the terms of the Goss Labor Government.

Mr Kaiser: Pretty excitable.

Mr HAYWARD: I take that interjection from the member for Woodridge, who made the comment that Ed Casey was a very excitable person. He had the vision of transferring ownership back to the industry which, after all, over a period had paid for those assets. It has taken many years for that concept to become a reality. I am pleased to note that consultation has occurred with the port authorities on this issue.

I draw members' attention to proposed section 228C of the legislation, which makes it clear that the land in the ports is not to be transferred to the industry, but rather just the improvements to that land will be transferred. That proposed section removes any doubts—and there certainly were some doubts—that ports will continue to have control over their own strategic port land. That was an important issue that had to be dealt with in consultation with the various affected port authorities.

I want to address briefly the issue of shares in Sugar Terminals Limited, which is the new holding company of terminals. Now that the Government has rightly said that it will abide by the industry's determination on the process of how shares are to be distributed, it is not for the Government to tell the industry who should get what shares in their own assets. I understand—and no doubt the Minister will address this issue later—that a lot of work has been undertaken by the industry in developing this process and it takes into account a range of special circumstances.

After the consultation period, the Minister provided an appeal mechanism for growers or millers who feel that, in their case, the process had not been applied properly. That is entirely appropriate and something that I am sure will be welcomed by growers and millers. That means that, if it should happen that there is a mistake made in the issue of shares to a shareholder, that shareholder will then have some recourse to action. I do not believe that anyone would have accepted a situation in which shares would be distributed but that there would be no way of questioning the application of the process.

I am pleased to have had the opportunity this afternoon to say a few words in support of the Sugar Industry Amendment Bill. As I said, I think that it presents an exciting opportunity for the industry. The Government is to be congratulated on its decision to transfer the sugar terminals back to the industry.
