



Speech by

**Hon. KEN HAYWARD**

**MEMBER FOR KALLANGUR**

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Hansard 4 October 2000

### **WATER ALLOCATION AND MANAGEMENT PLANS**

**Hon. K. W. HAYWARD** (Kallangur—ALP) (6.50 p.m.): It is a pleasure to rise in the Parliament tonight to speak to this amended motion. When listening to members of the National Party talking about the adverse effects for irrigators from WAMPS, I can only presume that they must be feeling very guilty. Those opposite are presuming that when a WAMP is introduced there will be adverse impacts. Where is the evidence to support that? There is no evidence to that effect.

Even members of the National Party would acknowledge that complex issues need to be resolved when it comes to dealing with situations where licences have been handed out almost willy-nilly. I notice the former Minister, the member for Warrego, is not presently in the House. However, earlier tonight he made a speech in the Parliament in support of the original notice of motion.

If one goes to the St George area and talks to a lot of the Balonne irrigators one finds that all they talk about are their problems. If the issues were simple and easy to sort out, why was it that when the member for Warrego was the Minister for a number of years he did not resolve the problem? It is not an easy problem to solve because a lot of people were given these licences with no thought being given to the logic of the process. Heaven knows why people were granted these licences. No thought was given to the quantity of water that was available.

The member for Warrego was the former Minister and he was unable to resolve the problem. I am sure that when members of the former Borbidge Government were sitting on this side of the Chamber people from the St George area would have been lobbying them and saying, "Why doesn't our local member, the Minister responsible, get on with it and resolve the problem?" I am sure that would have happened. If it did not happen, it simply demonstrates just how out of touch those opposite were when they were in Government.

The whole basis of this debate suggests that the National Party realises that it has made a mistake. It is well documented that whenever the Opposition tries to hide its mistakes it blames the Beattie Labor Government for something that the Opposition failed to do. The member for Bundaberg talked about that very issue earlier tonight in this debate. The Borbidge Government had plenty of time to address these water issues, but it did nothing.

Why did the Borbidge Government not address these issues? The National Party found the issue too hard to deal with.

**Mr Purcell:** They couldn't.

**Mr HAYWARD:** As the member for Bulimba said, they couldn't, because it was too hard. The National Party had difficult issues with its own constituency with which it had to contend. It found it impossible to try to satisfy everybody. History seems to indicate that every time someone in the Balonne area put up his hand for a licence he was granted a licence.

There was a question of security for irrigators in Queensland because those licences could apparently be taken away for no reason. Unfortunately, no work was ever carried out to determine the available amount of water in the river where irrigation was occurring. These tremendously important issues were never addressed by the National Party when it was in Government.

It is a difficult and complex issue. It is a particularly difficult and complex issue for the National Party, given its constituency. However, the National Party failed to address this issue. Those opposite come into this Chamber with all their ideas about what should happen. They refer to compensation and

other matters. However, when those opposite had the chance to do something, they did nothing because it was too hard, too complex and too difficult. The National Party had plenty of time to look at the question of long-term security for irrigators. The National Party was aware of the COAG agreement, but did nothing. It was left to the Beattie Government to tackle these important water issues for both urban and rural Queenslanders. In just over two years the Government has done that. We have reformed the water laws.

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