



Speech by

PETER WELLINGTON

MEMBER FOR NICKLIN

Hansard 7 September 2000

VEGETATION MANAGEMENT AMENDMENT BILL

Mr WELLINGTON (Nicklin—IND) (9.44 p.m.): I rise to speak to the Vegetation Management Amendment Bill 2000. Although I do not support this Bill introduced by the Minister, I wish to take this opportunity to respond to the contribution made by the member for Callide and to put on the public record that I am utterly disgusted with the personal attack and personal abuse of the Minister by the member for Callide. I wish only that the public gallery were full of Queensland schoolchildren so that they could teach the member for Callide some manners.

In December last year, I took part in the debate on the Vegetation Management Bill 1999. Once again, I stand here to say that I cannot support this Bill. Once again, I say I believe this Bill will take away farmers' rights to manage their own land and without any guarantee of compensation. This is just not on. It is wrong to take away anyone's rights without providing them with compensation for their loss. We are not talking about leasehold land; we are talking about freehold land. Once again, this Bill is being rushed through the House before members have had time to debate it properly. Queensland farmers are watching carefully what this Government is doing and they will not sit by idly and see nothing happen.

Farming organisations have not given this legislation the nod—no way! I have been speaking with the heads of Agforce and the Queensland Farmers Federation. They do not support the proposed legislation in its current form. I will be supporting the amendments to be moved in Committee by the Opposition, because these amendments will seek to provide compensation for landowners whose properties are adversely affected. They will also seek to provide an appeal process against certain declarations under the Bill and also provide for long-term certainty by granting approvals for 10 years.

I do not intend to reiterate issues I raised previously in the debate in December last year or those that have already been raised by other honourable members during this debate. Suffice it to say that this Government is foolish to believe that it can take away farmers' rights over their freehold land without providing compensation. This legislation is discriminatory and the Government pushes it through at its peril.
