



Speech by

**Mrs D. PRATT**

**MEMBER FOR BARAMBAH**

---

Hansard 3 April 2001

#### **OVERSEAS STUDENTS**

**Mrs PRATT** (Nanango—Ind) (10.23 a.m.): It would be a sad indictment on the Premier's patriotism if he is thinking of favouring foreign students over Queensland students. He recently announced that Sallyanne Atkinson would be spending time entirely in promoting Queensland educational opportunities to Thai students. Attracting foreign students to come and stay in Queensland creates jobs for Queenslanders. The premier said—

The industry estimates suggest that every extra 1,000 students we can attract to Queensland creates another 80 jobs.

Does this mean that Queensland students would be deferred in favour of Thai students? Present trends suggest that there could be 10,000 Thai students studying in Australia by 2002. The Premier has said—

We want as many of them as possible.

Using faulty mathematics to warrant more Thai students equals more Queensland jobs, the Premier is overlooking a future shortage of Queenslanders qualified in the subjects he hopes to teach the foreign students. These are business economics, science and technology, information and communications technology, engineering, English language training and vocational education.

Education reports and catch-up programs all highlight a sad lacking in the education of our own students. Let us now deny them the right to first preference higher education. If the Premier is selling our education system to foreigners in the sure knowledge of creating jobs for Queensland, then a similar number of jobs will be created to service a like number of our own students. Charity begins at home. Although the Premier's aim is admirable, we should be assuring the future of our own students before looking after others.

Time expired.

---