



Speech by

Hon. K. LINGARD

MEMBER FOR BEAUDESERT

Hansard 3 April 2001

SCHOOL BUSES

Hon. K. R. LINGARD (Beaudesert—NPA) (10.19 a.m.): One of the greatest farces we have seen over the last six months is the government's attitude towards the problem of students standing on school buses. In the last session of parliament we saw the government promoting the concept of regional cabinet meetings and talking to the people, and so we saw a meeting at Mount Gravatt in which the bus action committee met with the Premier and met with the Minister for Transport. Following this meeting and following other statements, the minister then rang the bus action committee and said that the president of that committee was not allowed to either approach him or the department and they would not talk to that person again.

Mr BREDHAUER: I rise to a point of order. The honourable member's statement is untrue, I find it offensive, and I ask for it to be withdrawn.

Mr SPEAKER: The honourable member will withdraw.

Mr LINGARD: Of course he finds it offensive. I will withdraw it. But of course before the last election the government was in an extremely embarrassing position because, following bus crashes in central Queensland, it was being agitated by backbench members. It also saw the bus action committee sitting outside the Premier's office. So the Minister for Transport was forced into action again. What did he do? He implemented a policy which provided that school students should not stand on buses travelling for more than 18 kilometres. So he brought it down from 20 kilometres to 18 kilometres. That was part of the interim measures.

Secondly, the coalition government was introducing a policy for the allocation of \$22.5 million. The issue that I had forgotten about at that particular time was that buses would not be allowed to travel at more than 80 kilometres per hour. So we found on a road like the Mount Lindesay Highway buses would not be allowed to travel at more than 80 kilometres per hour but they could carry many, many students. Of course, as they travelled up the hills the inevitable would occur. Clearly there was going to be a tail-ender, and that is exactly what has happened over the last few days.

Time expired.
