



Speech by

Hon. K. LINGARD

MEMBER FOR BEAUDESERT

Hansard 30 May 2001

RACIAL AND RELIGIOUS OFFENCES BILL

Hon. K. R. LINGARD (Beaudesert—NPA) (11.48 p.m.): There might have been a difference of opinion between the Leader of the House and me this morning about whether there had been a discussion about government business taking precedence tonight. However, there is no doubt about what has happened here tonight. With half a minute to go in debate on the previous bill, which I was conducting for the member for Maroochydore, the Leader of the House approached me to say that we would now have debate on a private member's bill.

It might be very funny for the government to watch us try to find our shadow ministers to work out who is actually going to speak to the legislation. If that is the way this government will run this parliament for the next three years, then it will be extremely flippant and the opposition will be particularly upset. I have no doubt that the government backbenchers will get very upset when they see this action occurring.

With half a minute to go we were told that our shadow minister had to be found to speak to a private member's bill. That was of no concern to us tonight because we could talk a little longer about the previous bill until all of our members returned to the chamber. But if that is to be the attitude for the next three years, then cooperation between the Leader of the House and the opposition will be difficult to achieve.

I also say for future reference that a few ridiculous things have occurred here today. A time limit of 60 minutes has been given to the mover of the motion. Therefore, at 20 past 10 on an ordinary day the mover of the motion has 60 minutes in which to speak. It is absolutely impossible and ridiculous. I ask the government: why would it ever bring in a ridiculous sessional order to provide that? Then it has given the person who replies to the bill 10 minutes. That is ridiculous as well. Why would the government do a thing like that? And every other member has 10 minutes within which to speak to the bill.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Fouras): Order! I point out to the member for Beaudesert that we are not debating the sessional orders that the House has already approved.

Mr LINGARD: I agree, Mr Deputy Speaker.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The member will return to the bill.

Mr LINGARD: And finally, the mover of the motion has 30 minutes in which to reply. According to the sessional order, on every Wednesday night we are supposed to finish debate on private members' bills at 11 o'clock. That is the specific provision. Yet this Wednesday night we can go all night. That is absolutely ridiculous. I suggest to the government that when it again considers sessional orders it should look at the ridiculous things that have occurred here tonight. Quite honestly, this sessional order as it deals with private members' bills is ridiculous.
