



Speech by

Hon. K. LINGARD

MEMBER FOR BEAUDESERT

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BEAUDESERT ELECTORATE, WATER RESOURCES

Hon. K. R. LINGARD (Beaudesert—NPA) (7.08 p.m.): When the Maroon Dam was built in the Beaudesert electorate, there was no doubt that the main reason was for agricultural viability and the extension of irrigation in the Albert/Logan Valley. However, as urban and industrial demands were allocated water from this dam, and SunWater was allowed to grab all water and return a healthy dividend to this government, it was quite obvious that allocations of water would become seriously affected in times of drought.

The recent drought has shown that when there is a shortage of water, the demands of urban and industrial usage are considered to the detriment of the agricultural users. These users not only lose allocations from the dams but also begin to lose their rights to access water from creeks and rivers which have always been considered their riparian rights.

When the Goss government stopped the Wolffdene dam in the Beaudesert electorate, one would have expected that capital infrastructure would have been implemented to cater for the demands. However, capital works by this government are absolutely non-existent in the area of dam construction.

In 1987 the coalition government proposed a \$7.8 million water supply scheme at the Bromelton Estate south of Beaudesert. The Bromelton scheme was among the highest priority projects in the state government's water infrastructure task force recommendations. The infrastructure development was going to go across Queensland. It had been included in category 1 of the task force recommendations to be implemented within three to five years. The scheme included the development of an off-stream water storage facility, pumping station, water treatment plant, reservoir and distribution system, with water being sourced from an intake at the Bromelton Weir on the Logan River near Beaudesert.

Irrigators in the southern end of Beaudesert, especially around Christmas Creek and Running Creek, have recently reacted to the government's attempts to take their water. The state government released a strategy for dealing with water shortage in Maroon Dam. This will see SunWater, the state government owned corporation in charge of managing Queensland dams, supplied with water for free from the irrigators which they can sell to their customers. Under the strategy Logan River irrigators will be on zero per cent allocation, while those on Running and Christmas creeks will be restricted in their water usage.

The water that is taken from irrigators under this method will be sold by SunWater to Beaudesert Shire Council and industrial users. Irrigators, however, will not receive any compensation as a result of this strategy.

Recently in the *Country Life* dated 13 November 2003 an announcement was made by SunWater that despite the drought it had turned in a profit this year, excluding valuations, of \$16 million, up by \$900,000 on last year. SunWater and the government should spend part of this money to make sure that Beaudesert receives water from Logan and from the Wivenhoe Dam. If this can happen and Beaudesert can access this water, then the irrigators south of Beaudesert will have access to the creeks.