



Speech by

John-Paul Langbroek

MEMBER FOR SURFERS PARADISE

Hansard Tuesday, 19 October 2004

JAPAN AND FRIENDS DAY

Mr LANGBROEK (Surfers Paradise—Lib) (9.52 p.m.): Mr Deputy Speaker, with your indulgence I would like to acknowledge the presence in the gallery of the campaign director for the Surfers Paradise campaign, John Lainer, and his wife, Julie. I thank them for their efforts in delivering the seat of Surfers Paradise on 7 February.

I rise in the House tonight to acknowledge the wonderful celebration of Japan and Friends Day 2004, held at Evandale Park on the Gold Coast on 10 October. The event was the fifth time this annual festival has been held. As has been the case since its inception, the festival was much bigger this year than it was last year. Japan and Friends Day 2004 had it all, from demonstrations of traditional Japanese instruments to a workshop on the ancient art of bonsai.

Takenori Yamazaki, Consul General of Japan in Brisbane, said the event was aimed at emphasising the attractions of the two countries and promoting bilateral exchange. The event certainly achieved this. It is a credit to the Japanese Society of the Gold Coast and their president, Mr Noa Hirano, and their ongoing work. The society is to be congratulated not only for putting on this event but also for its tireless work throughout the year in promoting Australia-Japan relations on the Gold Coast.

I must admit that the day was made all the more satisfying by virtue of the fact that the events of the previous night and day, 9 October, were so wonderful that I could not wipe the smile off my face all day. I would like to say to members opposite that, for all of their efforts in this place to push the substandard policies of their federal mates, it was all to no avail. I also love the line 'we won the campaign but lost the election'. As a bit of free advice for the Labor Party—maybe they can take this advice back to their federal colleagues—the Australian people do not like being told what they should and should not do. The Queensland Labor Party would do well to look at why Australians relate to John Howard rather than just despise him and assume that Australians will do the same.

When the members opposite pontificate about the alleged raw deal Queenslanders have received from John Howard, they should remember that this type of soapbox preaching turns the electorate off, as was evidenced on 9 October. To quantify that evidence, let us look at the performance of the parties in Queensland. The Australian Labor Party had a swing of 0.16 per cent in its favour on primary votes, while the Liberal Party had a swing of 3.25 per cent. This is in contrast to what the Minister for Energy would have us believe when he said this morning, 'The jokers opposite were crowing this morning about their election results. They went backwards by two per cent.' Well, in actual fact, if the minister is referring to the National Party, it received a swing towards it of 0.49 per cent, some three times the swing the ALP received. Perhaps the minister should spend more time looking after the woeful energy industry in Queensland by preventing transformers falling onto roads and starting grass fires, as they did on 11 October, than concocting false facts and figures about an election that sees his factional mates and enemies arguing with one another on the front page of national newspapers. If he does not start paying more attention to the things that matter, maybe he should come with me to Japan and Friends Day—

Time expired.