



Speech by

## Stirling Hinchliffe

MEMBER FOR STAFFORD

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### TEACHING QUEENSLAND HISTORY IN SCHOOLS

**Mr HINCHLIFFE** (Stafford—ALP) (10.13 pm): In the infancy of the federal election campaign, it is timely to talk about history. History is indeed destined to be made during this federal election, whichever way it goes. I am very sure that the Australian people will see the wisdom of rejecting the unfair industrial relations system that has been foisted upon them by the Howard government and, like another historical event I will come to in a moment, we will see the rejection of that government and a new Labor government will be elected in this country. That will be a milestone in this nation's history.

When speaking about milestones in Australian history, I want to refer to the recently published *Guide to the Teaching of Australian History in Years 9 and 10*, which has been issued by the federal government very much under the hand of the Prime Minister. Indeed, he wrote the foreword to the document and personally endorsed the Australian history external reference group who were ultimately the authors of the *Guide to the Teaching of Australian History in Years 9 and 10*.

I must admit that I was alarmed by media reports about this document when it was first issued by the federal government and particularly the education minister, Minister Bishop. Those media reports spoke about the challenges around the document as it was presented because it seemed to miss pretty significant events. To be fair, I have looked very closely at this curriculum item. It is a fairly decent working base for history teachers to use in years 9 and 10. It does, however, miss a lot of really important Queensland events—things that are important to Queenslanders. It is very much a southern state centric document.

In particular, I am very concerned about the fact that it does not speak at all about the sugar industry. I think some colleagues on the other side of the chamber would agree with me that that is very important to Australian history and indeed Queensland history. In particular, it fails to refer to the significant and very grave issue of the use of South Sea Islander labour in the establishment of the sugar industry in Queensland and the significant role that played going onwards to the political arrangements of the Federation of Australia.