



Michael Aird MLC

Legislative Council

Date: 21 June 1995

Electorate: Derwent

ROYAL DERWENT HOSPITAL (SALE OF LAND) BILL 1995

Second Reading

Mr PRESIDENT - The question is that the bill be now read the second time. The honourable member for Derwent. As he moves to the podium I would remind honourable members that this is the first speech to be made by the honourable member for Derwent in this Chamber and I am sure the usual courtesy will be afforded him, that there will be no interjections during his first address.

Members - Hear, hear.

Mr AIRD (Derwent) - Thank you very much, Mr President. May I firstly congratulate you on your elevation to that position. I am sure you will carry out your duties with exemplary conduct and I look forward to working with you, as I look forward to working with other honourable members in this place. May I also congratulate the honourable Leader on his re- election - I will be generous in this speech to all honourable members; I will save any other comment for some other time. I also congratulate the honourable member for Tamar on his re-election. I congratulate the honourable member for West Devon on his election and I would like to congratulate the honourable member for Queenborough, Mr Wilkinson.

Mr President, having served for about thirteen years in the lower House prior to entering this place, obviously I got to know most members here fairly well. I guess we all form opinions of one another as we observe our functions in the relative Houses and I would not be at all surprised if some people have gone to *Hansard* in the past and read some comments I have made in relation to this place. I think most of the comments I made were accurate at the time and if I can make any contribution which leads to a fuller understanding of the role of the upper House then I will have achieved something in stopping, I believe, the negative comments that have emerged.

Also through my former experiences I have had some association with the new members in this place, so I feel as though I have built up some relationship with them. I was Minister for Local Government at the time we were moving to modernised local government. It was not met with the greatest enthusiasm in some areas and the honourable member for West

Devon led the push. But at least he displayed his bipartisanship in terms of opposing the Liberal Party's final implementation of that program. With those few words I will now concentrate on the bill, and I thank you for your indulgence, Mr President.

Firstly I would like to congratulate the Government on ensuring that this bill is before the Parliament at this time. There was a chance that this bill would have had to be dealt with during the budget session and that in turn, I believe, would have held back some of the further uses that this land is going to be freed up for in the future. I speak particularly on behalf of the Corumbene Nursing Home which is situated in New Norfolk. For those honourable members who are not aware of this, the Corumbene Nursing Home is in receipt of, I think, in excess of \$2 million of Federal funds to build a new nursing home/hostel complex on a greenfield site.

In conjunction with the Government, that nursing home has in fact identified three sites related to the land which will be freed up under this abolition of the trust. To do that obviously the lead time is imperative in making full use of the Federal money and, while there is an exemplary service offered by the management and staff of Corumbene Nursing Home, anyone visiting the facilities there would know that they are less than satisfactory for a modern nursing home/hostel complex.

I congratulate the Government, particularly the minister. During the election campaign in Derwent I discovered that this issue had been put on the backburner, and a couple of phone calls to the minister's office, to his principal adviser, started the cogs going again. I am pleased to see this legislation through the lower House under a suspension of Standing Orders and being dealt with today. Whilst there will be an amendment, I am sure that amendment will not hold up the progress of this legislation. I believe it is going to be a major fillip in terms of further development in the New Norfolk area and that we have to ensure that any future use made of the land is in keeping with the development there.

The Government has put out a discussion paper in terms of future development of this land and that is supposedly open to public discussion. There was a bit of a hiccup when an application was made for the demolition of one of the buildings, and that application was put in the paper some time ago. My understanding is that that -

Sitting suspended from 1 p.m. to 2.30 p.m.

Mr PRESIDENT - The honourable member for Derwent.

Mr Brookes - Part 2.

Mr AIRD (Derwent) - There you go, people try very hard not to interject on inaugural speeches but somebody has just -

Mr Brookes - With due respect, Mr President, that wasn't an interjection, that was another loud thought.

Members laughing.

Dr Crean - That was an interjection though.

Mr PRESIDENT - Order.

Mr AIRD - If he had not done it before he has done it now, Mr President.

Mr PRESIDENT - Order. In case any honourable member may have been absent from the Chamber when the honourable member commenced his address, I assured him at the time that the courtesy of no interjections would be afforded to him.

Mr AIRD - That is all right. At least life is consistent in the lower House and the upper House. I remember very distinctly Ray Bonney interjecting on me in my maiden speech in the lower House - so the honourable member Mr Brookes is in good company.

I had nearly concluded my points in relation to this bill and in fact I was drawing suspicious looks from the Leader in terms of my congratulating the Government so effusively, as though I had a hidden motive. I do not want to leave anyone with the impression that this is why I say nice things about the Government; I will at all times try to be fair when the Government does the right thing and I hope that if this bill goes through - and I am sure it will - the Government will see its way clear to allow Corumbene to acquire land at a favourable rate so it can proceed with this new facility. There is no doubt that it is of great urgency for the people living at the nursing home, and the future hospital development is going to be an added benefit to those people. I may add that any development of about \$2 million in an area such as New Norfolk is going to provide a major fillip to the economy of that area, though that is not necessarily the principal reason for that development.

I would like to put on record my appreciation to Maree Crane, the nursing director of Corumbene. She and her staff have done a fantastic job in terms of providing top rate nursing care for the elderly in that area. I hope that facilitation of this legislation will allow that development to go ahead, and I urge all honourable members to support this bill.