



Legislative Council
Royal Botanic Gardens And Domain Trust
Amendment Bill Hansard
Extract

26/10/99

The Hon. D. E. OLDFIELD [8.34 p.m.] (Inaugural speech): Madam President, I take this opportunity to publicly congratulate you on your election as President of this House and to express my gratitude for the fair manner in which you have thus far conducted its business. I also acknowledge the work of the staff of the Parliament, be they from security, administration or catering; during my time here I have found them to be extremely courteous, helpful and professional.

Clearly, my charter of responsibility as a representative in this place is for the people of New

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South Wales, but I will not be deterred from the fact that we the people of New South Wales are but a part of our great nation of Australia. I will not, however, extrapolate that with the notion that we as Australians are but one group of people in this world, because no-one will ever care for our own people as we do ourselves.

I particularly thank the nearly 300,000 New South Wales people who voted for One Nation at the last State election and the more than one million Australians, many of whom were from New South Wales, who voted for One Nation at the last Federal election. It is of particular note that this was our first State election in New South Wales and that our organisation was less than two years old, yet twice as many people chose One Nation as those who chose the Australian Democrats or the Greens. Once again we confirmed our position as the third most popular political movement nationally and in New South Wales.

The way for me to take up my place here was made possible by our organisation, Pauline Hanson's One Nation Party. Its members and supporters have my thanks for all their efforts. Our movement bears its founder's name, and I am especially pleased that Pauline is present in the gallery tonight surrounded by hundreds of our members. Honourable members can be certain that I know how I came to be in this place and the responsibilities I have at this especially difficult time in our history as our people face far more than the usual problems of life.

Often the truth is harsh - it can be a bitter pill - but the truth is part of the cure, whereas lies only partially treat the symptoms while leaving the body and mind still unwell. I ask that what I say be read in context and the good intentions in my meaning be understood. As I speak this evening I am particularly cognisant that my maiden speech - I did say "maiden" as I am neither a purveyor nor a follower of political correctness; rather, I am one of its greatest opponents - is perhaps the first in many years to be made at a time when Australian military personnel are on active duty overseas. With that in mind it is appropriate to register my admiration and support for the brave men and women in uniform currently risking their lives in an attempt to bring peace to our region.

These soldiers, sailors and air force personnel, many of whom come from New South Wales, are conducting hazardous operations in a hostile environment. They deserve the highest level of support and a special place in our prayers. Regardless of the politics of any war or action such as East Timor, military personnel as individuals and units are entitled to our support. They do not question or judge their deployment - they simply follow orders.

I mention this because, while it is clear that Australians are very much in support of our involvement in East Timor, I am mindful of the fact that our role in the Vietnam War also began with considerable support. Just like the Hon. C. J. S. Lynn, my brother, Wayne, was one of the many who suffered the disgusting and inexcusable actions of those who did not distinguish between the politicians who gave the orders and those whose duty it was to follow them. We cannot be sure what East Timor will lead to, or when Australians may once again serve where some civilians may find reason to protest, so we must remember the past and damn those who offend the commitment and dedication of our military personnel.

The future is unavoidably linked to the past. In fact, I am firm in my belief that those who correctly interpret history have a window to the future. I place on the record some facts about my family, because we are all products of the things that surround us, the sights, the sounds, the experiences, the stories, the lessons, the individual values held by our families and the issues that are important to the people we respect. Those things shape who we are and what we will become.

I am the nephew, great-nephew, brother and son of men who fought for our country. We lost my great-uncle Reg in the first world war. My great-uncle Tom, in the same war and as a member of the 10th Light Horse, left his arm at Gallipoli. My great-uncle Harry of the Eighth Division died while a prisoner of war of the Japanese. My uncle Ted of the 2/16th served in the Middle East and New Guinea. My brother, Wayne, as a regular, did his tour of Vietnam in 1968 and 1969 with 35 Caribou Squadron. Even now, my nephew David, a commissioned officer in the 1st Brigade in Darwin, is preparing for deployment to East Timor to conduct security operations. I am proud of them all. Even those who died before I was born are still a part of me, for they are my family.

Understandably, I am especially proud of my father, Bill, who, as an air gunner in Hudson bombers won a Distinguished Flying Medal and the right to wear a United States presidential citation. My father was commissioned from the ranks, and on his seventy-seventh combat mission was shot down and captured by the Japanese. I think of him and speak of him as a son should. My family has always run to the sound of guns, and in my own way I do but follow in their footsteps. My mother, June, is

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both a woman and lady. In the early 1950s, and only in her twenties, she achieved the almost impossible for her gender in those days - she convinced a bank to lend her a substantial sum to expand her small business into proper premises.

Both my sisters, Leslie and Carolyn, grew up to become successful people and loving parents. On this day 22 years ago, after a seven-year fight, my brave sister Carolyn was taken from us by Hodgkin's disease. Though I often appear ungrateful, I am very aware of my good fortune at having been born into a wonderful family with parents who have always selflessly put my interests before their own. If not for my parents, I would not have had the success I have enjoyed on many occasions, and I only pray I will one day be as good as them and my brother and sisters.

Australian families everywhere have histories like mine and though they may not have the opportunity to enter such deeds on the parliamentary record, these stories, at least within their own families, should be told again and again. Our nation has been built on the strength of its families, and the enemies of the family are my enemies as well.

Often I have been asked whom I admire, who are my role models, who do I look up to? They are those who have done what I have not, who have endured what I have not and who have lived through what I will never have to, because of their sacrifice. If admiration be sought, let it be found where it belongs, at the feet of those who did what we did not. I am the second in my family to enter Parliament, my father's younger brother, Ted Oldfield, being the first. This should not be considered as a pattern in my family for I, like my uncle before me, view this profession - if one can refer to it as that - as perhaps the most unfortunate of all.

This vocation called politics has been made lowly and despicable not so much by its intention but by the political parties and persona of those involved. Public representation should, alongside the defence of country, be among the noblest and most worthy pursuits of all, yet the lack of quality, decency and genuine purpose on behalf of people, coupled with self-interest, have brought politics into disrepute instead of elevating it.

The interests of political parties taking first place over all else is defended by the idea that it is good for the agenda, but often the parties' agendas take priority over the decisions required for the benefit of our citizens, our sovereignty, democracy and cultural existence. Members of a political party should not be so set in their serfdom that time and again they vote against what they know is fair, what they know is right and what they know the people who elected them would want - indeed, need. This problem was illustrated in a recent maiden speech. The member said:

I am proud to sit in this House as a representative of the Liberal Party of Australia in coalition with the National Party.

I say to you I am proud to sit in this House as a representative of New South Wales. One Nation's own code of conduct expects me to represent the people first, not the party. Only One Nation makes this understanding of true representation incumbent on its members. Already in my brief time in this Parliament a number of members have expressed to me what they really felt should be done, but how their party would never allow them to speak of such solutions.

Those of us with depth in our understanding must expose the deceit of those who represent their party's interest rather than the people, our State and our nation. During my time in this place I will do what I can to promote casting one's vote as a representative of the people, not the party. I will do what I can to encourage voting on issues in accordance with one's beliefs and the genuine needs of the people of New South Wales, not the parties' dictates.

Be assured, I do not kid myself about the level of difficulty in separating party vassals from party masters, however adversity has never impaired my willingness to give it a go. There is no such thing as an organisation that is great or good or decent. This greatness and/or decency results from the spirit and determination of individuals that make up that group and direct its organisation. The greatness and decency of individuals cannot be inherited; they can only be continued by dedicated new generations.

Always remember it is governments - and arguably the two-party system - that are responsible for the way things are in this State and this nation. It is government action or inaction that determines the state of our affairs. It is government policies that determine the make-up of our society, the size and power of our police force, the assistance we give to those in need and the incentives we give to those who would build.

It is government that determines the standard of our education, our safety on the streets, the taking of services from country towns, and how much farmers will be forced to pay for the water that nature causes to fall on their land. It is government that decides how our money will be spent, which

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industries will be helped or destroyed, what hospitals will close and how long rapists and paedophiles will spend in gaol. Make no mistake, it is government that must take the blame for the ills that face us, if not for their failed policies, then certainly for the policies they have failed to introduce.

One Nation's New South Wales policies have been detailed in the blue book and other documents. Those platforms are specific in principle but continue to evolve as appropriate. One Nation clearly supports the rural sector, job creation, the legitimacy of responsible firearm ownership, referenda and consultation. Our concept of punishment properly fitting the crime is obvious and we are committed to making it the criminals who live in fear, not the innocent.

One Nation strongly supports a people's bank, such as the original Commonwealth Bank - an initiative of the Fisher Labor Government in 1911. Even if only in New South Wales, low-interest development funding could be a reality if only Labor had not forgotten its roots. Perhaps Labor and Liberal would both consider the benefits of such policies if so much of their donor base was not tied to the commercial banks.

Our organisation's views on assistance and, in particular, our policy of all Australians being treated equally and the same have long been misrepresented. We have a very clear problem with the current policy of race-based assistance, and believe strongly in the proposition that no group in society has a monopoly on hardship of any kind.

In saying that, One Nation does not believe anyone in genuine need should lose the assistance a benevolent society should make available to those less fortunate. We simply make the point, and I will make it very clearly, that we do not support assistance on the divisive basis of race. We know that in all fairness assistance must be distributed in what is the only just and decent manner - on the basis of individual need.

While harmony and understanding are essential, I will not let pass this opportunity to include a comment on the ridiculous nature of what is put under the banner of reconciliation. To have reconciliation is to have

restoration, as to reconcile is to restore. Both the word and the concept are wrong, because one cannot restore what has not existed. Non-Aboriginal Australians have never been together with Aboriginal Australians in any more of a fashion than we are now, and we should be aiming not to live as two peoples but as one.

We must have a fresh look at how to bring all Australians together and not just be separate groups living in the same land. We must do without the distorted view that paints Aboriginal history as anything other than it was: groups of people living on the edge of survival, where one day rolled into the next without difference or progress.

We must not continue to confuse what must be the logical priorities, for it is not so much the future of aboriginality or the preservation of that culture that should take priority; rather, what is important is the quality of life of those people as individual Australians. Even the benefits, such as special low-interest loans given to Aboriginal Australians, are intended not so much to help them but to buy them off, to shut them up, to placate them and keep them quiet. Governments toy with Aboriginals and their issues to satisfy the activist movements and elements of the media.

The lack of genuine, progressive policy is evident in the fact that, despite the countless billions spent, the predicament of Aboriginal Australians has not really improved. Throwing money at a fire will keep you warm for a while, but it will not change the weather. I am sorry for the way in which Aboriginal Australians have suffered, just as I am sorry for any suffering that may have been avoided, but no one group monopolises suffering, and guilt cannot be inherited.

Let us stop the arguments of the past, accept what is here, and together welcome the positives of a future as one people. It matters less what we have been and more what we are and will become. Let us promote being Australians today and tomorrow, one people, one flag, one set of rules, one nation united by our acceptance of each other and with a common goal for us all to live a better life together.

Perhaps an even greater issue of division and the breakdown of our potential for social cohesion is the assault by the policy of multiculturalism. Honourable members may have noted that I consistently say "acceptance", not "tolerance", for even more than reconciliation the word "tolerance" must be rejected and those responsible for its employment given dictionaries and relegated to less important tasks. To tolerate you is to put up with you, to endure your presence and to suffer its imposition. But to accept is to welcome, to be favourably receptive, to embrace.

We must as Australians live together as one people, and to do that requires acceptance - for to only tolerate leaves the door to resentment wide

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open. We are all immigrants; we are all the descendants of immigrants, Aboriginal Australians included. But those who came to New South Wales and the rest of Australia in the periods of mass immigration following the Second World War came under the policy of assimilation.

The policy of assimilation catered well to the natural human desire to fit in - and the Greeks, Czechs, Italians and many other nationalities who desperately wanted to be accepted and to be Australians have contributed enormously to our country. However, multiculturalism tells people that there is no need to fit in. In fact, it divides us through the highlighting of differences. It dismisses the advantages of embracing a new life as an Australian and instead promotes the notion of simply bringing much of the life you wanted to escape with you.

The policy consequences of multiculturalism's relationship with ethnic-related crime is very rightly a particular concern for the people of New South Wales. In the overwhelming majority of cases, when judged by obvious standards, the places most immigrants have come from fall short in terms of modern social development. We concern ourselves with democracy, freedom, lifestyle, justice, opportunity, public safety, and a whole range of rights which are virtually non-existent in so many other places. We fail to place the appropriate value on what we have to offer and, as a consequence, much of what has been given has failed to strike the right note of appreciation.

The fact is that people come to Australia to have a better life than their country offers, and the more we encourage multiculturalism the more we are making Australia like all the places people want to leave. Before the guardians of political correctness got their hands on Prime Minister Howard, he had a lot to say about the inappropriateness of multiculturalism, including this in June 1988:

I think it is a rather aimless and divisive policy and I think it ought to be changed.

Before I was elected as a member of Parliament my public profile was already considerable due to the attention which made me Australia's best-known political adviser. So I have had an extraordinary level of contact with the media. I will make an observation of the propensity of some members of the media for selective treatment. Most recently, the case of New South Wales Senator Aden Ridgeway is the best example of the amazingly sympathetic and positive approach to reporting provided by large, especially print-related sections of the media who take up a cause and take up a side.

Just for expressing views deemed politically correct and in tune with the way sections of the media want the public to view life and its issues, Senator Ridgeway is profiled with such positiveness as to almost position him for sainthood. On the other hand, for expressing or supporting views the media does not agree with, others are treated as the inquisitors treated heretics. They delve into your past and try to discredit you. They portray you as evil personified, and therefore all you say, believe and represent must also be evil and, therefore, cleansed with fire.

I recognise that not all of the media are like this, but those who are most like this are so twisted that they fail to recognise or do not care about the cost of their deceit. Some who have taken a side have the courage and decency to acknowledge their slide from journalistic ethics. I am reminded of what Maxine McKew said:

As the new century loomed it was time to evaluate how the media covered news. The Hanson Phenomenon had raised some questions about fairness and objectivity.

For the most part the mainstream press roundly condemned Hansonism but one million Australians voted for her.

Maxine McKew went on to say:

The broader question is, are we so out of touch with mainstream thinking that we have to ask questions about ourselves?

I am grateful to journalists who try to report without taking sides, but I am sorry for those who serve masters with agendas that

preclude fairness and truth. How many of these people would survive if they were the subjects of their own tactics? Senator Ridgeway, as we all know, will never face spurious and inappropriate allegations about his private life, hundreds of financially-based investigations, or read dishonest and inaccurate reviews of himself by people he has never met; nor will he have to stomach investigative reporting with the intention of creating a slur regardless of what the investigation may actually discover.

In fact, I suggest that Senator Ridgeway will lead a charmed and protected political life - the media will never come after him. My concerns and those of One Nation have been and are for all issues to be dealt with from a nationalistic standpoint - the interests of Australian people always coming first, second and third. That means proactive policy-based support for Australian ownership, Australian industries, business, import replacement

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manufacturing, investment, social cohesion and equality, combined with the rights of individual expression.

Recent and clandestine treaties such as the multilateral agreement on investment [MAI] were, to a degree, exposed by One Nation as damaging to Australians. It is interesting to note that we who are often shallowly referred to as right wing were joined in the fight against the MAI by small, predominantly left-wing activist groups.

While the MAI may seem to be on hold, it is but one weapon of the multipronged attack on Australian living standards and way of life. The others must also be captured and put on public trial. The somewhat less known Lima declaration, embraced by both major parties since its inception in the early 1970s, has lain unseen as its agenda stripped Australia of jobs through policies that caused the export of much of our manufacturing. Whilst the Lima declaration was an unsigned document, adopting its aim of international redistribution of manufacturing, and hence international redistribution of employment, as an example, caused the closure of BHP in Newcastle, and the annihilation of manufacturing jobs in industries all over New South Wales and beyond.

The effects of the overall agenda, these days commonly called globalisation, sometimes internationalisation, can best be understood by the impact of the pre-emptive strike already felt in rural New South Wales and other regional and rural areas of Australia. It is particularly in rural and regional areas that the decline of all things Australian - production, manufacturing, industry, heritage and lifestyle and the loss of certainty and hope - slaps us in the face with the greatest clarity.

Citrus, pork, lamb and sugar have all felt the effects of losing reasonable protection, of inferior imports, or of the acts of other countries unwilling to do to their farmers what our governments do with a sneer and a kick. All our primary producers are left to compete with countries whose governments overcome the so-called level playing field through direct subsidies, quotas and, in many cases, import protections, just like the ones the Australian Government is removing.

Farming subsidies in America, Japan, Korea and the European Union often make up more than half of their farmers' income. Other countries pull out all stops to maintain and support their rural industries, but our governments lack the same spirit and commitment. Using beef as one example, it must be noted that European Union beef subsidies have increased 33 per cent in the last 10 years. The average European Union beef farmer now gets 70 per cent of his or her income in the form of a cheque from their respective government.

In the race to devastate our own production, to destroy our own farmers, their families, all the associated jobs and community services, including access to health in country towns, Australia would easily win gold. That is a sad indictment on the new millennium and the coming year of the Olympics. Where once great Australians carved out a way of life that overcame the adversity of the elements - floods, drought, fire, disease and even isolation - we now witness their losing battle against the treachery of the people they elected to help them.

The actions of the Australian Animal Health Council, driven by the New South Wales Department of Agriculture, deserves special mention over its failure to address the issues of Johnes' disease. Its actions are destroying flocks, bankrupting farming families and pushing some to suicide, all through a program that is flawed and unnecessary. Nowhere else in the world has this disease been dealt with as it has in Australia. In New Zealand, where it is estimated that 75 per cent of sheep are infected with the disease, destroying the animals has been assessed as unnecessary.

Governments could do many positive things for rural development in New South Wales. One of the best examples is Parkes Inland Marketing Corporation [IMC]. This marvellous initiative, backed by 53 local councils, needs only \$63 million for basic storage facilities and an airport that will allow fresh Australian produce the fastest possible means of export - gate to plate. It is estimated the IMC project will create 10,000 jobs for a cost equivalent to half the aid given each and every year to Indonesia, of all places. When the huge Olympics cost for New South Wales is considered, it is easy to see why rural New South Wales says, "The only bush that Sydney understands is Homebush."

The financial hardships, loss of protection and assistance, lock-up of land and water, the native vegetation Act, deregulation and the so-called National Competition Policy all make their contribution to what, you might ask. The bulk of the answer can be found in comments by a former New South Wales Premier who recently spoke of the corporatisation of the farming industry:

It was put the future would be characterised by increasingly de-regulated markets, globalisation of business, increasing scale of production and minimal government involvement.

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To the economic rationalists and the international big money they serve, for them this future is a kind of heaven. For everyone else - ordinary people, workers, trade unions, small business people and most who aspire to be their own boss - the globalist's heaven for them will be hell on earth. We once fought communism and its centralisation of wealth and power - a system where the smallest number of people controlled everyone and everything, and individuality and personal ambition was considered a danger to the State.

We now see the same social product emerging by way of transnational corporations - foreign owned, foreign resourced and supported by the judases of Australian public life. We now see the future for Australians as a kind of indentured consumer where, for the most part, opportunities will lie only in the chance to work for a foreign corporation, if indeed there is the chance to work at all. We must make more Australians aware of this creeping takeover tactic.

I have paid particular attention to the economic rationalists, their global agenda and the impact on the rural sector but, of course, it does not stop there. Globalisation will alienate Australians and, as more of the wealth is owned and controlled by an ever-decreasing percentage of the population, we will be delivered into a class-based society of such proportion that has not been seen in our history. Just as Labor has forgotten its leaders, such as Fisher and Curtin and their policy of a people's bank, so too should the Liberals and Nationals be reminded of the position of Menzies and McEwan. Menzies said:

Rising material standards of life in a democracy cannot be adequately attained unless industries are developed, production increased and the resources of a nation expanded . . . An uncontrolled and unregulated free enterprise would tend to destroy the weak, impoverish the poor, and reduce that dignity of the individual man and woman, which it must be the purpose of democracy to create and enhance.

McEwan said:

Any economic system which prevents us from achieving the greatest measure of industrial progress is detrimental to our social welfare.

The wealth and power of transnationals is already eclipsing governments. Democracy will fall even further by the wayside as the engineering of a corporatised society removes the ability for individual action and success. Just as rural Australia will suffer from the stranglehold of transnationals and their virtual monopolisation of land, water and production, so will the cities experience the death of most small or owner-operated businesses. Petrol stations, corner stores, small supermarkets, hotels and most other retail and service businesses will succumb to the overwhelming control of distribution and an inability to compete financially.

The effect of globalisation on Australia, a small and easily monopolised country with a high standard of living, will be devastating for the vast majority of the population. Almost non-existent government intervention resulting from international treaties, free trade, domestically supported major party political policy, the breakdown of borders, the free movement of work forces and the simple power of money will cause wages and living standards to fall.

As our once proud State and this nation suffer through this restructuring of what was once our wealth and what was thought to be our future prosperity, we will experience the associated further increase in the circle that is poverty, crime, substance abuse and family breakdown. Globalisation will devastate our equality of opportunity and replace our once benevolent society with one of serf and master. Many know how much devastation is taking place even if, as yet, they know not why.

Our way of life has not faced a greater threat than globalisation as it is truly the unseen enemy. My concern is for the younger members of my family and other young Australians who will face and suffer these difficulties much more so than any of us. But I must believe that as we carry the battle now, there will be those among the next generation and the one after that who will rise up and repel this international disease of corporate takeover and centralised wealth.

In the face of seemingly insurmountable odds, when some of us feel we are fighting a losing battle, I am positive in my belief of the outcome for I am reminded of the many times Australians have fought losing battles right up until they have won. One Nation is a part of that fight and will be a part of that victory.

I refer now to the Royal Botanic Gardens and Domain Trust Amendment Bill. The Royal Botanic Gardens are an important part of the heritage of this State. They have significant environmental and recreational values. The people of New South Wales must know we appreciate these facilities, so we must not rush this debate.