

CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES (DRUG DETECTION POWERS) AMENDMENT BILL

22nd July, 08

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from 17 June 2008. Page 3747.)

Mr PEDERICK (Hammond) (12:18): I, too, rise to make a contribution to this bill. I wish Molly, Jay and Hooch all the best in their endeavours. It could not be more timely when we have anecdotal evidence of the scourge of drugs throughout the state, throughout our urban areas and farther out into the countryside.

An acquaintance of mine has messed up his life over the use of drugs. It is a good lesson for anyone (a young child going to school or anyone) who thinks that it is fine to dabble in substance abuse to see what it can do to a person.

I am not a medical practitioner but I do not think all the medical studies have been done that may need to be done as to the things that can potentially happen to people. I do know that a lot of studies have been organised over time. I believe that drugs have ruined lives and have the potential to ruin many more lives. I call upon the community to make wise decisions. The pace of life seems to become faster every day and people are looking for different ways to find relaxation or a so-called buzz, but they really need to be aware of the consequences.

I note that dogs and electronic detection agents can be used in all sorts of places, including licensed premises, passenger vehicles and public carriers, and there could be an issue when using detection dogs in sleeper cabins of trucks, etc. We would like to see what the reality of the situation will be there and whether only electronic devices will be used. Obviously, they will be a bit like random breath testing stations, as this bill gives the right for drug detection stations to be set up. When used in the transport industry, which in effect does carry this country, I hope that inspections are done in a timely manner, because freight companies and drivers are always under pressure to get to the other end of the trip.

Another concern I have is to see if these dogs can be used in country areas where some of the marijuana is grown. Dare I say that the sands of the Mallee are very good marijuana-growing country—so I am told.

The Hon. M.J. Atkinson: You don't see too much on the Yorke Peninsula.

Mr PEDERICK: No. The Yorke Peninsula, I believe, is land that is too good; it is the barley growing capital of the world. I do not think they would have too many spare acres to grow any marijuana over there. However, I digress. I do know people who have had several drug crops found on their properties. You can always pick it up when an SA Water pipeline is accessed or a farmer's pipeline. Some people have very intricate watering facility set-ups.

Sometimes I wish the police were perhaps a bit smarter on the job and cornered some of these people when they have had notice. Marijuana growers are very keen to protect their crops because they could be worth several million dollars. These matters should be actioned immediately once someone is aware of what is going on. I know that the police do a lot of great work in staking out some of these patches but I think more could be done. With those few words, I commend the use of the three detector dogs and support the bill.