

Legislative Council

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TORRENS ISLAND QUARANTINE STATION

The Hon. A. BRESSINGTON (17:33): I thank honourable members for their contributions on this motion. At least now the concerns about the environment and heritage issues are on the record and, as the Hon. Michelle Lensink said, this island and those particular heritage interests are tucked away there for very few to see—out of sight, out of mind, really.

It is a shame that the motion is not supported, but I would just like to pick up on a couple of things that came to mind while I was listening. We talk about concern for heritage issues, and it was mentioned that the quarantine station is currently used for Army exercises and there are buildings there with the doors smashed in and empty shells left lying everywhere.

This place could actually have some value for tourism. Interest was expressed by the owner of the dolphin tours in Port Adelaide to assist with that and build up knowledge that this place actually exists, and that has been quite successful in Victoria with its quarantine station.

The one thing about this particular motion that presses on me the heaviest is where maritime construction will have its port, or whatever it is called, and that it is going to require—as the Hon. Ms Lensink said—a dredging of that river back some 50 metres, I think, which is going to flood part of the mangroves and flood the graveyards.

As has been indicated to me, there are now issues with the Indigenous community. This is a sacred burial ground to them and, prior to the knowledge of these projects going ahead, it was suggested to people in the Indigenous community that this area would be used to bury the bones of some of their ancestors or relatives who had been found elsewhere, that they would be relocated to Torrens Island. It was actually the mayor of Port Adelaide who brought that to my attention. If that is the case, perhaps the government may like to enter into some discussions with the Indigenous people involved and explain why this proposed burial ground is going to be exposed to industry and perhaps even flooding of that area.

I acknowledge the Hon. Rob Lucas's comments that this is an old issue. The same thing was touted 13 years ago about the dolphins and the mangroves. That, in fact, was not the intention of the *Stateline* program that the Hon. Mark Parnell and I did together regarding this matter. However, we all know that the dolphins are a good hook and that everybody loves dolphins. It was a way of getting people to pay attention to this issue, because we can only muck around with this river system and with the mangroves so many times before there is an impact on the dolphins and the fish breeding ground in those mangroves.

We need to understand that the fish bred in those mangroves are what the dolphins use to train their pups in how to shepherd and catch fish. So, we have a whole system that is gradually—bit by bit—being reclaimed, if you like, by we humans. Although the impact might not be right here, right now, we have no guarantee that these ecological systems are not going to be disrupted to the point where we will lose a very important system in the future.

I am not going to rave on forever. As I said, I thank honourable members. I am sure that the media interest in this particular issue will continue, and I intend to make sure that it does, and that these projects, these subdivisions, are watched very carefully and very closely.

Motion negatived.