



Speech by
**Mr DENVER
BEANLAND**

MEMBER FOR INDOOROOPILLY

Hansard 21 October 1998

APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL; APPROPRIATION BILL
Committee (Cognate Debate)
Estimates Committee D
Report

Mr BEANLAND (Indooroopilly—LP) (5.50 p.m.): In rising to speak to this Estimates committee report, I want to thank the chairman of the committee, my fellow committee members, the committee staff and the departmental officers who appeared before the committee. I am concerned about the previous speaker's comments about Chuwar and the Challinor Centre. Comments were made that some fraudulent decisions were made in relation to a contract for Chuwar. Some questions were certainly raised about the issue. However, I would be concerned about the intemperate language which the member used a few moments ago. I understand that the CJC has cleared people in relation to that matter. All staff have been cleared, as I understand it. My information is that no-one has been charged in relation to that matter, and we should be careful not to malign people. In fact, I understand that discussions are probably taking place in relation to the compensation that is required following that matter. The point is that the issue was referred to the Criminal Justice Commission and, as I understand it, all people involved have been cleared.

I turn now to the committee itself and the Minister appearing before the committee. Since taking office, this Government has had some months—four months, in fact—to put in place arrangements in relation to initiatives that were first announced by the former National/Liberal coalition Government, namely, electricity concessions for low-income, seriously ill people who have been on life-support oxygen concentrators. As I understand it, the machine is provided free of charge through Queensland Health. Yet over that period, and still today, the Minister does not have that initiative in place.

Recently, the Minister for Mines and Energy was asked a question about this matter. The Minister indicated that the matter was still subject to discussion. Of course, that is what we get from this Minister—a Minister who is long on rhetoric but short on action. She does not like to do the homework. That is pathetic. Of course, this is a result of paralysis of Government. There has been a lack of action on the part of this Government in a number of areas, and particularly this one.

Members of this Government sit around and allow people in that particular position to suffer unnecessarily, because this callous Government will not make the decisions. It will not do the hard work that is necessary. Instead, all we get are excuses, excuses and more excuses while fellow Queenslanders suffer. The concessions would mean a saving of something like \$48 a quarter for the people on oxygen concentrators and \$32.25 per quarter for those eligible users of kidney dialysis machines. Yet what we get are excuses. A number of people are now starting to question the Government's sincerity in relation to that particular matter.

Furthermore, this Minister did not do the necessary homework in relation to questions on notice. How lazy can one get! When we started asking questions at the Estimates committee hearing, we discovered that the Minister's answers to questions on notice were incorrect.

Ms Bligh interjected.

Mr BEANLAND: The Minister has not answered the questions correctly. The Minister cannot deny that, because that is in the record, and the record speaks for itself. On two occasions the Minister provided incorrect answers: firstly, in relation to a machinery of Government matter and, secondly, in relation to task forces, committees of review, inquiries and so forth. I understand why the Minister would want to disown them, because continuously there are inquiries and task forces. Today we heard that "forums" is the new terminology. I am sure that it will not be long before this Minister is into forums, too. But that does not excuse the Minister for misleading this Parliament on that very important issue. Tonight the Minister was rushing off to a press conference. The Minister is quick to put out press releases, but it requires more than that to be a Minister of the Crown. It requires hard work—something which this Minister is not doing. Members are seeing that daily in relation to two issues, one of which involves the misleading of the Parliament.

As to the Children's Commissioner, there has been a cutback of funding in the Children's Commission—quite a sizeable decrease of funding.

Time expired.
