



Speech by

KAREN STRUTHERS

MEMBER FOR ARCHERFIELD

Hansard 16 September 1998

QUEENSLAND VISIT BY GLENDA JACKSON

Ms STRUTHERS (Archerfield—ALP) (10.16 a.m.): I am sure that many members of this House have been entertained by Glenda Jackson in the movies *A Touch of Class* and *Elizabeth R*, as well as her other great films. Glenda Jackson has taken on a new career. In 1992 she was elected to the British Parliament. Glenda Jackson now holds the position of Under Secretary of State for Transport.

This week Glenda Jackson visited the Queensland Parliament. She was in Brisbane to promote Emily's List, a Labor women's initiative to gain greater representation of women in local, State and Federal Governments. Yesterday the very witty Attorney-General Matt Foley said that one does not have to be a Mel Gibson to know what a lethal weapon the GST is. One does not have to be a Glenda Jackson to know what a touch of class women bring to our Parliament.

Whilst some gains have been made, women are still substantially under-represented in legislative assemblies throughout the world. Some assemblies believe that they are doing well if they have an average of one woman to every ten men. Many assemblies have even fewer women members. There are 11 women on this side of the Chamber and five on the other side. That is an improvement on past years, but it is a mere 16 out of 89 members.

I am honoured to be one of this Government's new women in Parliament. There is no doubt that there is an abundance of eminently qualified women in our community, but why do our Parliaments remain under-represented by women? I do not have sufficient time to canvass all of the reasons for this, but I want to say that political parties will continue to overlook the value of women in Parliament at their peril. It makes both good political sense and it is fair to have more women as elected representatives in our Parliaments. As Labor Leader, Peter Beattie has been very supportive of Labor women candidates. He played a key role in the current increase to 11 women members.

Time expired.
