



Speech by

**Mr L. SPRINGBORG**

**MEMBER FOR WARWICK**

---

Hansard 22 October 1998

**APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL APPROPRIATION BILL**

**Committee (Cognate Debate)**

**Estimates Committee G**

**Report**

**Mr SPRINGBORG** (Warwick—NPA) (4.45 p.m.): In opening I will comment on an issue that was raised in a contribution by the honourable member for Kurwongbah in relation to the funding of some of our shooting organisations around Queensland. We witnessed the beat-up during the Estimates committee process and in the Parliament today about how unfair that was alleged to have been. I support very much the responsibility of Government in ensuring that we have proper facilities for our shooting organisations. In the post Port Arthur period, a lot of our decent shooters went through an extremely traumatic period. I am sure that the Minister would appreciate that. We saw a growth in many of the shooting clubs around Queensland. Those clubs were wanting to put in place decent and proper facilities for their members. It is very important to ensure that, if we encourage people to join rifle clubs, pistol clubs or clay target clubs as a legitimate reason for the ownership of a firearm, we need to ensure that those people have the facilities to properly vindicate their right to use a firearm. That is extremely important. Therefore, I very much support the actions of the former Minister in supporting our shooting organisations around Queensland in obtaining reasonable and decent facilities for their members to use.

I will touch on the Estimates of the Minister for Natural Resources and the Minister for Environment and Heritage. I was a Minister in the Department of Natural Resources for a brief period. That is an extremely challenging portfolio. A lot of people do not realise that, when considering the issues of land titling and the effect of infrastructure development and resource management, a whole range of very interesting and important issues start to come in: for example, the greenhouse response, catchment management and planning, water allocation management and planning, tree clearing, and water management planning as in the case of Cooper Creek. A wide range and a whole raft of issues are involved. From time to time, those issues prove to be challenging.

I hope that the Minister continues the actions of the former Government in relation to the catchment planning process that was put in place by the Water Infrastructure Task Force. We set about properly identifying the sites for new infrastructure in Queensland in areas that could actually sustain dams. We were not just constructing dams or weirs on a whim. I think that process was good, because it leads us to examine the catchments to establish how much water was in them and how many of the projects that may have been suggested for that area could be constructed some time down the track.

The St George issue is challenging for the Minister. Although we still had some controversy, many aspects of what I was putting in place were drawing to a conclusion. I wish the Minister all the very best in getting all the parties together. It is a very difficult issue. In relation to Stage 1, there is no doubt that that can soon be ready to go. In my final negotiations with Mr Cooper regarding Stage 2, I think we were on the verge of reaching a reasonably amicable agreement on a scaled-down version. There were some issues that were no doubt outstanding. That matter had gone on for eight years. How much longer could we let something like that go on for? It has dogged a lot of Ministers. It dogged my honourable colleague and friend the member for Warrego. If we were to sit back and decide to review the issue once again, we would never get anywhere.

I will briefly touch on the issue of the Cooper Creek water management plan and encourage the Minister to continue considering the draft plan that we put in place, which I believe was a fairly good draft plan for consultation. Once again, that issue involved a balancing act. Before we started considering the issue of a water management plan for that area, nothing was regulating the level of extraction other than the normal licensing process. I know that some people in that area have differing views. At least for the first time we recognise that a cap should be put in place with a maximum level of extraction based on a subcatchment basis. That is important. I believe we had in place a reasonable template for the Minister to start with. I encourage him to continue down that line. Obviously the prerogative is his and the department's. In some ways, I believe the process that we put in place was not necessarily appreciated and was unjustly maligned, because it did recognise an important principle.

Time expired.

---