



Speech by

**LINDA LAVARCH**

**STATE MEMBER FOR KURWONGBAH**

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Hansard 21 October 1998

**APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL; APPROPRIATION BILL**

**Committee (Cognate Debate)**

**Estimates Committee A**

**Report No. 1**

**Mrs LAVARCH** (Kurwongbah—ALP) (11.53 a.m.): This is the first time I have been involved in the Estimates committee process of this Parliament.

**Mr Nuttall:** It's an experience, isn't it?

**Mrs LAVARCH:** It is. Even though I was a member of the last Parliament, I came in on the tail end of the Estimates process and was not engaged in it. I have been enlightened by the process. I found that it worked very well.

In speaking to Estimate Committee A Report No. 1, I will raise a couple of matters. In relation to Parliament House, 20 years ago I used to walk past here every day on my way to the QIT Law School next door. I admired the outside and did not come in. Over the years, I attended a couple of functions here, but I did not really appreciate the beauty of this building until I became a member of Parliament. As I sit in this Chamber each day the Parliament sits, a different part of the room always attracts my eye. My appreciation for the building has also come through inviting people into the House to share not only the history but also the architecture and cultural heritage of this place. Seeing it through the eyes of others who have never been here, I find new and interesting things. I have spoken to Mr Speaker about the history of the place. I know that the officers of the Parliament all have interesting stories to tell about the history. Mr Speaker has indicated his desire to put that history on paper and his belief that each member should share some of the history and stories that bring this place to life.

The report states that the previous Speaker, Mr Turner, introduced public tours on Sunday. I know that many of my constituents have availed themselves of that. They welcomed the House being open on Sundays. I commend Mr Speaker for continuing to open the House on Sundays.

In common with other speakers, I will refer to the equipment available to us as members of Parliament. I came into this position after having worked in office positions. Even when working at Legal Aid I had much more technology available to me than I do in the electorate office. When I asked for an industrial stapler or a dictaphone, I was told that a list was put out in 1995 of equipment that members could ask for. If a member did not get the equipment in 1995, there was no possibility of getting it now. I am in an unfortunate position because the previous member for Kurwongbah was a gun shorthand typist. She did not have any need for a dictaphone. She was equipped with much more skill and technology in the office than I am. I suggest an audit of the equipment in every electorate office. There is a huge difference between electorate offices. Perhaps we could have a standardised list of equipment from shredders to staplers and dictaphones.

I would like to have available here in Parliament House as well as in the electorate office a computer for each member and, as the previous speaker mentioned, for additional staff members. I found the need so great that I committed my own funds to providing a second computer in my office. Even though the office's existing computer is not very old, it is so outdated and slow that networking it to the new computer that I bought slows down the whole system. Unfortunately, we have to keep upgrading technology. The same applies to our mobile phones. They are dinosaurs compared with the small models that others have.

Time expired.