



Speech by

PHIL REEVES

MEMBER FOR MANSFIELD

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APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL; APPROPRIATION BILL

Committee (Cognate Debate)

Estimates Committee C

Report

Mr REEVES (Mansfield—ALP) (5.04 p.m.) I am pleased to rise to speak to the report of Estimates Committee C. Firstly, I congratulate the chairperson, the member for Greenslopes, on a sterling job, as well as all the members who participated, the Minister for Public Works and Minister for Housing and the Minister for Transport and Main Roads. I also give a special thanks to the parliamentary staff and the public servants, especially those who at short notice came to the third committee meeting to help the committee out on a couple of questions that needed clarification.

I represent an electorate that has a higher proportion of public housing than many others in this State. For that reason, I take very seriously my responsibilities to those tenants. However, I am also aware that I have an equal responsibility to their neighbours. I am proud to be a member of a Government that accepts that it has a responsibility to ensure that the standards of public housing and the presence of our tenants enhance the quality of life in our neighbourhoods rather than detract from it.

This Government has in the short term taken a number of significant steps to address important issues of public housing. The Minister, Robert Swarten, has made it clear that the very tiny minority of tenants who annoy their neighbours, damage their homes or do not pay their rent will not be tolerated. At the same time, he has declared his intention to do everything in his power to remove the undeserved stigma that still exists in some sections of our community towards public housing.

A small symbol of this is the re-introduction of the gardening competition, which was slashed by the heartless economic rationalists who now occupy the Opposition benches.

Mr Swarten: What a success it's been.

Mr REEVES: Certainly it has. This Government has also seized the opportunity to take advantage of the provision of public works and public housing to extend benefits throughout the community. Those benefits include massive job creation that will extend from my electorate to the regional and remote areas of Queensland. Also, there will be sharply accelerated opportunities for building trade apprentices and trainees.

During the Estimates committee hearing, the Minister assured me and my fellow committee members that 140 apprenticeships, rather than the 90 allocated in the previous budget, will be engaged in the coming year. He also guaranteed that 40 people who will be coming out of their time next year will be retained by Q-Build. This is an important contribution to addressing both the skills shortage in the building industry and the persistent problem of youth unemployment in Queensland.

I turn now to the Department of Transport and Main Roads. The committee heard the Minister's frustration with Federal road funding. During the Federal election campaign, the Prime Minister announced funding for roads. However, a lot of that funding was directed towards the electorates of his coalition mates to help them get re-elected and did not take into account the need for such funding in Queensland. For example, under the Roads of National Importance Program, \$34m was allocated to a

road in the electorate of the former Federal Transport Minister, John Sharp. The road is known as Main Road 92, which is probably a very appropriate name for it considering that the New South Wales RTA report indicated that a massive 92 cars a day use this road! Yet this road has been allocated \$34m worth of Federal funding. So while federally funded roads, such as the Mount Gravatt-Capalaba Road and Kessels Road in my electorate, upon which tens of thousands of cars travel, need major expenditure to rectify present and future problems, funding is allocated to a road that has only 92 cars travelling on it a day.

In that regard, I believe that all the committee members realised the Minister's frustration. Even the former Minister demonstrated his frustration with the previous Federal Government's Transport Minister. Let us hope that the new Federal Government Transport Minister, John Anderson, will rectify those problems and look at needs rather than helping out his mates.

The Transport Minister also referred to the major increase in funding for the Pacific Motorway. I am happy to be going down there on Friday to verify that increase in funding and to look at the motorway's progress. The boost in funding to \$225.1m to fund the continuation of the Pacific Motorway will not only accelerate the progress of the construction of the Pacific Motorway but also increase job creation.

The busways project, particularly the Garden City busway, is of major importance to many people in the Mansfield electorate. The acceleration of that project will be well received by the people of the Mansfield electorate. In conclusion, I thank all the committee members. This report is well worth acceptance by the Parliament.
