



Speech by

**DESLEY BOYLE**

**MEMBER FOR CAIRNS**

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Hansard 27 October 1999

**APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL**  
**Estimates Committee A**  
**Report No. 1**

**Ms BOYLE** (Cairns—ALP) (11.36 a.m.): I rise to address the matters contained in the Budget papers, and particularly in the Speaker's Portfolio Statements. It is an opportunity, of course, for us to recognise just how important are the staff of the Parliamentary Service and, indeed, our electorate officers—especially those who serve country members. Probably it has not been well recognised by those outside Parliament how much we are reliant on the infrastructure and support of all the staff of this Parliament and of the Annexe; how many need to work hours that match our hours, and who do so silently and equitably and fairly to all honourable members. I give recognition to them and to the importance, of course, of the budget for them and for their own stable employment.

Nonetheless, of course, the imperative is in this workplace, as in all others in Queensland, for there to be reviews of efficiency and effectiveness in management. I give recognition to the changes that the Speaker has addressed through the committee that will be made to the organisation of the Parliamentary Service. Indeed, too, I give recognition to his clear statement that these are attempts to improve the service, not to in any way diminish it. And should these changes not be effective in any ways, then they can be further adjusted. This is particularly so with the matter of the changed arrangements for the parliamentary committees. Important as they are to parliamentarians themselves and, thereby, to the people of Queensland, these changed arrangements are an attempt at improvement. Should they, in fact, not succeed, then other arrangements will be made.

I give recognition, too, to the important step taken by the Speaker in the allocation of moneys for upgrades in information technology and telecommunications. Some \$1.3m is provided for this initial stage in the project. It is a costly and yet important initiative, and surely one that we would hope to see continued in further budgets. It is presently somewhat of a surprise to me—having come to this position from the private sector—the limited levels of information technology provided to honourable members. So I am personally particularly pleased to see this upgrade here in the Parliament itself in the Annexe and within our electorate offices, and I look forward to the further roll-out in the years to come.

I recognise the very fine initiative taken by the Speaker in relation to improving revenue generation. This is the way of the modern world, regardless of what business is being considered. It applies to Government as well as other areas of operation. Our parliamentary shop has not been the most exciting little shop in the world. The popularity of these buildings provides avenues for hospitality and other functions. The policy in this regard needs to be reviewed. We need to find ways in which it can be a friendly policy for the people of Queensland. It can provide them with important souvenirs as well as information and records of parliamentary proceedings. It is important that we increase our revenue.

I recognise the continued allocation of funds for the restoration of Parliament House and the Annexe. Recently, I have moved to one of the rooms which has already been upgraded. I must say that it is a considerable improvement. The 1970s decor of my previous room was not as comfortable as the rooms which have been renovated. I now have a bigger desk which enables me to do more work. That is a benefit for my constituents.

Nevertheless, it is a difficult budget—one which requires attention in relation to the stability of the parliamentary service of our electorate officers and their employment whilst at the same time taking account of modern management. We need a balance between restoring what is old and important and part of Queensland's heritage whilst moving towards information technology and telecommunications for the new century. It is a finely balanced budget. I present my compliments to the Speaker and to all of the staff who look after us so very well.

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