



Speech by

DESLEY BOYLE

MEMBER FOR CAIRNS

Hansard 27 October 1999

**APPROPRIATION BILL
Estimates Committee A
Report No. 2**

Ms BOYLE (Cairns—ALP) (12.47 p.m.): In responding to Report No. 2 of Estimates Committee A, I take the opportunity to mention a number of elements of the Budget that have not so far been commented on. I refer in particular to the unanimous acceptance by the committee of the importance and appropriateness of the budget for the Governor and Government House. This is an opportunity to give recognition, staunch republican that I am, to the Governor, Peter Arnison, Mrs Arnison and staff for the excellent job they do on behalf of all Queenslanders.

This is an opportunity also for me to recognise the excellence of the Queensland Audit Office, as shown by a recent audit. That is money that is essentially well spent in order for Government to have integrity. I extend my compliments to the office. Nonetheless, I think it is important for honourable members to recognise the tremendous cost of thorough audits, particularly when they are commissioned through provocative politics. For example, the cost of the recent Gocorp related audit was \$400,000. For the people of Queensland that represents a lot of services they will not be able to access. The audit found, as we all knew it would, no impropriety at all on behalf of the Treasurer or others. That audits not be commissioned on unlikely grounds or irresponsibly is a matter for all members to take into account.

I would like to give particular recognition in the Premier's budget to several of the important programs that are listed, particularly as we now approach the year 2000. \$12.1m is set aside for the Cultural Heritage Trails Network and \$8.5m for projects to commemorate the Centenary of Federation in 2001. These are important projects—important for numerous reasons—because they will be spread across the State and of benefit, therefore, to large and small communities in rural areas, remote areas, regional cities and yes, of course, here in the populated south-east part of our State. They are projects which will commemorate our heritage, protect and conserve our heritage for generations in the future. They are projects which will allow us to celebrate who we are in Queensland in the years 2000 and 2001—projects that will, at the same time, provide many jobs around our State for artists and artisans, tradespersons and others.

I particularly note the \$1m that is set aside within the Premier's budget to review and consolidate the Queensland Constitution. How timely is this also following the work of the Legal, Constitutional and Administrative Review Committee on having our Queensland Constitution, as it were, in one piece, easily recognisable and, hopefully, more easily communicated, particularly in its purpose to all Queenslanders, and particularly to young Queenslanders?

This is also an opportunity to mention again the tremendous job done not only by our Treasurer but also by the staff of Treasury through the move from cash to accrual budgeting. Despite particular concerns nominated by Opposition members, that broader process has been accomplished with apparent ease. Surely, that is a superficial appearance that belies the tremendous effort that has been put in by, I dare say, hundreds of people over many months. In particular in Treasury, I note the Budget allocation of \$5m to assist Government services in the transfer to the Federal Government's GST next year. That \$5m, as well as the millions of dollars of impacts on the private sector, I am not at all

convinced will be well spent and certainly is a reflection of the hardship that we have ahead in transferring to a system that is still ill defined.

I give recognition to the Department of State Development and the Deputy Premier's overseeing of this extraordinary department, which attends to trade and to Queensland's positioning tradewise in the world, as well as looking after small businesses, such as those that are, of course, the core of business in places like Cairns. I note also the reservations of an Opposition member that insufficient is being done by the department in the area of promoting overseas students' opportunities to study in Australia. He has not looked closely enough at the funds devoted through regional economic development organisations and even through the CBD revitalisation project for this purpose.

Time expired.
