



Speech by

PAUL LUCAS MLA

MEMBER FOR LYTTON

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APPROPRIATION BILL, ESTIMATES COMMITTEE C

Mr LUCAS (Lytton—ALP) (3.11 p.m.): In my contribution to the debate on the Appropriation Bills, I referred in some detail to the excellent state of Queensland's finances. The third Beattie Budget keeps our AAA credit status and at the same time delivers a \$29m surplus with a capital expenditure of \$5.2 billion. In my contribution, I spoke about a number of local issues, such as \$1.5m for the Wynnum Court House, \$4.2m for the Queensland Fire and Rescue Academy at Whyte Island, and \$4.5m for the Moreton Bay Nursing Care Unit psychogeriatric and acquired brain injury facilities.

However, it is issues relating to the Transport and Main Roads and Housing portfolios that I want to address today. Within my electorate, there has been strong spending in both portfolios. The Transport portfolio budget for 2000-01 provides \$2.085 billion for roads, \$442m for rail, ports and aviation, and \$192m for transport, special projects.

I would like to take the time to highlight a number of important issues in the Ministry of Transport and Main Roads. I was delighted to see that the Brisbane Airport rail link project is progressing extremely well. Each time I drive along the Gateway Arterial—which I do often—or go to the airport, I see the construction progressing further and further. On completion of this project, the trains will run at 15-minute intervals between 5 a.m. and 11 a.m. There has been significant Queensland Rail involvement in the project, with the provision of track work, overhead power and communications. After 35 years, this project will be handed over to the Queensland taxpayer. So that is a very good, positive involvement of Government with the private sector in relation to a project that is really needed.

In relation to the building of electric train rolling stock, some \$47m is being spent in Maryborough for 33-car suburban multiple units and \$27m for some interurban multiple units, which will be used on the airport rail link. So not only are we continuing to invest money in rolling stock; that rolling stock will also be used for the airport rail link. The construction of that rolling stock also creates jobs. I know that the Labor Party candidate for Maryborough, Alan Holmes—who, hopefully, will be the member for Maryborough after the next election—is extremely interested in developing that community, working hard and being part of a Beattie Labor Government that will develop even further the community of Maryborough.

The port motorway is also located within my electorate. Some \$23m has been allocated for Stage 1 of that project. The total project cost is some \$121.3m. As the Minister said in the Estimates committee, it is one of the most important infrastructure projects in Queensland today. It is of critical importance that Queensland's largest port in terms of containerisation has adequate transport links to it. We have excellent transport links to the west through the electorate of the member for Logan—the Logan Motorway connecting to the Gateway Arterial—but then we have that terrible bottleneck between the Gateway Bridge and the port. A significant amount of money will be spent on that project. A significant amount of money will also be spent within the Port of Brisbane Corporation itself to develop the port, which is also located within my electorate. I note that the Minister also indicated that duplication studies will be undertaken in the future in relation to the Gateway Bridge. The bridge is so successful that there will be a need in the future to have some expansion of those facilities.

I want to make a brief contribution in relation to the Public Works and Housing portfolio. The Minister has always been focused particularly on service delivery. He has concentrated very heavily on seeing what the battlers in Queensland need and realises that an investment in social infrastructure is a

real investment in the future. People who think that they should ignore social infrastructure are dead wrong, wrong, wrong. In particular, I would like to highlight some of the matters that the Minister advised the committee of, including the Housing Industry Trade Training Scheme. The Government has established that scheme with \$9m funding over four years to provide a further 600 building construction apprenticeships. An excellent project in Ernest Street, Manly, where quality public housing was built, was undertaken through the Housing Industry Trade Training Scheme. So we got the double-header: we got quality housing built and we got young Queenslanders receiving training to get a job. That is what it is all about.

Similarly, I noticed the glib comments by the shadow Minister with respect to names and so on in relation to the Roma Street parklands. We delivered in relation to the Roma Street parklands.

Time expired.
