



Speech by

**VAUGHAN JOHNSON**

**MEMBER FOR GREGORY**

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Hansard 4 & 5 October 2000

**TRANSPORT (BUSWAY AND LIGHT RAIL) AMENDMENT BILL**

**Mr JOHNSON** (Gregory—NPA) (5.39 p.m.): The purpose of Transport (Busway and Light Rail) Amendment Bill 2000 is to amend a raft of transport legislation to specifically provide for the construction of busways and light rail facilities, including the associated infrastructure.

The Transport Infrastructure Act 1994 is the main piece of legislation to be amended, to provide for the acquisition of land to allow the building of the infrastructure in question. The Transport Operations (Passenger Transport) Act 1994 is to be amended to provide for the appointment of authorised officers in association with light rail. Amendments are also proposed to the Transport Operations (Road Use Management) Act 1995 to regulate the vehicles which are to be permitted upon or have access to busways and light rail land established under this legislation.

This Bill also seeks to amend the Transport Planning and Coordination Act 1994 with respect to the acquisition, lease and disposal of land used for light rail and busway purposes. Importantly, this Bill also seeks to amend compensation entitlements which relate to properties associated with busways and light rail. It is the provisions regarding compensation which are most controversial and which have already been subject to adverse public comment about the Government's actions.

The Minister has indicated that these provisions are based upon those provided for other infrastructure in existing legislation. As I will indicate in some detail later, there are indeed some important deviations from existing legislation that I would have thought were self-evident. It has been said that the provisions are exactly the same as those in other existing legislation. If that were the case no-one, including the coalition, would be asking these questions. However, there have been questions in the media about the failure of the project and considerable concerns among the tenderers for the project.

The tenderers were required to outlay very considerable capital in preparing tender submissions, which have required a number of last-minute variations and additions. In answer to repeated questions on notice the Minister advised that the tenders would be let in the first quarter of this year, while all along I and others predicted that the gutting of the original Briztram project would make it unviable.

As predicted, that is exactly what the tenderers told the Government. What concerns me and others is that the impact of the variations made by the Beattie Labor Government were never going to stack up, and I am disappointed to think that the Department of Transport persisted with the myth when everyone else knew that it was folly.

I hope the Minister will inform the House as to why we are considering this legislation as such. Much of the legislation that is before the Parliament today is quite straightforward, but some aspects of it have already attracted public concern. They are matters which I have indicated the Opposition will oppose.

This afternoon the Minister presented me with a lot of amendments to Bill. I hope they will clarify some of the Opposition's concerns. The Minister told me at 5 o'clock this afternoon that he signed off on those amendments this morning and had them circulated. I hope that after we subject the proposed amendments to closer scrutiny we will find that they will put to bed some of the Opposition's concerns. I am aware that the Property Council has concerns about this legislation.

Before commenting on the legislation in some detail, I believe it is appropriate for me to comment on the projects which have led to this legislation being introduced. The first one upon which I would like to comment is the failed light rail project. Since his appointment to the ministry, the Minister has been boasting that the light rail project would be superior to the Briztram project, an initiative of the Borbidge coalition Government. The basic question that the Minister has to answer is what has happened to this project. One thing we know about it is that the \$65m of Federal funding is in the balance. Every Queenslander is concerned about that. I hope that the Minister and his Government are endeavouring to ensure that we secure that \$65m in Federal funding for Queensland because it was earmarked for Queensland projects. I trust it will be spent on Queensland projects.

It is one thing to mislead the public of Queensland about a project, but what is more concerning is that the tenderers, who were required to jump through hoops and spend ridiculous amounts of money—up to \$3m each—to meet the Minister's deadlines, now find that the Minister could not meet his own deadline. When the tenderers made inquiries to find out what was happening they discovered that no-one would talk to them. This is an unfortunate scenario. In the meantime, contractors who had tendered for the project were attending public functions where the Lord Mayor of Brisbane was telling anyone who wanted to listen that he had scuttled the light rail project. This is professional vandalism at its best. It is appalling to think that we have a City Council and a State Government of the same political persuasion who cannot sort out the differences in their policies on a very important matter. I believe that the light rail concept would have addressed a lot of the concerns of Brisbane residents.

Whilst the Minister and I have great confidence in the Integrated Regional Transport Plan document—

**Mr Bredhauer:** It's a pity the Liberal leader doesn't.

**Mr JOHNSON:** Well, I certainly do. The point I am making is that the IRTP is a document that was put in place to address some of the concerns that we are raising in relation to this legislation. When we speak about the IRTP, we are talking about allowing people to be able to plan their futures by letting them know what is ahead of them in the next 25 to 30 years in the south-east corner of the State. It is important to remember that that document was put in place so that people could have security over their investments in the future. It was important that people knew where they might be in 25 or 30 years' time and not have the construction of infrastructure tearing up their backyards or their communities.

**Mr Bredhauer:** So where did the member for Moggill get his hare-brained idea from?

**Mr JOHNSON:** I suggest that the Minister ask about some of those concerns. We are talking about the light rail Bill and other amendments to transport legislation. I have spoken with the member for Moggill about a lot of issues concerning Brisbane and south-east Queensland. Some of those issues concern the progression of better transport corridors throughout Brisbane and the south-east areas of the State. The member for Moggill is quite concerned about that matter.

Instead of making negative comments about this issue, I believe it is imperative that we make constructive comments and arrive at an outcome that will address the problem. We do not want to have the problem that Sydney encountered 25 or 30 years ago. We know that Melbourne is encountering the same problem at the present time. We have an opportunity to get it right the first time. I thought that is what we were trying to do with the IRTP.

As I was saying, contractors who had tendered for the light rail project were at public functions where the Lord Mayor was saying that it had been scuttled. Finally, the Minister had to come into this House and admit that the project had been scrapped. However, he still refused to admit that it was his changes to the project that had sounded its death knell. I questioned the Minister about the prospect of compensation for the tenderers, who had spent millions of dollars responding to the tender documents. I refer members and others to an answer given by the Minister in this House on 18 July 2000 in which he said—

"There were no tender documents. The member for Gregory is wrong that there was a tender process."

I had to rise on a matter of privilege to read to the Minister the words used by the department that confirmed that there had in fact been tender documents and a tender process. The next day, the Minister had to come into the House and, in weasel words, admit that there had in fact been tender documents and a tender process.

During the Estimates hearings I asked the Minister how much had been spent on the light rail project and if any provision had been made for compensation for tenderers. The Minister could not answer the cost question then but advised that he had spoken to the representatives of the companies and that none of them specifically requested compensation from him. Perhaps the Minister may take the opportunity in responding to this issue to advise if this is still the case.

One thing on which I can update the House is the cost of this mismanagement by the Minister. It is appropriate that today we are discussing the light rail Bill because I can tell honourable members that the light rail bill is \$12m. That is how much the Beattie Labor Government has cost the Queensland taxpayer for its head-in-the-sand, can't-do mismanagement.

Every day in this State we keep seeing evidence of the Government's lack of progress in announcing new projects. These are projects that would take up the slack from such magnificent exercises as the Pacific Motorway. I hope we can get the port road firing before too long. However, it certainly will not take up the slack. The City/Valley bypass is another excellent initiative. Again, it certainly will not take up as much of the slack as we would like to see from the Pacific Motorway.

**Mr Bredhauer:** I'll tell Santo you said that the inner-city bypass was a great initiative.

**Mr JOHNSON:** It is a good initiative.

**Mr Bredhauer:** I am sure Jim Soorley will be pleased, but I'm not sure that Santo will.

**Mr JOHNSON:** It is a good initiative; it is one that we always wanted to see happen. I do not think that is a funny remark at all. I will say this: one thing that we certainly want to see is prospects put in place to address some of these anomalies that are crippling Brisbane. We only have to look outside this House now to see the traffic crawling up Alice Street and on the motorway adjacent to the river. Those sorts of scenarios are what we are trying to eliminate. We are trying to put in place a good through-flow concept that will produce the type of traffic management procedures that we need in this State.

It is appropriate that today I update the House on one thing. We are discussing issues that in time the Minister should be made aware of. The business community had very serious reservations about the financial viability of and the consequential impact on the light rail project. The primary reason for proposing a light rail project for Brisbane was to reduce private vehicle usage in the city and its environs. One of the most important routes in this regard was the link to the University of Queensland, which the Minister junked as a favour to his friend and colleague the member for South Brisbane. I have to say here this evening, and I hope that the Minister takes this on board, that I believe that one of the most important aims of the IRTP is to try to educate people to take advantage of public transport. There is no better place to start than with our young people.

My son, who has just completed four years at university here in Brisbane, does not own a motor car, and he has never used any other means of conveyance than public transport or a pushbike. I believe that is what we should be trying to get our young people to do, to adopt that practice. If they adopt it at a young age, when they work in the city or the inner suburbs they will adopt it through their work life. I believe that our public transport concept is certainly a way of trying to get vehicles off roads. We talk about the environment and about other aspects, but at the end of the day I have to say that if we get our young people to use this method of conveyance we are certainly addressing the issue of traffic choking Brisbane and places such as the Gold Coast, and even the Sunshine Coast with the population explosion expected there in the next 10 or 15 years. Despite the Government's mismanagement of the Brisbane light rail project, opportunities still exist for such projects in the future.

I will applaud any such initiatives in the future that address public transport issues in this part of Queensland. We talk about the viability of these projects. We see private enterprise entering into a deal to provide the Citytrain link to the airport. That is certainly one project that many of us are waiting to see come to fruition.

I wish to touch on the success of the Olympic Games in Sydney. My son and I went down for the Sydney football grand final a few weeks ago. When I got off the plane at Sydney airport I was very impressed that I was able to walk a few metres and get on to an electric train to go into Central Station, where I got off the train and took another train out to Stadium Australia for the grand final. The reverse applied for coming home.

On my return to Brisbane I wrote to Carl Scully, the New South Wales Minister, and congratulated him and his Government on such an excellent concept. It worked well and I believe that it worked just as ably during the Olympic Games. The number of people who went to Stadium Australia was probably three or four times the number of people who went to the grand final. This proves that we can put in place infrastructure that will address the needs of the general public. As I discovered at Stadium Australia that day, it was only about half an hour from the end of the game till we got on the train. By the time we got out of the stadium and walked to the railway station, we waited a couple of minutes to be marshalled on to a train and then ultimately arrived back at the airport. Those in motor cars would probably have been there for the whole night. That could possibly have led to road rage and other types of atrocities that we do not want to witness on our city streets.

Again, it comes back to patience. The general public has to be aware that what we are trying to achieve is a transport system that will facilitate the travel of patrons. They need to exercise patience

and have the understanding that it is not possible to get from one side of a major city to the other in a matter of five minutes.

**Mr Bredhauer:** Did you have as much fun at the game as you did on the train?

**Mr JOHNSON:** I will take that interjection. I did not go to the Games, I went to the Sydney—

**Mr Bredhauer** interjected.

**Mr JOHNSON:** But I will say that the Sydney grand final was an excellent exercise, one that both my son and I enjoyed immensely.

There is one point I want to make here. I think it is important to make the point that, although the trains in Sydney have double-decker carriages—and possibly in time we will see that type of vehicle used on the urban system here in Brisbane, too—only a very small number of people had to stand on those trains because of the close scheduling of trains—five minutes apart. I believe that during the Olympic Games the scheduling of trains was even more frequent. I think that we have to give credit where credit is due. This is what we are trying to achieve no matter where we are.

One of the major concerns expressed by the Brisbane community relates directly to the provisions of the Bill, that is, the disruption that is likely to be caused by the construction of major infrastructure such as busways and light rail systems. The other aspect of the light rail project that caused considerable community concern was the impact that projects of this type are likely to have on existing traffic networks. There are two aspects to this concern. The first is the impact upon the traffic during construction and the other is the operational consequences. I note that in his second-reading speech the Minister indicated that some concerns had been raised by the Property Council and that a further briefing had been arranged. The briefing must have been a ripper if the result was the scrapping of the project. I have to say again that I hope the Minister has some good news for us in the not-too-distant future about what will happen with light rail in Brisbane and south-east Queensland. I can assure the Minister that I think that many parts of this city certainly can take advantage of that light rail concept.

One has only to read the legislation before the House to see that what the Property Council was and still is worried about boils down to one thing: compensation. The Bill that we are considering places considerable limitations upon the compensation available to land-holders who are affected by the types of infrastructure projects encompassed by this Bill. What this legislation does is limit that compensation by ruling out all compensation except for those matters that are specifically detailed. I have to add here that tonight we raised these concerns in a briefing by departmental officers, for which we are truly appreciative. This evening the Minister has circulated a list of amendments that will address this compensation issue. I have not yet had a chance to scrutinise them but I will have more to say about that as we progress tomorrow.

**Mr Bredhauer:** I'd be happy to make the departmental officers available tomorrow if you've got any questions after you've had a chance to read the amendments.

**Mr JOHNSON:** I thank the Minister for that.

**Mr JOHNSON** (Gregory—NPA) (11.30 a.m.), continuing: Yesterday evening I was speaking about the concerns the Opposition had in relation to compensation. I am happy to see that the Minister has now endeavoured to address that issue. I believe the Property Council of Queensland still has grave concerns about the compensation issue. I seek the Minister's assurance that there has been proper and full consultation and that the council should have no further concerns. I am amazed that no further consideration has been given to compensation for the impact on property owners during the construction phase. Yesterday evening the Minister said that he would have his departmental officers give us a briefing. Unfortunately, this morning we were not able to take advantage of that. But we certainly will be listening with interest to the Minister's reply and to his comments on the clauses to see whether this has been addressed and whether it has been canvassed properly.

What the Minister said during his second-reading speech is worthy of further consideration. As usual, sometimes this Government listens and sometimes it does not. Sometimes it does not say what it really means. Some of issues canvassed in the Bill are significant for the ongoing viability and prosperity of businesses. What about the Government's 5% unemployment target? We should not be wreaking havoc through the planning process. We have to get the planning right, whether it be in relation to Briztram, busways or any other type of infrastructure, transport related or otherwise.

In his second-reading speech the Minister referred to the key features addressed in the Bill, such as tenure, public utility interaction, compensation entitlements, accreditation of light rail managers and provisions for incident management and aspects governing preliminary investigatory works. Interestingly, these aspects referred to by the Minister applied only to the light rail provisions and not to the busway provisions. In his speech the Minister said—

"... compensation is not provided ... for a loss of amenity or any interference with an activity of a business, commercial, industrial or residential nature".

This statement by the Minister seems to relate to the proposed sections 180ZG(2) and 180ZZS(2), both of which clearly state that the matters which are not compensatable are—

- "(a) the adverse affect on the amenity or likely amenity of the neighbourhood of the relevant land; and
- (b) interference with an activity of a business, commercial, industrial or residential nature carried out on the relevant land; and
- (c) loss or damage arising directly or indirectly from interference with access for the relevant land; and
- (d) the reduction or loss of a right of access for the relevant land and loss or damage caused by the reduction ..."

It would be improper for me not to raise these issues today. As I said earlier, I will be waiting for the Minister to comment on those clauses, because we believe they are very important. I am sure that upon his revisiting the legislation the Minister will see their importance. In both cases, the compensation relates only to the physical access to the property, but this applies when the project has been completed. We await the Minister's comments. The Minister has already admitted that there have been substantial cost blow-outs in the SET Project. This includes as yet unquantified delay in the provision of the transit lanes between the Logan and Gateway Motorways.

A major concern of this Parliament is the withdrawal of common law rights in relation to damages incurred during the construction phase of a project. This is a departure from fundamental legislative principles, because it is affecting common law entitlements. The reason for these provisions, which the Minister avoided in his second-reading speech, is outlined in the Explanatory Notes, which basically state that because these claims are hard to calculate and could be quite extensive it is necessary to abolish the right so that a defined budget for a project can be implemented. I am amazed that the Minister would raise the accuracy of the budget predictions by his department, because we have already discussed the department's recent noticeable failures in this regard.

The coalition questions this rationalisation and contends that there is a far greater cost to the community if these rights are abolished. There is not just a cost to the economy through the businesses and jobs that are likely to fold because of disruption during the construction phase of these projects. By the same token, the coalition understands that the Government leaves itself liable to open slather legal claims by every business that would like to blame any downturn in business upon the Government. And we have witnessed that in relation to the construction of the Pacific Motorway and other major projects around the State. The important thing to remember is that there should be full and proper consultation. We learnt that lesson with the Pacific Motorway. It is a lesson that probably many honourable members have learnt. The former Labor Government learnt about what happens when there is a lack of consultation in relation to major capital works. We all saw the angst that created for the former Goss Government.

It is most important to recognise that everybody has a right to be heard and to make a claim so that they can protect what they believe is rightfully theirs. Everyone should be given the opportunity to gain a fair understanding of what is trying to be achieved. We suggest that it might be appropriate to put in place a review process that addresses the concerns of any business operator or resident who claims to be disadvantaged during the construction phase to ensure the project team is showing due regard to legitimate concerns. I think that the Minister would have to agree with that. It is an issue that needs to be looked at very, very closely. If that happened I think it could avoid a lot of heartache in future not only for Governments, departmental officers and construction companies but also for those people out there who want to be given a fair go and exercise their rights to be heard.

As I touched on in this House yesterday evening, it is only right that we recognise what we are trying to achieve with the IRTP. I certainly support that totally, and I know the Minister questioned me yesterday afternoon about what I thought about it. I will not resile from that. The important factor is that we keep talking about the importance of it so we can get the best value from the document. A lot of people think that that document is set in granite. I think it should be stressed and made known publicly that it is a document that has flexibility. If it did not have flexibility, it certainly would not achieve the objectives that it was put in place to achieve in the first place.

I also note that the Alert Digest states that one of the often occurring criticisms of this legislation is that there are no appeal mechanisms provided in relation to a number of areas. One example is where the chief executive exercises his power to enter land. I ask the Minister to consider the establishment of an appeal body to review matters of this type. Such an appeal body may also be appropriate to review cases of dissatisfaction with access arrangements, etc. during the construction phases, as I have just said.

Since the legislation was introduced, busway construction has become more topical with the news that the first stage of the inner-northern busway has also been scrapped by this can't do Labor

Government. Yesterday I touched on the Brisbane/Valley bypass. While that is a very significant route, one for which we have been waiting for a long time, and I am pleased to see it start, there are certainly going to be complications at the other end of that bypass in terms of accessing areas such as Breakfast Creek. Because widening cannot be carried out there, how is the congestion going to be eliminated?

That was one of the issues that I asked the Minister to address. I am not playing politics with this; I am stating a point today that is very valid and that causes me concern. I hope that the connector road at the other end is not going to become a bottleneck. That is the one concern that we have. I can see the Minister grinning.

**Mr Bredhauer:** You didn't have a talk to Santo overnight, did you?

**Mr JOHNSON:** No, I did not, actually. No doubt he will make comment, too. I know he is on the list of speakers. I did not speak to the honourable member for Clayfield overnight.

I am now going to talk about the inner-northern busway. I do not know what the state of play is now in relation to the \$65m payment from the Federal Government. I hope that we can secure that money and that it can be spent in Queensland to play a significant role in some of these transport infrastructure programs that we are trying to initiate to alleviate problems within the south-east, whether it be in the City of Brisbane or in other major centres in this region.

Despite his protestations that everything was proceeding normally, the Minister finally had to admit to the House that the contract for the essential link between the Queen Street bus tunnel and the Normanby had met the same fate—the scrap heap—as the light rail project. The consequence is that buses wishing to access the inner-northern busway will now have to use Adelaide, George and Roma Streets, which means that northern suburbs buses will now be diverted down the already seriously congested Roma Street precinct.

This proposal makes a complete joke of the inner-northern busway. I predict that the journey for express buses from the Queen Street bus tunnel to the northern suburbs is likely to take longer than the current route. Also, Roma Street will not be able to adequately handle the increased bus traffic. Roma Street is already a disaster in the afternoon peak hours. With increased bus traffic, it now has every chance of becoming known as the Steve Bredhauer Car Park, but I hope that does not become a reality. That is not because I do not want to see a car park named after the Minister, but because at the end of the day we are trying to put in place something that is going to work, not something that is going to fail.

I assure the Minister that there would be a bipartisan approach on this because I believe that, considering their magnitude, cost and purpose, we have to make absolutely certain that these capital works programs work. That is something that I have always given an assurance on. We are talking here about taxpayers' money, something to which I believe we have to give some serious consideration.

I understand that the Minister has indicated that he has taken on board my reservations about the compensation provisions under this legislation and has circulated some amendments, which I will touch on again during the debate on the clauses. The Minister and his staff were kind enough to provide me with a briefing about some of the other issues which the Minister proposes to address in the Committee stage. The first relates to the busway acquisition and the need to again validate the acquisition process. One of the first things that the Minister introduced into the House was retrospective validating legislation in relation to the South Bank property. If I recall correctly, at that time the Minister also advised that this legislation was necessary because the legal advice gained at the time of acquisition was incorrect. We now have a similar situation in which there is some doubt about the acquisition of other SET property. I am sure that this is a significant issue for the department. I must express my concern that that is the second example of the department getting incorrect advice. Obviously this is not a matter that the Minister or the department is directly responsible for, but I would like the Minister to respond to this issue in his summation, because it appears to be an ongoing matter of concern.

On a similar note, I am advised that there are also legal deficiencies in the marine legislation which require validation, and validation is apparently also going to be included in amendments to the Bill in the Committee stage. I also note that the amendments in Committee will make provision for legitimisation of certain aspects of the integrated ticketing project and the Citytrain initiative. I am advised that this amendment will be necessary to ensure that the cooperation between the various transport providers necessary to bring about the integrated fares does not breach aspects of the Trade Practices Act.

I must express concern about the use of the Committee stage to introduce legislation which is obviously so different from the aims and objectives of the amending Bill. It would be very wrong of me if I did not put on record today that this legislation has now been on the table of the House for some five months. As I say, I am concerned that the Minister presented these amendments to us in the House

only yesterday. I believe that we should have seen some of those amendments in their entirety before yesterday. I believe that, because of the complexity of this piece of legislation, it should have had more exposure to the general public to put to bed any concerns they have. I express that concern again, because we are denied the opportunity to consult the affected stakeholders. It seems that this legislation also avoids the Scrutiny of Legislation Committee. I know that it had some reservations about some aspects of it, too. I would like the Minister to advise the House which stakeholders have been consulted about the amendments concerning the exemption from the Trade Practices Act and also what consultation he conducted in relation to compensation.

As I said, this Bill has sat on the table for the past five months. The excessive use of amendments to the legislation at the Committee stage provides an opportunity to introduce legislation that cannot be properly scrutinised in the accepted manner; that can result only in bad legislation. I hope that is not the situation in this case. The other day the Minister for Environment and Heritage brought into the House 65 pages of amendments to the Water Bill on the morning of the day the Bill was scheduled for debate. I need the Minister's response to some of the other issues that I have raised before I will be in a position to recommend support for this piece of legislation.

Whether it is applicable to just the south-east corner or the whole of the State, this transport infrastructure legislation is a very powerful piece of legislation. I believe it is a very good piece of legislation. We certainly do not want to see amendments made to the Bill that will be misunderstood by the general public. We have to make absolutely certain that that does not occur, that the purpose of legislation is there for the benefit of the general public.

Yesterday we heard the Premier say in answer to a question in relation to the foot bridge across the river that the cost has blown out from \$13m or \$14m to \$17m or \$18m. I believe there are more pressing issues which that money could be used for. I also heard what the Premier had to say in relation to the use of that bridge and why the cost had blown out. I again put on the record the fact that there was a cost blow-out with the Pacific Motorway. I am well aware of that. We can be critical of each other's policies and projects, but when there is a blow-out in the cost of a project I believe the general public should be told the truth of the matter. It should not be hidden from them through embarrassment to the Government or any department. The general public is not silly. They become aware if there is a problem. If there is a problem, we should be honest about it.

I now turn to the South East Transit Project. As I said to the Minister before, it is about getting it right the first time. I will make certain of that. That is why more money had to be spent on the Pacific Motorway; I recognise that tomorrow will be a great day. The prime objective of all major capital works programs in Transport and Main Roads, and any other department for that matter, is to create something which is world class. We are talking about transport corridors and future initiatives which will give this State the ability to develop, grow, prosper, create jobs and create a quality of life for its citizens.

The opening of the Pacific Motorway tomorrow will be a symbolic occasion. I congratulate all and sundry for the great work and effort they have put into this motorway over the past four years. It is a magnificent project, one that I and every other member in this Chamber is very proud of. I want to put on record the hard yards put in by the project manager, Bob Higgins. It would be remiss of me if I did not mention him. He has done a very able job. He is a very able engineer. He is a very able negotiator. I think he is an absolute champion. He has been subjected to many hardships and personal traumas during this project, not unlike Don Steele during the SET Project. He is also doing great work.

I also recognise the work done by departmental heads such as Dick Wharton, my director-general when in Government. I thank him and his departmental officers for their great work and advice. Mr Jim Varghese then took over as Director-General of Main Roads. Currently, Main Roads is headed by Steve Golding. Under the stewardship of Steve Golding, these great projects will continue.

**Mr Sullivan:** There are a lot of good officers, aren't there?

**Mr JOHNSON:** Absolutely. I salute the Minister's choice of a director-general for Main Roads. Steve Golding is a very able man who will do a great job. Main Roads will be rewarded for having him as its steward. In closing, I say to the Minister that we will be waiting anxiously to hear his response to what I have raised about amendments and therefore reserve the right to support the legislation in question.

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