



Speech by

Hon. PETER BEATTIE

MEMBER FOR BRISBANE CENTRAL

Hansard 11 December 2001

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Royal Visit

Hon. P. D. BEATTIE (Brisbane Central—ALP) (Premier and Minister for Trade) (9.43 a.m.), by leave: The good news continues. What a can-do government!

Mr Mackenroth: What a can-do Premier!

Mr BEATTIE: I am too modest to accept that. It gives me great pleasure to inform the House that Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth is to visit Queensland. It was confirmed on Friday that the Queen will visit Brisbane, Coolumb, Cairns and Kuranda during her visit to Queensland at the beginning of March. It was also announced that the Duke of Edinburgh is to accompany her and that he will make a special trip to Roma as well.

One of the downsides of the 11 September tragedy and the subsequent postponed CHOGM was that Her Majesty's royal visit to Queensland was also postponed. It is now excellent news that another royal visit has been rescheduled, even if slightly reduced. I am delighted that, even though the royal visit has had to be cut from four days to three, each of the communities that was on the original itinerary for October will receive a visit.

In addition to the royal visit to Queensland, the Queen will also be here in her role as head of the Commonwealth to open the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in Coolumb on Saturday, 2 March. While Her Majesty is at Coolumb the Duke of Edinburgh will visit Roma. The Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh are due to visit Cairns on Friday, 1 March and Brisbane on Sunday, 3 March.

I am delighted that, despite the duration of the royal visit having to be curtailed due to the rescheduling of CHOGM and Her Majesty's existing commitments, none of the communities that were expecting a visit have been disappointed. It means that the Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh will be able to experience very different parts of Queensland and that people from those regions will have an opportunity to welcome them personally.

The royal party is scheduled to arrive in Brisbane on the evening of Thursday, 28 February and depart late in the afternoon of Sunday, 3 March. I am advised that the final program is still subject to confirmation by Buckingham Palace and many of the details have yet to be finalised, but the highlights include a people's reception at Roma Street Parkland on Sunday, 3 March, a ride on the Skyrail from Kuranda and the launch of a new Royal Flying Doctor Service plane in Cairns. We are holding a people's reception instead of an indoor state reception because it gives everyone a chance to come along instead of limiting the invitations to a privileged few. We expect carriages from the Great South Pacific Express will be available to carry the royal party from Freshwater station to Kuranda.

Further details will be announced as they become available. It is indeed an exciting time, and I am sure that all present will join with me in extending a typical warm and friendly Queensland welcome to the Queen and Duke.