



Speech by

PHIL REEVES

MEMBER FOR MANSFIELD

Hansard 21 June 2001

BUDGET DEBATE 2001

Mr REEVES (Mansfield—ALP) (6.55 p.m.): Madam Deputy Speaker—

Mr Briskey interjected.

Mr REEVES: Yes, this is my last speech as a single man. I must admit to the House that, stupidly, on Wednesday, due to circumstances beyond my control, I drove in to Parliament House. I was stuck in the traffic on the freeway instead of being on the world-class South East Busway.

Mr Briskey: What, the No. 1 ticket holder?

Mr REEVES: As the No. 1 ticket holder I was ashamed of myself. While I was upset at my stupidity, the journey was made bearable by the radio comments about the budget. What I heard was that it was a budget for the grassroots, a budget for the basics—health, education and jobs—and a budget for the Labor heartland. And as a Labor member, one could not ask for better headlines to prove to me that the Deputy Premier had done a first-class job in delivering his first budget. I only hope that my performance on Saturday will be as good as the performance by the Treasurer in his first budget.

This budget is definitely about the basics. This budget is definitely about the basics for Mansfield: health, education, jobs, housing, crime prevention, transport and main roads. The reducing number of patients waiting for elective surgery and oral health services, the \$35.7 million for the Princess Alexandra Hospital redevelopment and the \$7.5 million for the Logan Central community health centre are the key initiatives of the budget from which the residents of the Mansfield electorate will benefit. I notice the Minister for Health in the chamber. I congratulate her on getting those initiatives into the budget, especially the \$5 million in oral health services, which will have a major bearing.

Mrs Edmond: A smile on your face.

Mr REEVES: With a smile on my face. This budget shows the Labor government's commitment to health, with a record recurrent \$4.06 billion allocated, as well as \$364 million for the capital works program.

Education lies at the heart of the Beattie government's vision to make Queensland the Smart State. Our government has delivered a record \$43 billion to education in Queensland, including \$253 million for capital investment and a 9.1 per cent increase in state funding to Queensland state schools. There is a total of \$732,289 in total capital spending on education in the Mansfield electorate. This includes the initial \$444,380 of the \$769,000 allocated for the Mansfield State High School renewal program; the initial \$70,500 of the \$141,000 allocated for the admin upgrade at the Mansfield State High School, which was an election commitment delivered; \$150,000 for a single space relocatable and the hire of temporary accommodation at the Mansfield State School; and \$51,009 to complete the construction of the covered area at Wishart State School, which was a commitment that former Education Minister Dean Wells, now the Environment Minister, gave to the people of Wishart in September. That covered area and activity centre, which will be opened in the next couple of months, are vitally important for the kids at the Wishart State School because they need a place to hold their assemblies. I know that some of the cabinet ministers have seen the performance of the Wishart State School at the community cabinet meeting held in the electorate in September. Now their performance will be even greater, because they will have that covered area.

Further spending in the electorate includes the initial \$35,000 of the \$350,000 allocated to refurbish the Mount Gravatt East State School. Other education highlights which will have a major benefit to my electorate include the extra \$22.8 million for students with disabilities, including \$15 million for teachers and teacher aides, and the \$18.2 million boost to IT for students and teachers, so that by the end of 2001 every Queensland state school will be connected to the Internet. A total of 135 additional teachers will be employed in 2001-02 as part of our commitment to an additional 800 teachers over four years, and \$50 million will be provided for the Triple R maintenance program over three years.

Sitting suspended from 7.00 p.m. to 8.30 p.m.

Mr REEVES: This will be the second part of my final speech as a single man. Before dinner I was talking about the benefits of this budget for education. It is probably appropriate that at dinnertime I went to the retirement function for Alan Druery, a constituent and also a close family friend of my mum and dad. I went to school with Alan's son. I congratulate Alan on his contribution to Catholic education and his major impact on education in general. As the minister said today in her ministerial statement, all members appreciate Alan's efforts. I congratulate him and wish him a happy retirement, even though he will go and work for the Archbishop for a period.

Under this budget the Queensland government will create a \$100 million Smart State Research Facility Fund to help overcome the shortfall in research and development investment in Australia. The new fund will invest in world-class research facilities and provide an opportunity for Queensland industries to improve their competitive advantage through innovation. This is the latest step in our commitment to ensuring that Queensland is the Smart State of Australia. It complements the government's \$270 million biotechnology strategy, which began in 1999.

When we talk about the Smart State, TAFE is very important. It is good to see the Minister for Employment in the chamber. The 2001 state budget allocates \$43.2 million for training delivery at the Moreton Institute of TAFE. It provides \$885,000 to commence the refurbishment and upgrade of facilities at the Mount Gravatt campus. I have had a look at this campus. It is world renowned for its fashion students. The facilities in which they learn certainly need to be refurbished. This upgrade will contribute to the positioning that the Mount Gravatt campus has as the centre of excellence for engineering, automotive and fashion studies. A further \$515,000 has been allocated to provide refurbished office accommodation at the Bayside campus. I must compliment the Bayside campus. I am a former graduate of the Moreton Institute at Bayside when it was the old Redlands Community College. What a great institute. Other budget investments for the Moreton Institute of TAFE include \$393,000 to purchase major equipment and \$329,000 for minor works. The institute has campuses at Mount Gravatt, Bayside, Wynnum and the city as well as skills shops at the Carindale and Alexandra Hills shopping centres.

The budget allocation for the Brisbane south and Gold Coast region in the area of employment and training includes \$1.46 million to assist an estimated 640 people through a community training partnerships project. This program funds communities to identify their current and future employment needs and to purchase the appropriate training. There is \$5.45 million for the Community Jobs Plan projects that will provide an estimated 471 long-term unemployed people with paid work experience.

One such Community Jobs Plan is being coordinated by the Mount Gravatt Training Centre. They had one program last year for about \$155,000, and they have been approved for another project in a similar amount. For the member for Mount Gravatt—the Minister for Families—and me, this is one of our really great achievements in our last term. We were lucky enough that the Mount Gravatt Training Centre came on board. We got the community groups together. The outcome was many projects that are benefiting our whole community. We have had improvements to the Mount Gravatt Showgrounds as a result of the Community Jobs Plan as well as improvements to Mount Gravatt soccer, Mount Gravatt East State School, Mount Petrie and Southside Community Care. This will be ongoing. There are other groups. I know that St Catherine's, where I am getting married, is involved in it as well. Mansfield State School is looking at being involved, as are a number of other community groups. It is a great program because not only does it train the long-term unemployed but also there is a major benefit at the end for the local community. All members should get their local communities involved in this great Community Jobs Plan.

There is an estimated \$600,000 for the new Get Set for Work program, a one-year program to provide intensive employment and training assistance and a wage subsidy to help unemployed early school leavers aged between 15 and 24, and \$500,000 for the new Back to Work program, which provides Jobsearch and introduction information technology training to unemployed mature age people over 45. Since the Breaking the Unemployment Cycle initiative began in October 1998, the Brisbane south and Gold Coast region has received a total of \$41.4 million.

When you talk about training, you talk about Q-Build. The state budget allocation of \$6.2 million guaranteed the trade training future of 398 apprentices currently employed by the Department of Public Works' maintenance arm, Q-Build, including 85 headquartered at Mount Gravatt. Their headquarters is

in my electorate. The budget subsidy offsets the cost of Q-Build taking a lead role in building industry training. The trade training takes place right across Queensland, from Thursday Island to the border. That is our commitment to skilling Queenslanders wherever they are. We have 73 apprentices learning their trade in the Brisbane city branch at Milton and 85 apprentices at the Mount Gravatt based Brisbane metropolitan branch. It is a commitment that will pay dividends in the economic returns made through these tradespeople's careers in years to come.

One of the big news items of this budget was the delivery of an election commitment that we gave to the Rochedale South community, a new area that I have in my electorate. That community is set to benefit from the Beattie Labor government's commitment to community policing, with the announcement that it will receive a new police beat—a delivered election commitment. The Police Beat program has been highly successful across Queensland because it has encouraged closer cooperation between the police and the community. I know that the Rochedale South community will welcome this new police facility, which is part of our continuing bid to be tough on crime and tough on the causes of crime. It is a welcome initiative and an example of the Beattie Labor government's continuing support for our region.

Police beats mean that communities can get to know their local police—the old country cop style of policing. It is reassuring for these people to see more police on the beat, and this increased police presence in itself is a great deterrent to crime. I believe the Police Beat program is fostering a cooperative partnership between communities, police and local government. This is a sensible approach because these groups are striving for the same things: the prevention and the reduction of crime.

In the area of Transport and Main Roads, there are some great wins for the electorate of Mansfield. \$1 million has been approved for a federally funded planning study to be undertaken for the upgrading of the Ipswich Motorway to Gateway Motorway section of the National Highway. There is \$2 million for a planning study for the upgrading to six lanes on the federally funded section of the Gateway Motorway between Mount Gravatt-Capalaba Road and Nudgee Road. The million-dollar planning study is well overdue. I have been in this House many a time and talked about the problems of Mount Gravatt-Capalaba Road and the number of trucks that are using it. The federal member for Moreton does nothing and tries to politicise the issue, rather than getting in and trying to assist and looking for long-term solutions. His quick solutions will not do anything for the people in my area. This study will involve a lot of community consultation, and it is well overdue. I look forward to playing a part in it over the next 12 months.

There is \$1.25 million to complete the asphalt resurfacing on the \$2 million project on the South East Freeway between Gaza Road and Logan Road inbound and to the gateway outbound. There is \$250,000 to install traffic lights at Palmdale Shopping Centre on Logan Road just near the police station. With my office being just around the corner from there, I often see the elderly in particular trying to cross Logan Road to get to Garden City. I fear what is going to happen. These traffic lights will have a huge impact for them, because there are a lot of retirement villages just nearby. There is a \$40,000 provision for an indented bus and car pick-up/set-down area at Rochedale High. This is in conjunction with the Brisbane City Council. A similar facility will be constructed at the Mansfield State School. I know that both of these schools are really looking forward to improving the safety of their students going to and from school.

An amount of \$37,000 has been allocated for the provision of bikeways in various locations within the Redland shire and a similar amount has been allocated for Logan city. In relation to public works, there has been an allocation of \$550,000 for upgrading to ATSI housing. There has been an increase in funding to the Mount Gravatt district Home Assist/Home Secure program—which is a great service and I know that the member for Mount Gravatt has a keen interest in this as well—from \$200,000 to \$370,000. This is a great service for those people, especially elderly people, who do not have the wherewithal to undertake work around their properties such as changing light bulbs or installing security. This is a great service and it is great to see that this budget continues to support it.

There has been an allocation of \$2.4 million for general upgrades of housing in the Brisbane south region and, in the Logan area, an allocation of \$2.6 million. Also the budget contains construction valued at \$460,000 in public works and, in the Mansfield electorate alone, \$771,000 has been allocated to maintenance.

This budget also continues to reform child protection with a further funding boost of \$18.2 million provided for an additional 50 child protection workers. That includes \$5.7 million on a recurrent basis and \$2.5 million non-recurrent funding for child protection, family support and youth justice services. This year's budget operating expenditure for the Department of Families was \$335 million—an increase of \$36.6 million. That shows our commitment to families. An additional \$6.3 million has been allocated to individual packages, increasing the total number of adults who have received support under this program to over 1,000. There is also an expansion of post-school services for 160 young people with high support needs. This budget will work to improve the things that are vital

to all Queenslanders, such as health, education, housing and crime prevention, and will also provide opportunities for skills training jobs and economic development.

An area close to my heart, the sport and recreation industry, injects \$1.9 billion a year into the Queensland economy and employs more than 40,000 people. Some members opposite, such as the member for Nanango, have complained about Lang Park. Events held at that stadium will create jobs. When tourists come from far and wide—and even people from the Nanango electorate will come—to attend an event at the stadium, no doubt they will stay in Brisbane for a few days. That means jobs, jobs, jobs. Sports and recreation is an essential part of the Australian way of life, especially in the Sunshine State.

Through initiatives such as those contained in this budget, the Beattie government will work to ensure that Queensland retains its reputation as the sporting capital of Australia. Some of these initiatives include the continuation of the popular Thanks Coach, Thanks Ref campaign, about which I know the Minister for Sport and Deputy Premier is passionate, and \$500,000 for a new initiative to encourage parents to be involved in sports administration. As a former volunteer sports administrator, I know that we must try to convince parents to become more involved in their children's sport because without volunteers children's sport would not be able to continue. This program will include forums, workshops and training, resources, sport and the continued development of coaches, instructors and officials and volunteers. An amount of \$1.5 million has been allocated to a campaign to encourage more people to get up and be active to kick off the push to boost participation in physical activities by five per cent across-the-board over the next five years.

It is my pleasure to congratulate the Treasurer and Deputy Premier on an excellent job in delivering his first budget. In both the Logan paper and the *Courier-Mail* the day after the budget was delivered, it was stated, 'It is a budget for Labor heartland. It is a budget for the basics. It is a budget for the grassroots. It is about health, education, jobs and crime prevention.'

I congratulate the Treasurer on an excellent job. I am sure that the Treasurer and Deputy Premier will present to this House many more budgets in the years to come.
