



Speech by

Hon. STEVE BREDHAUER

MEMBER FOR COOK

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APPROPRIATION BILLS—ESTIMATES COMMITTEE C

Hon. S. D. BREDHAUER (Cook—ALP) (Minister for Transport and Minister for Main Roads) (5.17 p.m.): The member for Gregory must have been at an estimates committee meeting different from the one I attended, because there he was, all meek and mild and eating humble pie all the time and being very nice, yet he has come in here today—

Mr Johnson: I asked you questions and you didn't answer them. How many of them did you answer?

Mr BREDHAUER: Ever single one on both portfolios. Obviously, the member took his angry pills before he came into this place, with his chest all puffed up to give me a bit of a towelling up, and he thinks that he has done a great job.

Let me start where he finished. I have a confession to make. The member for Gregory and the *Courier-Mail* are right. The cost of the tilt train project is \$138 million. The tilt train is going to take 26 hours to run between Cairns and Brisbane. Services are not going to start until 2003 after we take delivery of the units in 2002. I am very pleased that the member for Gregory and the *Courier-Mail* have finally twigged to the fact that those facts are true about the tilt train. Do members know why I am pleased that they have twigged to that? Because I put out a press release, which said in part—

The two new trains, to cost \$138 million ... Travel times between Brisbane and Cairns are likely to be cut by more than five hours to 26 hours.

And—

The new trains are expected to come into service in late 2002.

Do members know when I put out that press release? On 2 August 1999! The second anniversary of that press release is tomorrow. Yet today we are debating it. The member has been up and down the coast of Queensland whipping up apathy —

Mr JOHNSON: I rise to a point of order. The former coalition government and the former Goss government put in place a \$650 million upgrade of the main line. That was part of the operation between here and Cairns. The minister has had to go and spend now probably in excess of about \$400 million to upgrade that northern line so that he can run the tilt train. The minister should add that on to the bill.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN (Ms Phillips): Order! There is no point of order.

Mr BREDHAUER: Madam Temporary Chair, he is taking my time and that is not fair. He has been up and down the coast of Queensland, whipping up apathy for the last 48 hours. I will tell members what they did in Bundaberg. The local newspaper sent someone down to the train station to meet the tilt train. Everybody said, 'The tilt train is fantastic.' They went to Rockhampton and asked the people what they thought about the tilt train. They said, 'We think it is fantastic.'

Mr JOHNSON: I rise to a point of order. I made no mention of the tilt train from Brisbane to Rockhampton. I am talking about the concept from Rockhampton to Cairns. I ask the member to withdraw.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN: Order! There is no point of order.

Mr BREDHAUER: I withdraw. The tourism industry in Cairns has been onto me, wanting to know when they can get the promotional material for the new tilt train. The tourism industry in Mackay has

been onto me. The only person who is out of step in this march is the member for Gregory. He does not want us to provide services to the people in regional Queensland. Up and down the east coast they are waiting for it: in Mackay, Townsville, Ingham, Innisfail and Cairns. All the member opposite can do is knock, whinge, whine and carp. While he whinges, we work. I am working to deliver it.

I am pleased that the member has finally discovered what I issued in a press release two years ago tomorrow. I offer my congratulations to the investigative journalists from the *Courier-Mail* who have suddenly tumbled to something that I published in a press release two years ago. At that time I went to Walkers and I met the 200 workers there, 80 of whom who have been employed directly as a result of this project. I have been found out by the member for Gregory. I told him at the estimates committee meeting last year, I told him at the estimates committee meeting the year before, and I told him at the estimates committee meeting this year. I put out a press release about it and it has finally sunk in. After all that time, it has finally sunk in.

I wish to talk briefly about an issue affecting my electorate. A group of people on Thursday Island petitioned me about a small-boat facility, the Idabu pontoon. They say that it is not big enough and needs extension. Unfortunately, that petition was not in an appropriate form to be tabled in Parliament. About 250 of my constituents signed the petition. I want them to know that I have received it and have had discussions with the Torres Shire Council. As part of our maritime budget we are seeing if, along with a range of other maritime priorities that the council is looking at, we can do something about that. I appreciate their concerns. Everybody on Thursday Island owns a dinghy, as the member for Burnett knows. He spent about half an hour in my electorate before he got an invite to go fishing. I want these people to know that I am chasing that up for them.
