



Speech by

Hon. Kevin Lingard

MEMBER FOR BEAUDESERT

Hansard Wednesday, 8 August 2007

APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL AND APPROPRIATION BILL: ESTIMATES COMMITTEE G (REPORT NO. 1)

Hon. KR LINGARD (Beaudesert—NPA) (10.07 pm): I have already thanked the committee, but I would also like to congratulate the Speaker on the way that this particular section of the hearing was carried out. Personally, I would like to congratulate the Speaker on his performance in this very challenging role to date. I also congratulate and thank the Clerk of the Parliament, who has been cooperative at all times, and also members of the Parliamentary Service.

In relation to the lifts, I knew the people who had looked at the plans of the Parliamentary Annexe. They were Bob Moore and Sel Muller. Whilst they joked about it, they made an honest mistake as far as the lifts were concerned and that needs to be recognised if the situation has to be fixed. They looked at the side elevations and saw the two lifts. They looked at a plan and they saw lifts at both ends. What they did not realise—and I do not know why the plans did not show it—was that one lift did not go to the top. They thought they had built two lifts going up to level 23, but unfortunately one of them only went to level 6.

Regardless of the fitness of members of parliament, at 5.30 and 6.30 in the afternoon when people are going through to the barbecue section and we have a division, as we always do on a Wednesday night at half past six, it is impossible for those lifts to work properly. This morning when the bells did not work on level 10 there was a problem with members getting to this chamber. At some time or other someone has to bite the bullet and fix up those lifts. There are many external lifts built on buildings now. As I say, it was an honest mistake and Sel Muller and Bob Moore would laugh about it if they were here because they were the ones who did not read the plans correctly.

I agree with the member for Toowoomba South as far as the staff in this parliament are concerned. Staff and members can put up with the concerns that we have with people who are not experienced serving at the tables. However, when members bring visitors in to the Strangers Dining Room for a meal some of the performances of the people who are clearly casual staff are quite embarrassing. It would not be too bad if the casual staff were here for a while and got used to the procedures. But it seems to me that there are continually new people. Whether this is the policy because the parliament only sits for three days a week, I do not know. At one time all ministers had to conduct their dinners in this House. They did not have dinners outside. They were all catered for by the parliamentary staff. I suppose then we could employ staff permanently. There are one or two staff here who seem to have to look after these young people and, quite honestly, they themselves are run ragged. I think that sometimes it is simply not good enough.

I asked the Speaker about school based apprenticeships within this parliament. I am not talking about ordinary apprenticeships. I know that we do have a couple of apprentice chefs in the kitchen. I am talking about school based apprenticeships where people are able to come in for one day and work in the IT section or work in the canteen. This House would be an excellent venue for school based apprentices. I know the Speaker knew what I was talking about. I hope that that is carried out.

The other thing I want to talk about is the video broadcasting system. I have been concerned sometimes that this House has allowed outside photographers to come in to take photos in the parliament and not only when the parliament is working but also before the parliament starts. There is one typical

example at present of a former member who is shown in the media asleep in the parliament. That should never have occurred. The agreement clearly is that if photos are taken in this House by official photographers or the media they should be of the person who is speaking, not someone else. I wonder whether any action has been taken because that particular photograph of a former member has certainly been in the media twice. I am afraid that if we do not check that then that photo is going to continue to be shown. I think it is wrong.

I believe there is work around the parliament that should be looked at such as with the gardens. I know in the present conditions that the gardens are just not watered. The front garden of Parliament House does need some sort of action and the pipes covered up. Surely some material could be brought in to cover that garden in this period of no watering.