



Speech by

Hon. Paul Lucas

MEMBER FOR LYTTON

Hansard Wednesday, 21 February 2007

MOTION: BEATTIE LABOR GOVERNMENT

Hon. PT LUCAS (Lytton—ALP) (Minister for Transport and Main Roads) (6.02 pm): It is wonderful to follow the member for Maroochydore, because it gives me great pleasure to point out how much money was spent on roads on the Sunshine Coast when her party was last in government—\$50 million under the Borbidge government. This year, this government will spend \$190 million and \$466 million over the next two years. So I am more than happy to compare her government's road expenditure in her region with that of this government, of which I am privileged to be a member.

This year, we will spend \$3.98 billion on transport infrastructure, including \$1.98 billion on Queensland's roads. I will remind members of how we perform compared to the other states. We spend twice per capita on roads than do the Victorian and New South Wales governments. We return 177 per cent of road registrations; the Commonwealth returns 19 per cent of its fuel tax. When it comes to road funding, we lead Australia. Members only have to pick up the *Australian Financial Review* and the southern newspapers to read that that is the case. When the *Courier-Mail* and the Local Government Association, on their own objective tests, show how the Queensland government performs, then the opposition has absolutely no credibility in this place.

At the moment, the Tugun bypass—a \$543 million project—is halfway towards being completed. In fact, the other day we broke through in the tunnel. The federal government is contributing \$120 million to this project. Let us see the colour of its money when it comes to the rest of the work that is required on the Gold Coast. This government has \$400 million on the table for the next stage of works that we want to do on the M1. In terms of the Gold Coast rapid transit project, \$550 million has been committed. This government is working with the Gold Coast City Council to get a great outcome for that city in terms of the trunk route up to Brisbane and also the internal route.

The duplication of the railway track from Ormeau to Coomera is completed. The third railway track from Salisbury to Kuraby is under construction. The second railway track from Helensvale to Robina is under construction. The new trains—the first of the 72 carriages—have already rolled off the line at EDI Bombardier and are due to be in revenue service in the first part of this year.

The extension of the Centenary Highway from Springfield, to Ripley and to Yamanto, at a cost of \$270 million, is underway, and is expected to be completed in mid-2009. In terms of the Gateway Bridge upgrade project, at a cost of \$1.9 billion, the federal government deserted the Queensland taxpayer. The contract has been signed. Leightons is building it. There will be a progressive opening from mid-2007 to 2011, including the early work that will be done on Wynnum Road. I will be there shortly with the Brisbane Lord Mayor to mark a milestone in the joint funding of that work.

I turn now to the extension of the Inner Northern Busway. On the weekend there was a protest about public transport. I thought, 'Of all the places to have a protest about public transport, why was it held outside Parliament House?' The protesters should have gone to Canberra, because the federal government exited from capital funding for public transport when it was elected in 1996. Of course, the protesters could not go to King George Square and hold the protest there as it is a construction site, because this government is building public transport. The protesters could not go to the Roma Street

Forum, because the government is building public transport there. The protectors could not go to Boggo Road, because the government is building public transport there as well. The Inner City Busway will take buses off the city's streets. It will connect about 300 trains with about 800 buses every day. Today I announced the final alignment of the Eastern Busway for community consultation. It is a wonderful project.

The member for Maroochy had the cheek and the embarrassment to talk about the planning of this government. What does she think the South East Queensland Infrastructure Plan is? No other state has done such a plan. Again, when that plan was released Queensland was recognised as being unique in Australia. Indeed, when people come from overseas—as they often do and I talk to them—they think that it is incredible that we have a 25-year plan, including guaranteed funding by Treasury for the first 10 years, not just in the forward estimates of the budget. I thank Peter Beattie, Terry Mackenroth and Anna Bligh for their commitment to the funding of that plan.

Mrs Reilly: They never did it.

Mr LUCAS: That is right. The members opposite can see only short term. With the M1, as good a project as it is, they were absolutely panicked into building it. That is why its budget went through the roof.

Mrs Reilly interjected.

Mr LUCAS: It is a great project, but in terms of talking about planning along guidelines, the opposition had to scramble about and do something when it scrapped the koala road.

There is \$284 million worth of work being done on the Sunshine Motorway. There is pile-driving being done across the Maroochy River at the moment. The Regional Bridge Renewal Program is taking place in most of the electorates of National Party members. The program is increasing mass limits on bridges, thereby increasing the productivity of heavy vehicles. At the same time, under that program the government is replacing timber bridges with concrete bridges, which is good for the environment.

The Bundaberg ring-road is a wonderful project that will improve access to the port. In Mackay, this government is replacing the Forgan Bridge and the Hospital Bridge. It is also constructing the east-west interconnector on the Mackay-Bucasia road. This government has completed stage 1 of the Townsville port access road. We now want a commitment from the federal government for stage 2. We are waiting for planning approval from the federal government for the upgrade of the Kuranda Range Road. We are asking the federal government for money for the Peninsula Development Road. The upgrade of that road is critical for the people in that part of the world.

In relation to the southern missing link for Queensland's coal industry, conditional exclusive project mandate status has been signed off. The proponents can now proceed with that. Of course, in relation to the northern missing link, we have acquired the corridor. In the past, a non-planning government would say, 'This is a private sector thing. You go and see us when you are ready to do it.' But we sat down with the coal industry and we asked, 'How can we work together to progress this?'