



Speech by

**Michael Crandon**

**MEMBER FOR COOMERA**

Hansard Thursday, 5 August 2010

---

## **APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL AND APPROPRIATION BILL: ESTIMATES COMMITTEE D**

**Mr CRANDON** (Coomera—LNP) (12.30 pm): Regarding Estimates Committee D heard on 16 July chaired by the member for Brisbane Central I intend to make comment on a question asked by the member for Hinchinbrook of the Minister for Disability Services and Multicultural Affairs. Before I do I need to give a little bit of background. On 17 November last year I attended the AGM of the Ethnic Community Council of Queensland on behalf of the shadow minister, the member for Hinchinbrook. It was a dark and stormy night and the Premier was guest speaker. Eventually the opportunity came for questions. Towards the end of questions Stefan Armbruster, a journalist with *News & Current Affairs SBS Australia*, asked the Premier—and I paraphrase—‘Can the Premier explain why there were no multicultural awards this year?’

A little background is needed there, too. There have been multicultural awards every year since 1990. The Premier looked stunned and confused. Imagine what the dark and stormy night was conjuring up in the Premier’s mind. Imagine the scenario: there we are at the AGM of the Ethnic Community Council of Queensland; the Premier has been waxing lyrical for 20 minutes or so about how much the government cares for the broader membership of the ECCQ; there they all were, many of the people who represent the multicultural communities in this state, and they are looking up at the Premier standing on the podium and waiting for her answer to this very important question for the multicultural community. To say the Premier was stunned is an understatement. She looked to the member for Mount Ommaney, who we all know is the parliamentary secretary for Disability Services and Multicultural Affairs.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Ryan): Order! Member for Coomera, I have given you a little leeway. The question before the House is whether or not the Estimates Committee D report should be agreed to. I ask you to come back to the question before the House.

**Mr CRANDON:** Her response was words to the effect that it had already happened. However, what did we find occurred towards the end of proceedings?

**Mrs Miller:** Does it matter?

**Mr CRANDON:** Yes, it does, absolutely. If I could be given a little leeway, it does come back to the question.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Member for Coomera, the chair has asked you to come back to the question before the House and I ask you to be relevant in accordance with the standing orders.

**Mr CRANDON:** Absolutely, thank you. A Mr Hogan was in the room. Mr Hogan is a representative of the minister, and he indicated that in fact there was going to be an announcement regarding the awards for 2009 very shortly. Now let us fast forward to Estimates Committee D. The member for Hinchinbrook as shadow minister put a question to the minister referring to page 322 of the SDS and said that one of the services is the undertaking of the Queensland Multicultural Awards on an annual basis. He noted that on that very day the minister announced that nominations were open for the 2010 multicultural awards for

Queensland. Then the shadow minister asked the minister to advise the winners of the 2009 Queensland Multicultural Awards. In part, the minister said we did not actually have the awards last year. Surprise, surprise.

Last November we had a Premier completely gobsmacked by the question from a reporter, we had a parliamentary secretary who thought the awards had been held and we had a deputy director-general from Disability Services and Multicultural Affairs, Michael Hogan, who said—

Premier, there is something in the works and there will be an announcement made soon regarding the multicultural awards.

Ultimately there was no announcement. I would suggest that the deputy director-general knew there would not be. He was getting his bosses off the hook in what was a very sticky position.

**Mr Dick:** Gotcha! He has got us. Stop the pressure.

**Mr CRANDON:** That is the attitude of that side of the House. That sort of attitude of 'gotcha' is because for 18 years those awards had been given and without a word from the Premier, without a word from the minister, they were cancelled, they were scrubbed out. For 18 years in a row it was policy and 18 years down the track not one word. And what is the attitude of those opposite? Gotcha! Absolutely gotcha because at the end of the day they were not announced because they were never going to happen and those opposite were just sliding it through. But they were caught out yet again. It is quite typical of this organisation. He was getting his bosses off the hook, but do members know what? So what! That is what we have come to expect from this government each and every day.