




Speech by

John-Paul Langbroek

MEMBER FOR SURFERS PARADISE

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APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL AND APPROPRIATION BILL: LEGAL AFFAIRS, POLICE, CORRECTIVE SERVICES AND EMERGENCY SERVICES COMMITTEE

 **Mr LANGBROEK** (Surfers Paradise—LNP) (4.27 pm): It is my pleasure to rise to speak to this estimates committee report related to the budget of 2011-12 and to note with interest the Committee of the Legislative Assembly's first report about questions asked at the hearing by the different committees. I want to thank the honourable member for Murrumba, who chaired the committee on the day in the absence of the honourable member for Springwood. We certainly had a lengthy hearing. Under the general observation section in my report that is contained within the report itself I have commented that we do think more time could be allocated, especially in the area of police.

In relation to the number of questions asked, I was pleased that, along with my colleague the honourable member for Kawana and the Independent member for Maryborough, we asked the second highest number of questions of a committee. I think it is salient to note that the reason we were able to ask the 379 questions that we asked is that we did not ask the ministers many questions. We asked 30.6 per cent of questions of the ministers—that is the Attorney-General and the police minister—and we asked 69.4 per cent to the director-general and to the other officers.

There were three reasons we did this. If we asked the officers a question we would get a real answer and you do not get a political diatribe, which is especially what we get from the Attorney-General. If we ask the officers we get a succinct answer. We do not ever ask the police minister questions because he says that he is only responsible for procuring funds in his portfolio and is not responsible for the provision of services by the various sections in his portfolio, whether it is Police, Emergency Services or Corrective Services. Then he says that we are criticising the people in his portfolio on the front line, as we heard in this place this morning.

Mr Roberts: Back to Bjelke-Petersen days—telling the Police Commissioner what to do, when to do it, where to put police—the dark old days of Bjelke-Petersen. That's what you want to go back to.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Elmes): Order! Minister.

Mr LANGBROEK: I hear the police minister now saying that we want to go back to the days of the Bjelke-Petersen government. It is appropriate that we look at the Police Service Administration Act, which we questioned the minister about at the hearing. It states that there are supposed to be communications between the minister and the commissioner—the commissioner is supposed to furnish the minister with reports and recommendations—and that the minister, having regard to the advice of the commissioner, will also then give in writing directions to the commissioner. These reports should be recorded and published, given to the CMC and then reported to this place. We got confirmation from the minister that he has never given any reports to the commissioner.

He is obviously having some sort of 'nudge-nudge, wink-wink' relationship with the commissioner or else he is not giving any directions about areas like the Gold Coast, where we have crime that is almost out of control. It is obvious that if the minister is not complying with the Police Service Administration Act—we

are not seeing any evidence of any communications between the commissioner and the police minister. Yet that is something that came out of the Fitzgerald inquiry. Instead, we have the political games again coming from the police minister saying that he does not have an inappropriate relationship with the Police Commissioner. No-one is asking about whether it is inappropriate, but it is obvious that on the Gold Coast the minister has not even been able to provide the funds necessary for our police districts.

At the hearing we asked about the details of district funding, and the answers showed that there was \$11 million taken out of the Gold Coast, Logan and Coomera districts over the last two years.

Mr ROBERTS: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order.

Mr LANGBROEK: Can you stop the clock, please?

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Stop the clock. The member will resume his seat.

Mr ROBERTS: Mr Deputy Speaker, the member is deliberately misleading the House. He knows that the budget for all of the districts in the Gold Coast region—which is the south-east region—have in fact increased over the period of time that he is talking about.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: There is no point of order, Minister.

Mr LANGBROEK: Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker. I refer to the minister's own answer to our question taken on notice. It states that the south-east region district expenditure is less than the district expenditure reported for 2008-09. I will leave it there.

On other issues, I have already mentioned issues about police policy directions and accountability. We also dealt with the issue of police recruitment. While we have had 280 extra officers in the last two years, the number of police receiving the operational shift allowance has declined from 7,396 to 7,347. There are real concerns about the lack of knowledge about sex offender movements from interstate. Statistics on drug use among offenders on probation and parole show that, of 14,000 on probation and parole, we had over 6,500 positive urine tests for illicit substances. Numerous issues were raised about assaults and violence in prisons.

Finally, to do with the flood inquiry, the minister's response to the flood inquiry's damning criticism of the Queensland Fire and Rescue Service response to its inquiry shows that he needs to do more than be a procurer of funds. It is not good enough to say that there has been miscommunication or that information may not have got to the commission. The commission says that the service has been unwilling or unable to provide this information.

(Time expired)