



Speech By
Patrick Weir

MEMBER FOR CONDAMINE

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APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL

APPROPRIATION BILL

Consideration in Detail (Cognate Debate)

Appropriation Bill

State Development, Natural Resources and Agricultural Industry Development Committee, Report

 **Mr WEIR** (Condamine—LNP) (12.42 pm): I rise to speak to the committee report as the deputy chair of the committee. I do not need to go into the statement of reservation as the chair has given that a bit of a run for me so I will leave that aside. Reading the chair's report one wonders whether we were at the same hearing. This report is a glowing endorsement and that is not exactly how I recall it. There were some very long, rambling questions to government ministers—Dorothy Dixers—which they read out with great aplomb, I must give them that. They played their part.

The ministers gave very long, lengthy, rambling responses. There were a couple of interesting things. The minister was asked about Adani. We have noticed the government's change in tack in relation to Adani. In the last sitting of parliament before the federal election we heard a lot of anti-Adani speeches and speeches on the black-throated finch. I have not heard the black-throated finch mentioned since the federal election because there is another threatened species that those opposite became concerned about: the extinction of the Labor Party in the north. That was suddenly the extinction they were worried about. Adani was approved and suddenly the black-throated finch was left to its own devices.

That is in direct contrast to a mine in my electorate called Acland stage 3 which the minister was asked about. It has been 13 years in the making and it is still ongoing. Yesterday I presented two petitions to the Clerk from concerned residents and workers at those mines. There are 150 staff who will be laid off next month. They are coming into my office showing me the messages on their phone that they are in the firing line to lose their jobs next month. This government has to make a decision regarding Acland. Fifty-two trains a week leave that mine to go to the Port of Brisbane. It is vitally important to the district.

The agriculture minister was asked about prickly acacia. Before the election there was \$5 million coming from the federal government and \$5 million coming from the state government for the control of prickly acacia. The federal government has put up its \$5 million, but the state government's \$5 million has gone wanting. Last week in my office I had Andrew Drysdale from Desert Channels. He brought along some photos, which I will table.

Tabled paper: Bundle of photographs depicting prickly acacia in the Lake Eyre Basin [1284](#).

These were taken in the Winton-Julia Creek area. They show an outbreak of prickly acacia which is waist high. This is the largest germination of seed of prickly acacia that we have ever seen. This is in the headwaters of the Lake Eyre Basin. It is making its way down that stream with the floodwaters. People who go out and visit Lake Eyre will be going out to visit scenes like those shown in the photographs if this government does not step up and provide some funding. I asked Andrew Drysdale how long it will be before those plants flower. He said they will flower within four months. There will be seed on the ground within six months. This will be one of the greatest environmental disasters that this country has seen. The minister needs to step up when it comes to this \$5 million promised before the election. Time is not our friend as far as this is concerned. This is time critical. We need to get on the ground and take control of this right now.

The minister is very happy to support reef regulations, anti-farmer vegetation laws and other attacks on our farming community. It is time that he stood up and took control of this. Fire ants was another issue that was raised. The fire ants continue their march to the border. There is a lot of money being spent for very, very little outcome.

Despite the chair's report, there were many questions asked during those hearings that were not adequately answered. I thank the non-government shadows who came along and sat in on the committee and did ask some very good questions. Unfortunately the answers were not good responses to the questions.