




Speech By
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MEMBER FOR CHATSWORTH

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APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL (NO. 2); APPROPRIATION BILL (NO. 2)

 **Mr MINNIKIN** (Chatsworth—LNP) (3.47 pm): The problem with socialism is that you eventually run out of other people's money, as we all know. I rise to make a brief contribution to the Appropriation (Parliament) Bill (No. 2) 2019 and the Appropriation Bill (No. 2) 2019. Whilst I am not opposing these bills—we have made that clear—it would be remiss of members on this side of the chamber if we did not take the opportunity to talk in relation to the economic mismanagement of those opposite. By way of background, we note that in September 2019 the Deputy Premier, Treasurer and Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships, Hon. Jackie Trad, introduced the Appropriation (Parliament) Bill (No. 2) and the Appropriation Bill (No. 2) into the Legislative Assembly. The bills were referred to the relevant Economics and Governance Committee et cetera and here we are today.

I also talk a little bit of history. In the contributions of those opposite, plenty wanted to talk about history. We will do just that. We will go right back to the Goss government which previously I said was not a bad government economically. I have made that statement before and say it again today. We then moved into the Beattie era. Then we had the treasurer many of us on this side of the chamber thought took the No. 1 gold award in terms of being absolutely bereft of economic thought processes—Andrew Fraser. We now have a new contender for the prize. We all are looking at the member for South Brisbane. Does she even know the basic accounting equation? The Treasurer of this state is more fixated on political survivability than fiscal management. As the member for Mermaid Beach said, typically all governments need this sort of appropriation bill. If we return to the recent history of 2014-15, \$12 million out of a multibillion dollar recurrent state budget was sought. What figure is this government seeking with these appropriation bills? Around about \$1.4 billion.

The problem is that every time a budget is handed down, in rank order starting with the Treasurer obviously and working their way down in hierarchical order of senior ministers, they all get up and start their contribution by saying, 'And Mr Speaker, Mr Deputy Speaker, I am so proud that this is a record investment in'—insert their relevant portfolio. We hear it all the time.

There is no problem with that. For a start, with the CPI one would expect that, but the problem is: where is the money being spent? There has been a series of ministers and in particular the Minister for Transport and Main Roads, and why would he not want to get involved in this debate? Let us look at what that \$1.4 billion is comprised of when Queensland Treasury provided the following amounts to the committee of the unforeseen expenditure by department. The Department of Transport and Main Roads is virtually just under \$700 million alone—that is, just that particular department. It was very interesting to sit here when moments ago the Minister for Transport and Main Roads preached about what is going to be spent and what those opposite are going to do. What have they done? Let us put something on the record which we know has not been done. That is, an audit report of November of the year before last showed conclusively that backlog maintenance on the 33,300 kilometres of state controlled roads was \$4 billion. The question was then refreshed at estimates last year. It was \$5 billion. Where is the money going? That is the problem. That is the rub here.

In terms of where the money has gone, we can go back through a little bit of recent history because we have the A to Z list of Labor waste such as eHealth project blowouts worth \$256 million, but I will zero in on the one that I think typifies where this government stands in the general community—that is, fiscally and economically a complete and utter joke. My favourite from the A to Z list of Labor waste is the app that was developed for fat dogs. That typifies in one statement where this government is so wrong. It defies logic and credibility that we are in this position, because all I heard during the last sitting of parliament and today is those opposite carping on about selling, selling, selling.

If those opposite want to talk about history, let us talk about history. In 2010 and 2011 many of those opposite were working for their favoured union before they got their dream jobs, yet they need to understand why we are in this current position and why some tough love had to be administered economically from 2012 to 2015. I am staring at the member for Woodridge right now. Back then, being the man of principle that he was, he was the member for Greenslopes, but he got a little bit of a holiday—a three-year holiday—but he obviously came back, being the man of principle, and moved into Woodridge. He was part of the cabinet decision tree, so let us talk about the history that got us into this very position which has rolled forward to today.

Back in 2011 those opposite sold Queensland Motorways for \$3 billion. Where did that go? What about the Abbot Point port that was sold for \$1.8 billion—nearly \$2 billion—in 2011? Where did that go? QR National was sold for \$4 billion—a cheque for \$4 billion. What have those opposite done with that money recurrently over the last several years? Absolutely zip! We have unemployment, bankruptcies and terrible NAPLAN results. As for 'rail fail' and as for the Minister for Transport and Main Roads—the minister who calls himself a rookie minister with rookie errors and the one who was referred to by the CCC as 'foolish'—what has that minister done with this money? He has squandered it and then he comes back here and wants more—nearly \$700 million more. Why is that?

When we keep looking back, those opposite even flogged off Forestry Plantations for a lazy \$600 million. That was not bad, was it? When it came to selling assets in the north, those opposite made sure that they did it on behalf of all of Queensland all right, because it was not just in South-East Queensland. Going north to Mackay and Cairns, they flogged the airports for \$738 million—nice if you can get it—and then they sold the Brisbane Airport for \$289 million. If you go through and add all of this up, including of course—there were no sacred cows—Golden Casket, they got a lazy, paltry \$530 million.

What did those opposite do with the money? All we know is that they get up and talk about record numbers and record programs, but when the tar hits the bitumen they are nowhere to be seen. We just need to look at the track record of those opposite. We are now in a situation where it is not about the money. It has moved on from fiscal principles to one of political survivability. Those of us on this side have no doubt, as we have already begun to see today, that we will see the member for Woodridge jostle with the member for Cooper. We know that the mojo of the Treasurer is well and truly gone. She is laughed at in the streets. The member for South Brisbane is laughed at by members of her own party. She is a complete and utter joke.

It comes as no surprise that we are starting to get the ruminations and the carping from the member for Woodridge because we know that he is not feeling comfortable. He knows that if you go back five months he was in the driver's seat, but do members know what? Something happened on the road to Damascus. The member for Cooper has usurped him. There are a series of backbenchers opposite who would not know fiscal responsibility if it hit them in the face, yet they are all sitting there like stunned mullets waiting for the inevitable come 6 pm on 31 October. Bring it on!