



Speech by

**Mr D. BRISKEY**

**MEMBER FOR CLEVELAND**

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Hansard 21 October 1998

### **UNEMPLOYMENT**

**Mr BRISKEY** (Cleveland—ALP) (6.52 p.m.): I am pleased to speak in support of the amended motion and to place on the record my support for the programs this Government has initiated to create jobs and drive down the State's unemployment level. Unemployment is the most serious economic and social issue facing this nation and this State. Creating long-term and sustainable jobs is the Beattie Government's highest priority.

This Government was elected on a commitment to job security and job creation, and just over a month ago this Government brought down a Budget which had at its heart significant funding for labour market programs and job creating capital works projects. I was therefore somewhat surprised by the original wording of this motion and the hypocrisy of its authors, the members opposite, to assert in this debate that the Government does not have a plan to reduce Queensland's unemployment rate. Our accusers were, after all, Ministers in the previous Government—a Government that did nothing to reduce Queensland's unemployment rate.

The figures speak for themselves. Job creation, as recorded by the trend employment growth figure, slowed to a snail's pace under the Borbidge Government. In 1995, the last year of the Goss Government, 87,800 jobs were created. This compares with only 18,100 jobs created in the first year of the Borbidge Government. The figures speak for themselves. Only State Labor Governments create jobs at the rates needed to reduce unemployment.

The members who now seek to criticise the Beattie Labor Government's employment initiatives are the same people who were responsible for scrapping the Goss Government's community renewal program, which was directed at communities that had high levels of unemployment. They are the same people who put a six-month freeze on all capital works projects—a decision which had a severe impact on the building and construction industry, a major Queensland employer. They are also the same people who abolished the Queensland Government's employment programs.

Yes, the mob who tonight stand up here and criticise the Beattie Government did not even have an employment department. Under the Borbidge Government, it was the Department of Training and Industrial Relations. Any reference to employment was scrapped. That says a lot about the priority the previous Government gave to employment. It is these people, the members opposite, who now wish to debate the Beattie Government's employment creating plan. The hypocrisy astounds me. The previous Government had no employment plan; it did not even have an employment department. It refused to set targets or goals for creating jobs.

Time expired.

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