



Speech by
**Mr DENVER
BEANLAND**

MEMBER FOR INDOOROOPIILLY

Hansard 20 October 1998

**BUILDING AND CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY (PORTABLE LONG SERVICE LEAVE) AMENDMENT
BILL**

Mr BEANLAND (Indooroopilly—LP) (5.57 p.m.): I rise to speak to this very important piece of legislation, the Building and Construction Industry (Portable Long Service Leave) Amendment Bill. Honourable members would be aware that the previous National/Liberal coalition Government, in its 1998-99 Budget, in fact made provision for additional recurrent funding of at least \$2.5m for a range of initiatives aimed at addressing skills shortages in the building and construction industry. It is most regrettable that the minority Beattie Labor Government did not see fit to retain this most worthwhile initiative in this Budget.

We have seen here yet another saving made but at the same time a raiding of what is now the Portable Long Service Leave Authority, because the Labor Government believes it is a hollow log to fund, in this case, an election commitment. If the Government were truly committed to job creation, it would have found sufficient funding from consolidated revenue for these initiatives. This coalition found the money. We had our priorities in the right order; the Labor Party does not have its priorities in the right order. The Minister is either too lazy or too powerless to convince the Treasury to find some money from consolidated revenue. That is quite appalling when one considers the amount of rhetoric we have from this minority Government in relation to jobs.

I believe this is a bad omen indeed for the building industry of Queensland. It sends a very clear signal about the economic ideal that we can expect from this Government. It is interesting to note that even the Capital Works Program in this year's Budget is \$25m less than the comparable May Budget from the National/Liberal coalition.

One of the important things to consider is what will happen if the Portable Long Service Leave Fund becomes deficient in some way. We have already seen what inaction and failures there were on the part of the former Goss Labor Government to rectify the situation of the Workers Compensation Fund. One has to ask the question: what will occur in relation to this fund?

I think it is relevant that the Minister indicate to this Parliament exactly what course of action he will take if the fund does become deficient in some way or he is advised by the trustees or the auditors that there are problems afoot. Will he immediately come to this House and start taking legislative action to rectify that situation or will he sit back and allow it to get into the same parlous state as the Workers Compensation Fund? I think that is a reasonable question in view of the history of these funds. I think we have to have the exact position clearly indicated. A major reform initiative of the coalition has been in this area of portable long service leave.
