



Speech by

Hon. R. E. BORBIDGE

MEMBER FOR SURFERS PARADISE

Hansard 11 November 1998

JAMES COOK UNIVERSITY MEDICAL SCHOOL

Hon. R. E. BORBIDGE (Surfers Paradise—NPA) (Leader of the Opposition) (10.18 a.m.): I rise to respond to the appalling ministerial statement by the Minister for Health in regard to the medical school at the James Cook University. The facts are these: under six years of Labor Government in this State, no progress was made whatsoever; nothing was done. When the coalition came to power in February 1996, we embarked on a strategy to secure a medical school for the James Cook University. The former Minister for Health, now the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, was successful in doing that.

The odds against the previous Government were immense. We had to break through the barriers of the southern universities, which did not want to release additional medical places to the State of Queensland. We had the entrenched views of the academic establishment to break through. The simple fact is that in the Prime Minister's office at Parliament House in Canberra the Federal Minister for Health, the Prime Minister, the then Minister for Health and I agreed to the proposal that the James Cook University could have a medical school, that arrangements would be made for the transfer of medical places and work and planning could start. If anything has happened to derail that, the responsibility rests solely with the current Minister for Health who creates disasters wherever she goes in this State.

I pay tribute to the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, the former Minister for Health, for his tireless efforts in securing that project for the James Cook University. I remember the day we announced it. Labor had to agree, because it knew it had no alternative but to follow our lead.

Time expired.
