



Speech by

VAUGHAN JOHNSON

MEMBER FOR GREGORY

Hansard 16 September 1998

TOWNSVILLE RAILWAY WORKSHOPS

Mr JOHNSON (Gregory—NPA) (10.21 a.m.): This morning in this Chamber we heard the Minister for Transport speak about the coalition's transport policy and the success of the Ipswich railway workshops. However, this morning he failed to tell the House about the mass walk-out by workshop employees at Townsville yesterday and again this morning after a meeting of shop stewards. I wish to quote from a document titled Regional Economic Development Strategy—Campaign Queensland Labor that was launched in Townsville before the election this year by the Premier and the Deputy Premier of this State. It states—

"The additional workshop activity will allow an expansion of the permanent workforce in Townsville workshops and we will immediately consult with Queensland Rail and the Unions to ensure that the 77 fixed term workers in the South Yards will be a part of this permanent workforce expansion."

This Minister has walked away from that Labor policy. Again, we have seen them turn their backs on the employees in the Townsville railway workshops.

Mr BREDHAUER: I rise to a point of order. The assertion by the member for Gregory is incorrect. We have already made 30 of those workshop employees permanent.

Mr JOHNSON: There is no point of order.

Mr BREDHAUER: I find the remarks offensive and I ask that they be withdrawn.

Mr SPEAKER: Order!

Mr JOHNSON: Mr Speaker, the truth of the matter is that these are contract staff. The member knows that they are contract staff. He has not honoured his obligation.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The member for Gregory!

Mr BREDHAUER: Mr Speaker, I found the remarks that I had walked away from our election commitments offensive. I ask that they be withdrawn.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The member for Gregory will withdraw those words.

Mr JOHNSON: No, I will not withdraw, because the situation is that they have sold out the unions in Townsville, and the Minister knows it.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Yesterday I ruled that if words are found to be offensive and they are clearly stated, the member who said them must withdraw. I ask the member to withdraw those words.

Mr JOHNSON: I withdraw. However, I can tell the Minister that the blokes at the Townsville workshop will know about this.
