



Speech by

**Dr DAVID WATSON**

**MEMBER FOR MOGGILL**

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Hansard 25 November 1999

**BUSINESS CONFIDENCE IN QUEENSLAND**

**Dr WATSON** (Moggill—LP) (Leader of the Liberal Party) (10.17 a.m.): We have seen yet again this morning that the Premier is loose with the truth when it comes to statistics.

**Mr Borbidge:** He did not have the numbers on any divisions.

**Dr WATSON:** He did not have the numbers on any division; that is exactly right.

But this was not the first time. Yesterday in his ministerial statement, the Premier tried to tell the House that business confidence in Queensland was at a near record level before citing the Yellow Pages Small Business Index to support his assertions. That is another example of his being very selective with the truth. Nothing could be further from the truth than what he said yesterday. The Yellow Pages in November actually found that business confidence in Queensland had fallen to its lowest level in 18 months. So far this year—

**Mr Borbidge:** That is not what he said yesterday.

**Dr WATSON:** That is not what he said. So far this year, business confidence has plummeted from 60% to 43%.

**Mr Borbidge** interjected.

**Dr WATSON:** He is always loose when it comes to statistics. He always quotes them selectively. He never tells the whole story.

It is no coincidence that this downward spiral has coincided with this Government's regressive policies on industrial relations, workers compensation and, of course, payroll tax. The survey reported grave concerns that the situation was likely to worsen next year. The Yellow Pages report stated—

"... expectations for the economy a year from now have fallen substantially from the previous quarter and are approaching historically low levels."

Strangely enough, the Premier forgot to tell us that, just like he forgot to tell us the difference between a majority and a minority Government earlier on.

Let me fill honourable members in on a few other gaps in the Premier's highly selective reading. The survey found that employment growth expectation was at historically low levels and expectations for capital expenditure are in decline. It is worth noting that those findings reinforce the ABS statistics and, of course, the National Australia Bank indices for Queensland.

Time expired.

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