



Speech by

**GRANT MUSGROVE**

**MEMBER FOR SPRINGWOOD**

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Hansard 16 September 1999

**WATER RESOURCES, RURAL QUEENSLAND**

**Mr MUSGROVE** (Springwood—ALP) (6.20 p.m.): I second the amendment moved by the member for Everton. Let us make sure that the House understands what this debate is really about. It is about the Opposition trying to build a smokescreen to hide its own failures in relation to water.

Between February 1996 and June 1998, what water infrastructure did the Borbidge Government provide for Queenslanders?

**Mr HOBBS:** Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. Nothing was built under the Goss Government for six years. We started the whole program.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order! There is no point of order.

**Mr MUSGROVE:** The honourable member continues with the smokescreen.

The answer, of course, is the Walla Weir, and we all know who initiated that project—the Goss Labor Government. In almost two and a half years, the Borbidge Government failed to deliver for Queenslanders and now, with this motion, it is trying to cover up for those failures. Not only is the Government aware of those failures but so too are Queenslanders.

When I was out at St George with the Public Works Committee only a few weeks ago, I found that the people there did not have many nice things to say about the former Minister. They were very dissatisfied with his non-delivery in terms of their water catchment needs.

Of course, communities expect more from Governments in terms of responsible planning than just joy flights by politicians to pick out dam sites. In fact, I think one of the terms that was applied to the former Minister when I was out at St George was "Biggles". They called him Biggles because he flew in and flew out. He offered no solutions and nothing ever happened.

These communities are very responsible. They expect ecologically sustainable development and developments that provide long-term, sustainable jobs. So devoid are those on the other side of the House of an understanding of the need for proper planning that they came up with a \$1 billion wish list for water infrastructure. It was not based on any proper planning, of course. It was not even based on proper funding. It was just a gimmick to try to catch a few votes.

How did the Borbidge Government come up with a water infrastructure plan to meet the future needs of Queensland? It took out newspaper ads and asked people for ideas. That is how little it knew about strategic planning for Queensland's water needs. The Borbidge Government went into an election trumpeting this great scheme, but the people of Queensland are a lot smarter than that. They saw this great plan for what it was: a pathetic gimmick without plan and without funding.

Of course, the can-do Beattie Labor Government is getting on with the job, not only by accelerating the WAMP process in Queensland's catchments but also by running other studies in parallel. Whilst this planning for sustainable development is under way, we are announcing projects.

Last month the Government announced a \$39m project to increase the capacity of the Awoonga-Callide pipeline near Gladstone. This project will upgrade existing pumping stations to enable the pipeline to carry additional water from Awoonga Dam for the Callide C Power Station. Thirty-four kilometres of the pipeline is being duplicated to meet the extra demand for water. When it is completed, this pipeline will have a capacity to deliver up to 27,500 megalitres per annum—approximately double

its existing capacity. This project will create local job opportunities and will lay the foundations for a more secure power supply for Queensland.

The productivity of Queensland's irrigation areas is being boosted through a series of improvements to major water infrastructure. Refurbishment works are being carried out in the Burdekin, in the Mareeba-Dimbulah irrigation area and in the St George irrigation area.

In June the Government gave the go-ahead for a \$4.2m refurbishment of the Moura Weir on the Dawson River. This weir is vital for the Moura town and mine site, local irrigators and the new ammonium nitrate plant located there. The Moura Weir forms an important part of the water supply in the Dawson Valley and refurbishment will provide certainty to people in the region. This project should be complete by the end of the year. As well as these infrastructure projects, this Government has been supporting rural and regional communities through water efficiency and waste water schemes.

This is a can-do Government and we have a can-do Minister leading the charge. What a comparison! In two and a half years the Borbidge Government failed on water infrastructure for Queensland. This Government is not only conducting the proper planning to secure environmental and economic certainty—

Time expired.

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