



Speech by

Hon. J. ELDER

MEMBER FOR CAPALABA

Hansard 15 September 1999

BURNETT REGION

Hon. J. P. ELDER (Capalaba—ALP) (Deputy Premier and Minister for State Development and Minister for Trade)(6.21 p.m.): I second the amendment. This debate is certainly about politics and my contribution will be about the truth. The fact of the matter is that, as the Premier outlined, the Borbidge Government did nothing to assist the Murgon meatworks when they came asking for help in their most desperate hour. When they needed support from the previous Government to continue a viable business, to keep 600 workers there, to keep the meatworks working and to invest in the plant, they came through the former Premier's door and got zip—nothing.

The one thing that rings true, and rings true in all senses of the word, is that it is "all but" Borbidge, "all but" deliver. In relation to Murgon, he did not deliver. Since that time, members opposite have been rolling through the Burnett spreading outright, deliberate untruths and half-truths. The fact of the matter is that the only opportunity that the meatworks had to survive commercially was knocked back by the previous Government. This Government has been the only Government that has assisted the Murgon meatworks—not the Federal Government—although local governments are giving it moral support. Members should rest assured that that is the fact and it can be proved easily.

The Opposition talks about major projects. In the two years that the Borbidge Government was in power, not one major project was delivered. This morning, the Leader of the Opposition made a claim about Boeing. If he regards Boeing as a measure of success then, in terms of the projects that we have brought to fruition, we have outscored him by six to one. In the time that the Borbidge Government was in power, one major project was delivered.

Mr Beattie: And Boeing was initiated under the Goss Government.

Mr ELDER: I accept that interjection. It was a facilitation under the Borbidge Government, nothing more and nothing less. In relation to the RFA—

An Opposition member interjected.

Mr ELDER: If the honourable member wants to interject, he should return to his correct seat and then I will take his interjection.

This Government is committed to a viable timber industry in the South Burnett. However, it has to be an industry that is competitive. We will work with the people involved and help them. It is not a 1950s theme park which in terms of industry development is where the former Government left it.

Mr Seeney: It's always conditional, isn't it?

Mr ELDER: My word. I will take that interjection. The member is weak, he is gutless and he misleads the people of his electorate.

Mr SEENEY: I rise to a point of order. I find the remark that the Deputy Premier made that I am weak and gutless and that I mislead my electorate offensive and absolutely hypocritical, coming from a member with his record. I find it offensive and I ask that it be withdrawn.

Mr ELDER: Mr Deputy Speaker, if the member finds it offensive, I will withdraw but, in the terms of the comments that he has made publicly, I will let the record speak for itself. I will let the member's actions speak for themselves.

We will deliver an RFA outcome which, in the two and a half years that they were in Government, the members opposite could not deliver. The members opposite had two and a half years

to provide support for that industry—to help it with value adding, to help it with management—and yet in that time they did nothing—nothing at all! The fact of the matter is that they had an opportunity to do that during the term of the Bjelke-Petersen Government. They had an opportunity to do it under the Russell Cooper Government, but they did not do it. They had an opportunity to do that under the Rob Borbidge Government, but they could not do it. The members opposite are a can't do Opposition and they were a can't do Government. They are "all but" Borbidge, "all but" nothing, "all but" deliver. The simple fact is that, during the time that they were in Government, they never delivered. That is their simple record. For the information of the members opposite, I point out that it is on the record for everyone to see. The fact of the matter is that, on any of these issues, the member for Surfers Paradise has no credibility. He had an opportunity to deliver, but did he not.

In relation to the meat industry, this Government has turned it around. The Opposition left it in a calamitous position. Right across the State, jobs were going to be lost. The members opposite say that we help Labor mates. We are actually generating jobs in abattoirs in Charleville, in Wallangarra and in Toowoomba—hardly Labor territory. However, they are jobs. It is a good demonstration—

Time expired.
