



Speech by

**Hon. J. ELDER**

**MEMBER FOR CAPALABA**

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Hansard 26 October 1999

**CENSURE OF MINISTER FOR MINES AND ENERGY**

**Hon. J. P. ELDER** (Capalaba—ALP) (Deputy Premier and Minister for State Development and Minister for Trade) (6.20 p.m.): I am pleased to be able to second the amendment moved by the Premier. On this side of the House we are pleased that this motion has been moved, because once again we can see the modus operandi of the Opposition. It is the same old gang trying to dupe their way into power with mysteries and untruths, just as they have done time and time again.

Those opposite did the same thing a few years ago and were successful. However, they have a record now, and that is the difference. All members on this side of the House will make sure that that record is reinforced in the community time and time again. We will remind the people of Queensland of the coalition's record. If there was one thing that the previous Labor Government did not do, it was that we did not expose the coalition's record. We did not remind the people sufficiently of the excesses of the Bjelke-Petersen years. We did not remind the people sufficiently that the coalition allowed a police commissioner to be on the take. We did not remind them sufficiently that four coalition Ministers went to jail because of their cavalier approach to public finances. I can tell those opposite that we will be reminding the people from now on as those opposite try to dupe their way into power again.

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr ELDER:** They are testy. Look at what the Opposition did in the area of Mines and Energy. The coalition's one crowning achievement when it came to Government was to change the name of the portfolio. The member for Mount Isa was the former Minister for Minerals and Energy. What did those opposite do? They walked into power and said, "We will call it Mines and Energy." How much taxpayers' money did that cost? Those opposite will notice that we did not do the puerile, pedantic and pathetic things that they did when we came to Government. We kept the portfolio's name as it was.

What was the Opposition's second crowning achievement in this portfolio? It gave us the blackouts—the Borbidge blackouts—during the 1990s. We had more blackouts during the Leader of the Opposition's term in office than ever before. It only paled by comparison with Bjelke-Petersen's efforts in the 1980s when he took on the union movement and created the same sort of dislocations in Queensland. That is the coalition's record in this area of endeavour.

The fact is that the coalition came to power and just sat there. There is a sign in some football dressing rooms which reads, "Being here isn't enough." Well, being there was enough for the coalition at the time. It was always enough for those opposite, and that was the problem. The problem was that the Opposition did not sit down and look at the administrative arrangements across all portfolios.

The coalition Government never ever managed the Government owned corporations. We have a litany of coalition incompetence. Those opposite are exposed as appalling managers and administrators. They did not have their hands on the tiller because they could not be bothered managing the portfolios, the processes or the businesses. They were happy just to be there.

I am pleased to be able to second the Premier's amendment because it highlights the activities and the work undertaken by the Minister in administering the GOCs over the past couple of weeks.

**Mr Borbidge:** He didn't build a power station in six years.

**Mr ELDER:** Those opposite only follow you out of morbid curiosity. The only thing that stopped you from copping a flogging was the member for Crows Nest. Your problem is that he has now

announced his retirement. You watch the rat pack now, my friend. That morbid curiosity will turn to revenge. Your time as acting Leader of the Opposition is waning, and waning rapidly.

The position taken by the current Minister exposed the improper processes followed by GOCs in terms of their responsibilities.

**Mr Beattie** interjected.

**Mr ELDER:** In that case, Mr Premier, we hope he stays, but I have to say that morbid curiosity is going to change the situation very quickly.

The coalition Government was not able to manage the GOCs. One has to simply look at the list of salary increases—and I will not go through them—to see that. The member for Caloundra, as former Treasurer, and the relevant Ministers were exposed as being incompetent. I am sure the former Minister for Transport will comment on the letter that was tabled this morning. If the increase for the CEO of Queensland Rail was not ticked off by the former Minister for Transport during the caretaker period, it exposes his incompetence. He is either guilty of ticking it off or he is guilty of gross incompetence.

Time expired.

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